

OTMC TRIP REPORTS

1993

Sourced from the 1993 OTMC Bulletins



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INTRODUCTION

The first trip for 1993 was meant to be just another enjoyable day out for the club, but following a fall, the club unfortunately recorded the first fatality on a club trip. Mary Clark had joined the OTMC in the early 1990's, and by 1993 was well and truly one of us and had joined the committee at the previous AGM, and had a lot to offer. Mary had a fall on the homeward leg of the day trip to Kaka Point and The Nuggets and passed away in hospital a few days later. 1993 was the club's 70th year of operation, and we are thankful for 70 years of safe tramping and mountaineering. As club President at the time, the overwhelming feeling from the time was how well our fellow trampers respond to tragedy and look out for each other. The camaraderie shown to Elspeth Gold (trip leader) and others on the trip is just so typical for a tramping club and something I have always appreciated. We have sadly seen this twice more, with the passing of Trevor Mason while participating in the 2008 OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon, and Charlie Weaver following a medical event on the 2018 Routeburn Crossover trip.

Weather wise, 1992/93 was a poor year – a record eight weekend or longer trips were cancelled. One was because of too much snow, three due to no snow, and the others due to low numbers. That said, there were still good numbers away, particularly in March 1993, with 28 to Ohau, 22 to the Matukituki, and 27 on the Makarora Easter trip.

After high numbers for several years, Bushcraft 1993 attracted only 13 participants – possibly the lowest number to date. Because we were still running a weekend basic tramping skills camp at Tirohanga Camp with the associated costs, we were forced to run the whole weekend with just four instructors (normally 15 plus). As it turned out this worked out OK but was very tiring!

The 1992/93 Christmas Trip was something a bit different, a guided kayaking trip down the Clarence River in the Kaikoura area. Kayaking was somewhat popular in the early 1990's due to the enthusiasm shown by Bruce Newton. The Clarence trip was the one and only time we have undertaken such a trip.

The OTMC continued with some work parties on the Otago Peninsula Tracks on the back of our contribution to the Otago Peninsula track working group.

Major issues that were floating around the OTMC in 1993 concerned the annual Outdoors Magazine (should we produce one, the answer from members was yes), and discussion and motions on what to do with Ben Rudd's and the associated revenue from the trees. Discussion on this continued with various options put forward until the Ben Rudd's Management Trust was formed in 1998.

Another good year for the club, with some memorable trips such as Rabbit Pass.

Antony Pettinger
July 2021

Cover: Kitchener Stream and Aspiring Flat, looking towards the Turnbull Thomson Falls (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

WILKIN TO THE EAST MATUKITUKI VIA RABBIT PASS

April 9-12, 1993

Author: Antony Pettinger

Previously unpublished

The television weather forecast for the mountains over Easter '93 was poor for the first day or so, with improving weather following, and so it turned out to be. As trip leader of the OTMC Easter trip, I don't recall taking much more notice of the forecast other than what was shown on TV. Parties were well equipped and could change plans to suit depending on conditions.

The trip was to the Makarora Region, and I had indicated in the club bulletin that one option could be a crossover from the Wilkin to the East Matukituki via Rabbit Pass. Out of the 27 on the trip, we ended up with 10 or so planning to undertake the Rabbit Pass option.

A normal trip away from Dunedin saw us approaching Makarora in torrential rain. I don't remember where the other parties camped, but we elected to camp at Boiler Flat. Town clothes were stripped off and raincoats adorned to get the tent erected.



Jumboland, Wilkin River, April 9, 1993 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We woke on Good Friday to the continuing rain, and quickly packed up the tent and headed for some shelter at the DoC office. With plenty of other parties mingled around, all wondering what to do, we decided there was nothing to lose with heading up to Top Forks hut in the Wilkin as planned and see what the weather does. If it clears, we would have a shot at getting over to the East Matukituki, if it didn't, we could just explore the upper Wilkin Valley's and then wander

back down to Makarora. The jet boat office was busy, but as we had made a booking, we were away first.

Even with all our wet weather gear on, the jet boat ride up to Kerin Forks was quite miserable in the persistent rain. A quick dash from the boat to Kerin Forks Hut saw the billy on within minutes – a hot drink was the first priority. It was now mid-morning, and time to get moving. Reluctantly raincoats were put back on and we headed up the track towards Top Forks Hut. As the track gains no real height in the first 4km or so, quick time was made to the Jumboland Flats.

We stopped for lunch when the optimistic amongst deemed the rain to have also stopped, somewhere opposite the Wonderland Valley. From here the weather improved to the point a watery sun was evident by the time we reached Top Forks Hut, although mist still hung around the tops.



Waterfall Flat, Wilkin River South Branch, April 10, 1993 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Saturday morning saw patches of blue sky, but still some ominous looking grey clouds. My party of four decided to stick to the plan and head up to Waterfall Flat, if only to see first-hand the infamous waterfall that was seen as the crux of the crossing to the East Matukituki. John Aldis from one of the other two parties was the only other one who was keen, so five of us set off from Top Forks Hut with all our gear.

My party was a mix of novice (only on paper) and experience. Trevor Deaker had been in the club for two months or so, having joined after Bushcraft 1993. From the first time I met Trev on the first night of Bushcraft '93 I could see he would be very capable as a tramping, to the point I encouraged the Chief Guide to make him a party leader straight after Bushcraft.

Russell Godfrey had been in the club for 2-3 years, and I had known him since high school. Russell was adventurous, but level-headed, and could be relied on completely when then the

going got tough. Debbie seemed to trust my instinct, so if I felt we could do something invariably she would trust me and follow along.

The topomap showed a track to bushline, and nothing after that. As it turned out there was a well-formed and marked track all the way to Waterfall Flat. It is a 500m climb over 3km to get to Waterfall Flat, and there are some excellent views into Snow Bridge Gorge and the surrounding peaks along the way. We reached Waterfall Flat after about 3 hours from Top Forks Hut, probably around 11am.

We knew that the waterfall face that leads to the upper section of the south branch of the Wilkin enjoyed a formidable reputation, and we believed if that could be surmounted the rest of the trip would be easily completed.



**Waterfall Flat, Wilkin River South Branch, with the waterfall and route shown, April 10, 1993
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

I had studied a clear photo of the waterfall in Mark Pickering's book 'The Hills', and it looked tricky enough, and I was certainly glad that we would be going up, not down! However, as we stood at the foot of Waterfall Flat in real life the barrier appeared impenetrable. But, as the weather was still windy and sort of clear, we headed towards the top of Waterfall Flat. As it turned out, the closer we got to the waterfall face, the less steep it appeared. By the time we reached the foot of the climb we had agreed to give it a go, knowing full well we may not be able to come back down.

The route up the face is well to the right of the actual waterfalls as you look at them (true left). After climbing up a grass covered fan, the route zig zags up through a series of bluffs before a final long sidle back towards the waterfalls – it is this last section that has the most exposure and is not a place to stop.

We were pleasantly surprised to find the route had been marked with orange waratahs, although some of these had been flattened to the ground by avalanche. The weather was clear when we started to head up, but from about halfway up we were confronted with snow flurries being blown up the face, not really ideal conditions. There was no vegetation of any length to grab on to, so it meant taking care to place your feet securely in the well-trodden steps, and don't look down. It was not the place to stop and enjoy the view, so it was a more or less non-stop to the top.



From the top of the Waterfall, looking down over Waterfall Flat, April 10, 1993 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

After 30-40 minutes of intense concentration five jubilant trampers safely reached the top of the waterfall face, believing we had conquered the worst part of the trip. From the top there is impressive views back down to Waterfall Flat, and in the other direction to Pearson Saddle, which provides access to the Waitoto River. Views of Pickelhaube were thwarted by low cloud.

The 1.5km walk from the top of the waterfall to Rabbit Pass was spectacular, maybe more so with the swirling cloud and intermittent snowfall. Rabbit Pass itself was reached in about 30mins, with good views into the head of the East Matukituki far below.

The metric map with the route marked on it was published after our trip, so we had been relying on the NZMS1 map, which didn't indicate the route. It was with a little surprise then we found the route down into the East Matukituki actually climbed to the east for 200m before descending down a steep rocky gut into the Matukituki.



**Wilkin River South Branch, above the waterfall, looking towards Pearson Saddle, April 10, 1993
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

Rabbit Pass is south facing, so there was significantly more snow in this area, pity we didn't bring iceaxes! The climb up to 1400m was fine, and we headed down into the gut. It was slow going, but OK except for just one section, where a large solid rock band lay across the route.



Russell Godfrey, Debbie Pettinger and Trevor Deaker at Rabbit Pass, with the head of the East Matukituki beyond, April 10, 1993 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Russell was in the front, followed by Trev, then Debbie and me. The rock had a couple of inches of snow on it, with a thin layer of ice below it. We elected to lower (more like drop, because we didn't have a rope) our packs down first – the first one decided not to stop and impressively went end over end for a long way down towards the East Matukituki (don't worry, we we'll pick it up on our way down!).

Russel then managed to shimmy down, now it was Trev's turn following the lowering of the remaining packs. Unfortunately, Debbie was in a precarious section and started sliding towards Trev – gravity took over and Trev was pushed over the edge. Of course, we all were thinking the worst, but Trev thankfully popped up with the only damage being ripped fingertips on his borrowed gloves.

Debbie and I manage to drop down OK, and we then gingerly picked our way down to easier slopes. We found a suitable campsite at the tree line and had a very late lunch. With the weather clearing once more we had an early night.

The next day dawned clear and frosty – we packed up and headed the 4km down to Ruth Flat and the sunshine. This was a great place to dry out our gear and enjoy the mountains. After repacking, we headed off towards Junction Flat. There is not a lot of views from the track above the Bledisloe Gorge, but even with its ups and downs it is a lot easier than what the gorge sounded like. A quick break to enjoy the view into Aspiring Flat and towards the West Matukituki, followed by the descent down the steep track beside the Hester Pinney to Junction Flat.

With all day available to get out to the road we had plenty of time for a wander up to Aspiring Flat to check out the Rock of Ages biv (more impressive in name). Aspiring Flats is one of the gems in Mt Aspiring National Park with an impressive cirque surrounding the perimeter.



The rocky section that proved difficult is above Trevor and Russell, April 10, 1993 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Back down to Junction Flat for lunch, and then just an afternoon stroll to Cameron Flat. The East Matukituki has a wonderful blue colour to it, so much so that Trev, Russell and myself decided to just follow the true right of the river rather than use the track. This was fine for a while, but soon we were in knee deep water, then waist deep, finally ending up pack floating down the river in deep pools. This would have been OK except for the cold – it was freezing. As soon as we could find an exit that would get us back to the track, we took it. I'm sure Debbie was having a chuckle when she came across us changing into dry clothes!

A brisk walk across Cameron Flat, a crossing of the West Matukituki and we were at the arranged pickup point. Elspeth Gold had graciously agreed to pick us up but had been delayed on her Gillespie Pass trip. We were about to settle down in a haybarn for the night when the van arrived around 8pm. A return to Dunedin well after midnight completed a very enjoyable Easter trip. My thanks to Russell, Trevor, and Debbie for a very memorable trip, so much so it is easily recalled almost 30 years later.

Antony Pettinger for Russell Godfrey, Trevor Deaker and Debbie Pettinger *(July 2021)*

FEBRUARY 6 FROM A SANE POINT OF VIEW

February 6, 1993

Author: Teresa Blondell

Published in Bulletin 517, February 1993

I can feel the colder southerly coming in as I sit in the car at the Bullring, waiting for the first lights to come over Flagstaff. The dawn is valiantly trying to break, with cold light showing under the dark cloud, . . . there it is - the first head torch appears on the summit!

An hour ago, seven mad fools set off from Booth Road for the OTMC marathon. I arrived with a restriction order, but there was no one around to implement it and commit these people to Cherry Farm. Some veterans of previous marathons and some poor innocents set off with bobbing torches (John G's on his faithful bit of binder twine) at just after 4.30 am. Here they are, down at the Bullring - their comments, after one hour on the track - bloody awful, said Arthur; keep him talking for a while (Sharon), give us a kiss (Arthur) the worst bit is keeping up with him (Michelle), where is my can of beer (Trevor) (at 5.30am???), puff, puff (Kath), which car is my taxi?? (John), I'm with him (Ross). The organiser has just commented that the weather is getting worse, it'll be raining by breakfast time - but when we ask, when is breakfast time for idiots who get up at 3.30 am????

For me, it's back to bed. Up again at 9 am and the weather is holding out, a bit of a breeze but it should be quite nice up on the tops. News that Antony and Debbie have gone to Whare Flat to walk, so we head to Green Hut site at 1300hrs to be the second reception committee (after Russell at the Gap.)

We are MAD!! Sample Road was muddy and rutted; after some spectacular skids, we became well stuck in a deep muddy hole! Attempts to free the car were in vain so we abandoned it and started walking. Just up the Green Hut track, I saw a flatbed truck and hurtled back to flag them down. Safely encamped with the dogs and dead pig in the back, I bumped my way back and provided great entertainment to the rescuers while we freed the car - I don't think it was the tramping Club's new climbing rope that we broke twice!!

Back to the track and zoom along to Green Hut - met Kath on the way, nobly cautious after some geographic embarrassment at Pulpit Rock - doesn't really want to finish her half marathon but doesn't want to have to do it next year!! Received abuse from Arthur, Sharon and Michelle because there was no cup of tea waiting for them at Green Hut site - better than a detour to a muddy road, I thought. We sat in the sun with David Barnes, Eric Lord and their inspection party; John and Ross appeared looking only slightly worse for the wear, this was the sign for breaking out the food and drink. They left at 5.30pm, with Antony accompanying. This left only Trevor to come through - which he eventually did, with Russell sheep dogging him from the Gap. This was NOT a good marathon year for Trev! He opted to come out to the road with us, so we packed up and headed back about 6.30pm, did a quick shuffle of cars and back to Booth Road again. Arthur, Sharon and Michelle had been greeted by Stu on their arrival at 7 pm but they had not seen Kath on their route. She appeared

exhausted, relieved and slightly disoriented just after 8pm, With the return of John and Ross, the OTMC marathon ended with all out safely by shortly before 9pm.

I have to wonder why they do it - the blisters and sore legs, the agony for the next few days - I am told it feels so good when you finish - a bit like banging your head against a brick wall? Chief Guide, please put up the trip list early next year and I'll get restraint orders early enough to get them implemented!

Teresa Blondell for all the marathoners and supporters

PENINSULA WALKWAYS – NYHON ROAD TRACK

Dates not recorded (January 1993)

Author: Eric Lord

Published in Bulletin 517, February 1993

Two work parties have completed the Nyhon Road track to link Sandymount Road with the Highcliff Road to Hoopers Inlet track. This work was carried out on behalf of the Dunedin City Council with the DCC providing materials and us obviously providing the labour. The first work party was on a Saturday a couple of weeks ago when Antony & Debbie picked me up in an unrecognisable car. After a very comfortable ride to Sandymount Road, Antony had myself and Debbie in shock when he showed us where the start of the track had to go. Since only a small segment of the nearby driveway bends outside the road reserves of Sandymount Road and Nyhon Road we now have to dig steps up the steep public right of way. So unnecessary had common sense prevailed in the first place.



Antony Pettinger and Eric Lord digging steps for the Nyhon Road Track, January 1993 (PHOTO Debbie Pettinger)

While Antony began digging the post holes for the track sign, I figured out a route for the steps. The soil was soft and crumbly which made for easy digging, but very unstable steps without any support. Debbie helped to cart the dirt away from the road and became excited by all the "wee willies" that poked out of the ground. I had to disappoint her and explain that they were only oversized worms. Breaking all Telecom rules we didn't stop for morning tea and carried on with our digging and wee willie spotting till lunch. After lunch Antony and I dug right

into the steeper top section when Russell arrived to help put in the track sign at the top of the steps pointing down.

With the Sandymount Road end completed we drove round to the Hoopers Inlet end of Nyhon Road. A little island in the swamp was chosen as the site to erect the track sign. Antony quickly scooped away the muck for one post hole, while Russell instantly struck logs for the other post hole only realising later that the very existence of the island was due to a heap of togs laid down way back. When we finally found a gap in the logs the posts were placed in and the sign bolted in place. With the sun out a hard day's fun had to finish at Portobello with an ice-cream.



Eric Lord with the steps partly completed, January 1993 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The second work party was last Sunday morning and with David joining us we carried two signs and 16 marker poles up to the top of the track. Putting in the signposts became a matter of avoiding large rocks and with that task done we set off down the track towards Hoopers inlet to place in the marker poles. Myself, Antony and Russell turned back for the grunt up to Sandymount Road to pick up the cars and bike while David and Debbie finished putting in the last two poles to Hoopers Inlet. They informed us two people had just gone up and used the track and with that satisfaction we left to go home for lunch.

Eric Lord for Antony & Debbie Pettinger, Russell Godfrey and David Barnes.

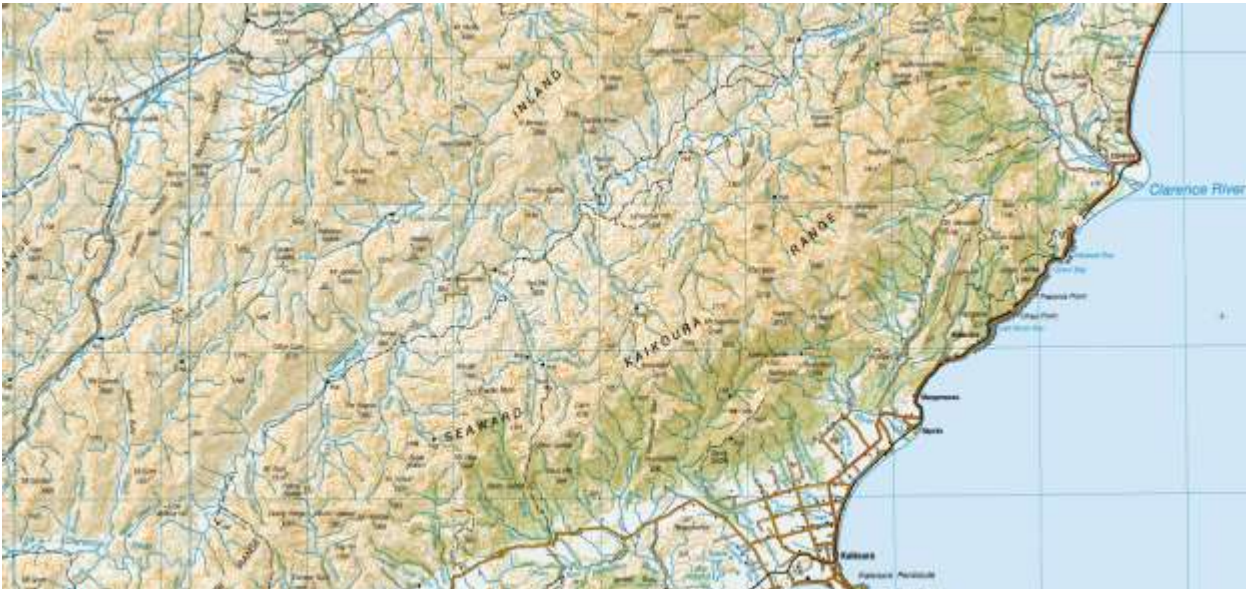
CLARENCE RIVER TRIP (A QUICK REPORT BECAUSE THE EDITOR ASKED FOR IT)

December 26, 1992 to January 4, 1993

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 517, February 1993

It was onward to Hanmer on the 2nd January to spend the evening enjoying the delights the town had to offer (the hot pools and a disco). The next day all headed to the river to await the rafts arriving, those with cars ferried them to the other end of the river and were picked up by the raft guides. A somewhat miserable afternoon and evening was had amid a lot of rain. After not being able to convince the ranger at Molesworth that the fire we were enjoying was actually caused by lightning strike, it was very early to bed that night.



The rafts arrived about 10am and it was on with the talk of working out what would fit in the gear barrels and if it wouldn't fit how important was it anyway? Nothing too important had to stay (if you call nothing important a water pistol and water wings) any excess gear was loaded into the rafting van to meet us at the other end.

So the adventure began 3 rafts and 4 kayakers and 1 funyaker headed downriver. (A travelling four ring circus so to speak.) Once the statutory safety talk was given and the paddling instructions understood it was on with the serious business of propelling the raft forward. An uneventful day was had and a wonderful campsite was set up by Wally the Wonderman, a legend in his own mind (more on Wally later).

The plot for a game of murder was hatched, and the murderer randomly selected by whoever drew the joker from a pack of cards. Their murderers mission was to inventively dispose of each member on the trip before the last day trying to make the murder fit the personality. John Galloway deserved an Emmy award for his death scene and over the course of the trip they were dropping like flies. Some examples of the murders were - Michael Hamel was electrocuted

by his digital watch, Jonette Service was attacked by rampant lipstick, Mary Hewinson decided to end it all after eating the last chocolate truffle and Fiona Buchanan died during a fit of giggling.

Our raft of six were the A team, most synchronised paddlers, best looking and fastest, (even if we must say so ourselves). At one stage our river guide was surprised when all aboard abandoned the ship. Between negotiating rapids the main entertainment was trying to get as many people off the other rafts. John Galloway proved particularly hard to shift and very inventive with a paddle.

The scenery was magnificent, the campsites superb, the rafting guides were wonderful and the different personalities on the trip combined to make for excellent company.

A big thank you has to go to Justin and Kay Calder for organising the trip, there will be an expanded report in the next Bulletin.

By one of the FMORPhs for the A team.

SEVEN CRAZY BODS IN THE OTMC MARATHON

February 6, 1993

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 518, March 1993

For me it was my first alarm clock wake up in months, unfortunately it was only 3.30 am. Quick breakfast and it was off down to Booth Road along with six other crazy bods, and six keen supporters. 4.30 am, ready for the go and Teresa is running about trying to take group photos in the pitch dark.

We're off and Arthur's long legs stride on up the hill, Sharon and I almost at a jog to keep up. Within minutes we had already split leaving John, Ross, Trevor and poor Kath behind. There was no conversation heading up over the Pineapple track, it was peaceful and all I could hear was my heart pounding as I followed my headlamp's light. Up on top and Dunedin lay quiet as it slept, on we raced, on down to the Bullring and three keen supporters watched in awe!!



Poplar Hut, Mt Allan Forest (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Down into Whare Flat, over gravel roads. It had been just short of two hours and time for a minute's stop before Arthur was keen to head off. Pack on first and strides ahead up the hill, past the Chalkies and on to Powder Hill. Weather is excellent with clear skies and spectacular views. No need for a map and compass yet (most unlike the normal marathon weather). From Powder Hill it was over a few Spaniards and down onto the road till the turn off through overgrown and out of control gorse to Long Ridge. Once on Long Ridge it's a left turn and down the hill until a sharp right down into what used to be the sheep yards. Up the second hill

and over the other side to Poplar Hut and being 9.15 am, it was time for morning tea. Twenty minutes later we headed away without seeing anyone else.

Mt. John was a long haul up with Arthur and Sharon up in no time. I plodded slowly up as my body was beginning to scream. "I just had two months doing nothing and the last three weeks were spent being a beach bum in southern Thailand, this can't be happening!" Down the other side into Christmas Creek, poor Sharon now had blisters under her heels.

Time ticked on and the weather stayed perfect. We were already ahead of last years' time and a steep climb up onto the ridge which headed over onto ABC Cave, and before we knew it we were at the Gap. It was a welcome sight to see Russell there, with his wee tent up, primus on and homemade muesli bars and biscuits. It was 1 pm and time for lunch!! Two brews later and we were off along Rocky Ridge. There was a strong cool wind and out to sea we could see the rain, past Silverpeak and down to Green Hut where Antony and Debbie were waiting. There was news that Kath, who was doing the half marathon was only 15-20 minutes ahead of us, she'd had a bad time with getting lost.

Packs on and time to move those legs as it was off to the turn off to Swampy. We met more supporters on the way. Mum and Olwen Dewhurst were on their way to Green Hut with fresh water for us, but due to Teresa getting her car stuck somewhere not far from Double Hill they were running a bit late. Not to worry as we were grateful for the water and carried on meeting up with Teresa, carrying our hot brews and a penguin kite. Sharon and I managed to drag Arthur away and we raced along, up over the long drag to Swampy. No sign of Kath yet! Maybe she had decided to head out to Teresa's car.

Along Swampy and the wind was blowing strong now. The odd shower passed over and time for the coats came and went, typical, once they were on it would stop raining and out came the sun. Back onto the Pineapple track and we pounded our way down to the finish. Sharon's feet now looked pretty painful as she hobbled her way out. Stuart Mathieson and his children were there to welcome us, as all three of us linked arms to cross the finish line at 7.24 pm. Just 6 minutes short of 15 hours total.

Stu had been there since 4.30 pm and had seen no sign of Kath or anyone else. We had therefore decided she must have gone out to Teresa's car at Hightop. Sharon kindly took me home and at 8.30 pm Mum, Olwen and Teresa arrived home with no Kath. Worry came on so Teresa headed back down to Booth Road arriving in time to see Kath arrive. Poor Kath, it had been a long day for her and once again she had taken a wrong turn and got lost. At least she was OKAY and had completed the inaugural half marathon.

I would like, on behalf of all those who took part in the marathon, to thank the keen supporters, Antony and Debbie Pettinger, Helen and Ken Williams, Teresa (penguin) Blondell, Olwen Dewhurst, Dennis Price and Russell Godfrey (Oh yeah, also those supporters, whom we didn't see but were told, they did exist)

A special thanks to Teresa for kindly loaning me her lightweight trekking boots.

Michelle Williams for Arthur Blondell, Sharon St Clair-Newman, John Galloway, Ross Chambers, Trevor and Kath McDonald.

QUEENSTOWN DIARY – DECEMBER 1949

December 17, 1949 to January 2, 1950

Author: W.S.G (Scott Gilkison)

Originally published in Outdoors 1950

Republished in OTMC Bulletin 518, March 1993

17th - Arrived Queenstown for a fortnight, full of hope of scampering over every hill in sight. Wind NW.

19th - Saw Earnslaw depart for Glenorchy. Wind south: weather promising fine - perhaps the Nor 'wester has blown itself at last. Many shooters on board, but no trampers.

20th - Wind back to NW. Early morning ascent of Ben Lomond and glimpsed Earnslaw, Aspiring and Christina before the clouds blotted out everything. Rain all afternoon.

21st - Saw Ben Lomond off to Glenorchy with three young ladies, hopefully bound for Olivine. Heavy rain.

23rd - Ben Lomond creaked off for Elfin Bay and Glenorchy under a staggering load of Tararuas, Hutt Valley and OTC members. Wind now strong N.W.



SS Ben Lomond, 1872-1951 (PHOTO NZ National Maritime Museum)

24th - Alarm at 4 am. Rain. Woke at 5. clearing slowly. Left at 6 for Double Cone with Bill McLeod, Gavin Clark, and Ron Stewart (Invercargill). Reached summit at 1 pm. Visibility poor but could sometimes see the other peaks and at least one glimpse of Queenstown. Snow of mixed quality. Careful descent of upper slopes, ran down lower ridge, return to Queenstown in time to greet the Earnslaw from Kingston with a load of optimistic holidaymakers and mountaineers. Heavy rain all night.

26th - Saw Ben Lomond off to Glenorchy with one large Club party heading for the Dart, as well as other optimists. Strong N.W. wind and rain up the lake.

27th - Wind N.W. Need I say more?

28th - Saw Earnslaw off for the Head with Gavin and party for Routeburn. Usual weather forecast. "Rain in South Westland." During the day heavy rain developed in the lake, reaching Queenstown in early afternoon.

29th - Wind switched round to the south, a clearing day with snow halfway down Ben Lomond.

30th - Off at last. Bright sunny morning and my last chance to have a look at the valleys at the Head. Up to Glenorchy per Earnslaw, then by truck to Rees Bridge and off up the valley. Swag not very heavy - three days' food, but rope and two pairs of crampons aboard in case I met anyone interested in a climb. Travelled the first mile or two with a Canterbury party, then pushed on alone. A glorious dip (complete immersion) near Arthur's Creek. Met an Auckland party at the hut, and I was informed the Earnslaw and 25-Mile Huts both full. I looked up to Wright's Col to see if any sign of the O'Kane-Rosie party, but East Peak was so plastered with icicles that climbing was clearly off. Decided to camp at the old OTC 1946 base at Hunter Junction. Arrived dead beat about 7 o'clock to find the whole area pretty full of Tararuas, so I carried on as far as the Big Slip and dosed down for the night.



Original Shelter Rock Hut (PHOTO Horace Tilly, OTMC Archives)

31st - Another beautiful morning. Up at daybreak, away just after 5, shortly before 7. I stirred up a couple in Shelter Rock Hut, they hadn't a fire going, but offered to get one on and make me a brew, but I wanted to get the big climb over before the sun reached me, so carried on. Fairly slow progress up to the Saddle, It was colder down the other side, so I travelled better. Crossed the stream just above the Natural Bridge, which some people won't believe exists. Then round the side of Headlong and eventually down to the Dart Hut - 2 pm. I had expected to greet R.B.H. and his merry men there, but the only inhabitants were four Tararuas and an

Auckland party, who arrived just after me. I enjoyed a brew of Tararua tea, rested an hour or so, and left at 4 for the Lower Dart. Weather thickening up again. An interlude to inspect and report on the bridge at Whitbourn Flats, then carried on towards Cattle Flat. Met two Victoria folks on the way, advanced guard of a party of twelve. I had seen another party of 12, also Victoria, across Snowy Creek in the morning. Half-way down Cattle Flat before dark and I picked a spot beside a rock with a slight overhang, where I stored a bit of dry wood in case of rain overnight.



Dart Hut, Dart Valley, circa 1962 (PHOTO Ron Keen)

1st January 1950 - No rain last night but thickening up now. Moved off about 5 in the first of the drizzle. At the foot of the Flat I surprised the rest of the Victoria party, just awakening to a new day (and year) - my first attempt at "First-footing". Rain getting heavier and reached Dredge Huts about 8.30 in a downpour. In residence were two Canterbury chaps just off down valley, one Victoria, and our own Ross, Ross, Bruce and John (arrived about midnight from Routeburn.) A quick snack, then I joined the Canterbury party, very glad of their company over the next eight hours as we squelched down the Dart. Had to climb both bluffs, Sandy and Chinaman's. Weather clearer as we got past the latter. The long grind up Chinaman's Flat had us all pretty weary and very glad to call it a day at the foot of the next flat.

2nd - Off to a good start, we slogged down to Paradise and there humbled ourselves to accept motor transport the next 12 miles. And so aboard the good ship Earnslaw and back down the lake.

W.S.G

HALF MARATHON EPIC

February 6, 1993

Author: Kath McDonald

Published in Bulletin 518, March 1993

Heading off with the others at 4.30 am Trev and I were soon left behind. He guided me around until the turn off to Long Ridge. I could not have gotten this far by myself, especially the gorse, which by next year will be impassable.



Pulpit Rock, the most northern point of the Half-Marathon (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

I got lost at Pulpit Rock mainly because it has been so long since I was last there. I forgot what it looked like! This cost me an hour and finally I arrived at Green Hut. I went down to get some fresh water and was just about to leave when Debbie and Antony arrived.

Towards Hightop I met Debbie's mother and her friend then along came Teresa, after spending so much time alone the place was becoming crowded! Along Hightop I followed Swampy Ridge track instead of Swampy Summit, which cost me another hour! This has to be the longest part ever, I thought I was never going to get home. The weather closed in on the tops and I got pretty wet as I couldn't be bothered to put my coat on. Shortly after it cleared which was a relief but it was getting colder.

I again missed the turn off and went sailing on past losing another 1/2 hour, this was the worst part because you know you are so close but so far. Finally, I arrived at the last sign telling me

Booth Road was only 1/2 hour away! Emerging at last with very sore feet and 16 hours after starting, which should have been only ten or slightly more.

Thanks Trev because I couldn't have done it without your help, and it cost him a lot of time. I hope more people do it next year!!

Kath McDonald

The first half marathoner home

Winner of the inaugural half marathon

THE THREE PASS TRIP

Date not recorded

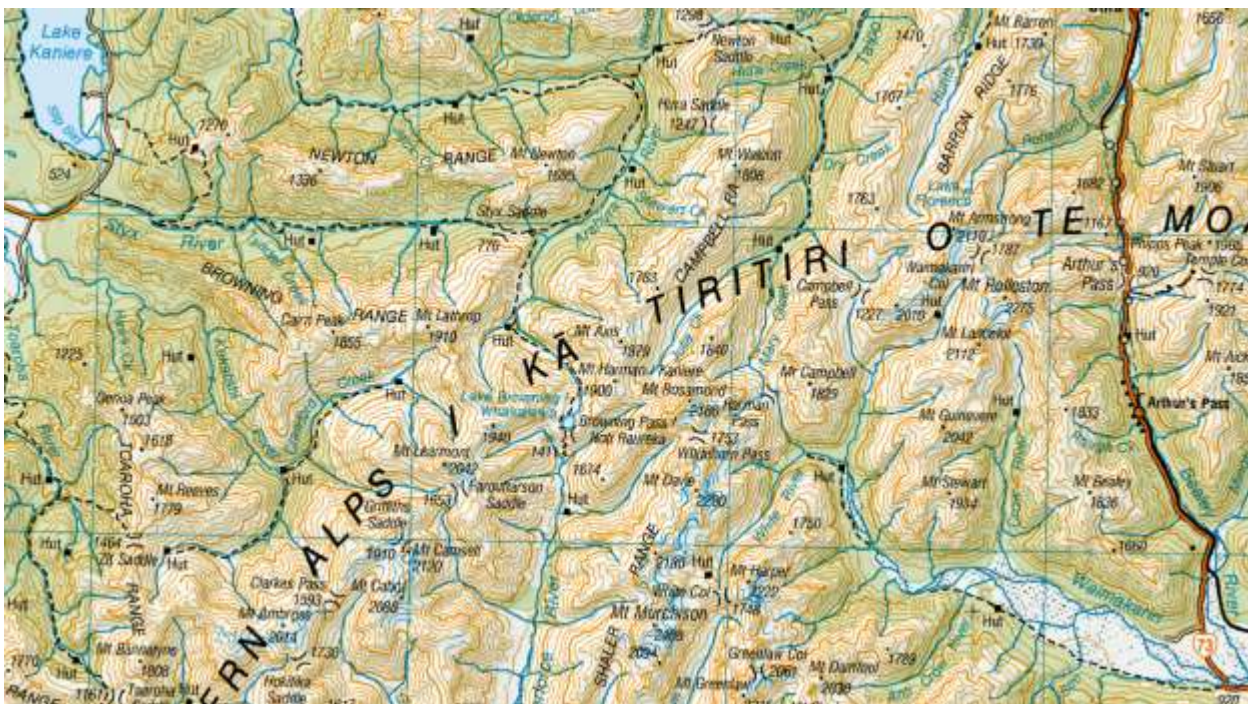
Author: Sue and John Robinson

Published in Bulletin 518, March 1993

We started the trip by following the Styx River which is near to Lake Kaniere in Westland. We were walking by 6.45pm and walked until 9.15pm when it started to get dark. The track was straightforward, wide bench track through lovely West Coast forest.

The next morning was pouring with rain, so we made our way to Grassy Flat Hut to dry out. To Grassy Flat Hut it takes about 4-5 hours from the road end. By early evening it had cleared up, so we made our way up to Harmon Hut. Once again, the track was good and scenery was lovely, it took about two hours to Harmon hut at a slow, ambling pace.

The next morning was misty, but showed signs of clearing, so we decided to head for Browning Pass. The route is described clearly in a brochure put out by DOC at Arthur's Pass. The day turned out gloriously hot. We arrived on top of the pass around midday. It is a wonderful spot, with Lake Browning a must for Teresa and her cronies. Down the other side of the pass, you carefully make your way down some rock bluffs and then it is a scree run down to the Wilberforce River. I do not recommend going up the other way, it would be a bit of a grunt, also in winter, I can imagine avalanches tearing down the pass. We then made our way to Park Morpeth Hut which lies where the Cronin River meets up with the Wilberforce. The hut is a dump, so we camped near the Cronin River.



The next morning, up bright and early and away by 7.30 am as the weather was supposed to change later in the day. Going up the Cronin was a pleasant rock scramble. The Whitehorn Pass

itself is pretty straight forward, except you must keep to the true left, well away from the Cronin Icefall as chunks of ice drop off it every few minutes or so.

Once on Whitehorn Pass we then dropped down to Harmon Pass via a snowfield. Care must be taken due to schrunds. It took about 3/4 hour to reach Ariels Tarns, where we lunched.

Another good bathing spot for Teresa. It was then another five minutes to the Pass and then we dropped down to the Talpiot Creek or in my eyes "Hells Creek". It is a narrow gorgy creek that would be perfectly okay later in summer, but we had to cross ice bridges which covered the river and what little space there was between the bluffs and river. The ice was terribly thin in parts and the drop to the river was not pleasant.

After two hours of this we then met up with the White River. From there we turned left and headed to Carrington Hut, a huge 40 bunk hut.

The next day was an enforced rest due to horrendous weather. However, the following day dawned fine. The route out involved following the Waimakariri out to Bealey on the Arthur's Pass Road. Unfortunately, the river was in flood, so we had to take the longer and grovelly route. We reached the road end at about 4pm and then strolled down to the Bealey Pub where we spent the night. A great way to end an excellent trip.

Sue and John Robinson

THE BURNS TRACK (A DAY TRIP WITH A DIFFERENCE)

February 7, 1993

Author: Sue Williams

Published in Bulletin 518, March 1993

Thirteen 'easy' walkers turned up on Sunday to tackle the Burns Track. Turn left at the top of the motorway and drive down the road until you cross a small bridge. The track starts with an encouraging sign saying 'no shooting'.

The first part of the track follows a grassed 4WD track (following a water pipe line). You have to keep your eyes peeled for a small sign saying Burns Track and then you head up through the bush. Very soon you reach familiar Silver Peaks scenery, with Burns Saddle in view.

We climbed up to the top of Swampy for lunch with a view and then headed back down to the cars via the Leith Saddle track. I was interested to see how far the board-walking had got (Conservation Corps) up through the mud. There was lots of fun watching people trying to avoid the mud. I didn't even try - plodding straight through is the easiest way. We met several day walkers on the boardwalk part of the track who looked suitably horrified to see how high the mud was on our legs.



Mopanui and Mt Cargill from the Leith Saddle Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The Conservation Corps have done heaps of work on this track, but still have a long way to go.

Thanks to Jonette (trip leader) who did an after-work jaunt around the track checking for wild animals and quicksand before Sunday.

Sue Williams for the 13 others.

THE CARRICK RANGE

Date not recorded

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

Monday morning up in Central Otago and no fruit picking today as the fruit is not quite ripe enough. So I decided not to waste the day and I got onto my mountain bike and headed up behind Bannockburn onto the Carrick Range.

The grind up was steep, often rough and quite bouldery. In places I had to walk which gave me a chance to catch my breath and the view, looking down into the Clutha Valley and Cromwell township. Lake Dunstan stands out for miles as it nears completion with only two more fills. The Pisa Range dominates the view to the right.



Young Australian Water Wheel, Carrick Range (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The Carrick Range itself is almost 5000ft and is still, today, one of our forgotten goldfields. It rises with rounded contours and is a continuation of the Garvies and Old Man Ranges. It was one of the earliest gold fields and reached its height of prosperity about 1870. Carricktown was quite a thriving small town with quite a few businesses below the mines. Now all that is left are a few fallen down stone buildings and an old water race which used to power a huge water wheel and several stamping batteries.

It is an area that is easily accessible by foot or bike. I enjoyed my ride back down the hill.

Michelle Williams

A NIGHT IN KEA BASIN

Date: November 7-8, 1992

Author: Neville Mulholland

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

I can't remember whether it was fine or overcast when we left the Clubrooms on Friday night, but the weather forecast wasn't too good as far as weather goes. By the time we reached Queenstown we were able to see clear starry skies all around. We camped on Friday night at Moke Lake - about fifteen minutes out of Queenstown on the way to Glenorchy. Moke Lake is a nice place to camp, with beautiful lake scenery and good running water supply. However, campers using fly sheets should be careful where they pitch camp as large farm land animals also use this area for their business.

Saturday morning we drove to Glenorchy to sign in at the DOC office before driving to the Rees Valley car park where we exchanged wheels for legs and soft comfortable mattresses for heavy less comfortable packs and headed off on our journey up the Rees Valley. Naturally it was a scorcher of a day so of course we all (!) donned sunblock and sun-hats and sunshades and followed the four wheel drive track up the valley, passing on the way, Arthur's Creek Hut and encountering our first wee river crossing. Many methods of crossing this water course were exhibited ranging from the conventional 'blat straight across' method, to the slightly orthodox 'two feet and one arm' method (also known as the 'oops I fell over' method) demonstrated by Kim.



Kea Basin, perched below Mt Earnslaw, Rees Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We stopped for lunch at 25 Mile (40 km) Hut where we had time to go to sleep in the sun - since it was such a nice day. After lunch (about 2.30 pm) we recrossed the Rees River to the track up to Kea Basin and followed the zig-zag track up the hill, stopping occasionally to push big trees over, and admire the views.

About an hour and a half after leaving the valley floor we reached Kea Basin to find the Bivy Rock had been besieged by sixteen Taieri High School children, we weren't surprised to see them there as we had read about them in the intentions book in Glenorchy. We passed on by the Bivy Rock and camped right up in the head of the basin on some nice grassy slopes (on the flat bits of course!).

We had dinner and indulged in a few (but not too many) alcoholic beverages while taking in the fresh, clean, cool night air. We retired to our sleeping bags reasonably early to get a good night's sleep.

Next morning we woke to skies which were slightly foggy. This fog soon cleared and we were again able to have brekky in the warm sunshine. After breakfast we packed up our gear and wandered back down the mountainside to the valley floor. On the way down we took a shortcut to avoid the zig-zags and ended up doing a wee bit of bush bashing for a change. We had lunch at the base of Lennox Falls where Greg did his 'Conan the Barbarian' impersonations for the onlookers and photographers.

Lunch was soon over for another day so we wandered back down the valley and out to the car park. A quick change at the van and a cool refreshing can of Mr. Speight's ale and we were on the road.

The trip back to Dunedin was relatively uneventful, although we did have to stop and fix a puncture on the Glenorchy Road. With a highly efficient pit crew on hand we were back on the road again within about 15 minutes. A quick comfortable ride back to Dunedin, and we were home at the not too unreasonable time of about 10 pm.

In all, it was a very enjoyable weekend with great company. Thanks Guys!

Neville for Greg, Kim and Craig.

A DAY IN THE SUN

February 28, 1993

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

Sunday, February 28 and the day dawned clear, a breeze picked up throughout the morning but at Pipikaretu Beach the wind was barely noticeable.

It was here that the club picnic was held and with about 20 people plus children turning up, the day was enjoyed by all. While the children played in the water's edge, a game of beach volleyball was started. This continued most of the day and while there may be some debate as to which team won, I can easily say my team did!! (well, I am the editor after all, and can write just about anything)



Otago Tramping Club Picnic, Pipikaretu Beach, January 28, 1951 (PHOTO OTMC Archives)

It was encouraging to see members who, for various other reasons, haven't got the time to be actively involved in the club come along. (It just goes to show people do read the Bulletin). The day ended around 5 pm and I think I can safely say those who turned up had a good time, in the sun at Pipikaretu Beach.

P.S. The highlight would have been seeing two penguins come up the beach and watch them dry before disappearing again.

Hope to see you all there next year!!

Debbie Pettinger

SILVER PEAKS IN THE MIST

February 20-21, 1993

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 506, February 1992

Saturday morning at Hightop, and a keen party of four were chomping at the bit, ready to set off on an expedition into the Silver Peaks, well maybe not quite like that but they were keen!

It took a look at the map and compass to confirm that the sign was pointing in the right direction and off we headed towards Green Hut site. A couple of practice sessions with the compass along the way (hampered only slightly by the wind) and it wasn't long till we arrived at Green Hut Site. It was time for a few photos of 'Look mum - I'm in Green Hut (only you can't see it!!)' and before I knew it my party was off again. Upon reaching Green Ridge, the wind really hit us, and continued to buffet us around, most of the day. The climb to Pulpit Rock seemed to take ages, as the wind continued to howl around us. It is times like this I am glad of my pack!



**Multiple ridges from the top of the Silver Peaks – right through to Mt Charles on the Otago Peninsula
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

We ignored the last little bit to the top of Pulpit Rock because of the wind and continued around to the top of the Devil's Staircase. Along the way we found a sheltered spot and had a unanimous vote to stop for lunch. While we were enjoying our break, the mist started to roll in, cutting off any view we had towards Waitati. As things cooled down, we packed up and headed

off towards the Staircase, which kept disappearing on us. We didn't hang around long once there and headed straight down.

Once out of the wind, we took our time, enjoying the view down the valley to Jubilee Hut nestled at the base of the hills. Even with a leisurely break halfway down, we still arrived reasonably early and of course picked out the best campsite and found the best rocks to hold down the fly.

As we were relaxing and enjoying the peace another noisy party arrived, invading our campsite and pitched their fly next to ours. It didn't take long before the other parties arrived and everyone settled down to an enjoyable evening, comparing who had the best dinner, etc. It was a lovely, calm night with a few of us electing to bivvy out.

Next morning and after a sort of lie in, we were up and getting ready to head away. First we called in to Jubilee Hut, to sign the hut book then straight up behind the hut. As we climbed higher the view down the valley slowly disappeared into the mist and still we climbed. We finally reached the top, much to my party's relief and then it was down the 4WD track on our way to ABC Cave. The mist was really closing in so we didn't get to see much as we wandered along. We were broken out of reverie by a party yelling at us from the cave, so we turned and climbed up to where they were yelling from. Luckily, we arrived at the right time - just as the billy was boiling! A much-deserved rest and it was off to the Gap. As we arrived, the mist lifted a bit and we could see something of the surrounding land, although not enough to see Yellow Hut. Another unanimous vote and a lunch stop at the Gap was in order.

Once we were ready to head off, the mist closed in again, nothing could be seen as we wandered down Yellow Ridge and were welcomed by another boiling billy at Yellow Hut again! (Good planning, I must say!) It was a short chat to Peter Mason who was doing some hut repairs before plunging down the track to the river and a mad rush up to the waiting cars at the top.

Debbie Pettinger for Hamish, Linda and Nicki

FIVE PASSES IN FOUR AND A HALF DAYS

February 1993

Author: Shirley McQueen

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

The cold grey damp weather continued into February, and I became increasingly desperate for some sunshine and fresh mountain air. So, the two of us set out from the Routeburn, over Sugarloaf Pass from the lower Routeburn. The weather was improving, judging by the comments about rain earlier in the day from people struggling up the hill from the other side. For once we struck it lucky, and experienced sunshine every day. Raincoats were not used once.



Rockburn Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

From the first camp beside the Rockburn, near the Sugarloaf Pass track, we travelled up the valley and over Park Pass. The track leading into the bush on the Hidden Falls side of the pass was difficult to find, as it is marked by one cairn that is obscured by the trees (to find it, veer right from the low point below the saddle). It is wise to follow the track, as it follows a leading ridge with steep drops in places. The track is blazed with old fashioned bark cuts, and three red markers at the bottom, near Hidden Falls Stream. We soon reached the stream and felt that we had done enough for that day, and so camped at the first inviting grassy patch, about ten minutes upstream. The only drawback was the abundant crop of biddy bids. A word of warning to those unlucky enough to answer calls of nature in the dark!! Picking them off socks and other garments kept us amused for hours.

Next day we continued upstream, generally keeping close to the river on the true left bank, until crossing onto the big slip from the Bryneira Range (well-marked with cairns). Beyond this are very pleasant gentle slopes of tussock and grass, with excellent views of the Livingstone fault, cutting through the mountainside. The rocks to the west of the fault are rust red with no vegetation on them, in contrast to the grey schist to the east, where tussock and beech forest grow. To the south the fault can be clearly seen where it passes through North Col.

After a bath in the last pool of Hidden Falls stream, followed by a leisurely lunch drying out and warming up, we wandered onto Cow Saddle. This is a vast open, almost flat expanse of tussock. From here we contemplated the route to Fiery Col with dismay. It was uphill all the way, and too early in the day to put it off for tomorrow. It was a slog but finding a route through ravines cut by streams in the red ultramafic rock, and then climbing up through little red bluffs was interesting, and the firm snow on the last slope was soft enough for step kicking. The view along the Livingstone fault, which passes through Fiery Col, made the effort worthwhile. To the north you can see the fault continuing through Four Brothers Pass beyond the Olivine Ledge, as well as the southern peaks off the Olivine Ice Plateau. The rocks are quite shattered on the Col, presumably by the movement along the fault.



Heading towards Fiery Col from the Olivine Ledge (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

From the Col. we could see a good campsite at the head of the Fiery Stream ravine. It turned out to be a charming place, complete with a waterfall, bubbling stream and a pair of friendly rock wrens. The Olivine Ledge was easily reached from here the next morning, and we had a view out to Big Bay revealing threatening cloud cover over the sea. Our amble along the ledge was interrupted by another nasty ravine, which we crossed in a slightly hairy place. I understand that there is a better route closer to the foot of the hill. At the end of the ledge the

official route is to cross the stream draining Fohn Lakes, and follow up the true right bank. We did not go this way, but followed the true left bank, up tussock and rock ledges. Above the gorge a steep but safe tussock slope drops to an easy ford. This turned out to be a good shortcut. A trip to Fohn Lakes was abandoned in favour of lunch and a sunbathe. The smoked oysters were delicious.



Looking towards Sunset Peak and Fohn Lakes from Fohn Saddle (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

More adventurous route finding on the way down from Fohn Saddle to the Beansburn - we made a beeline for the rock bivy and ended up on some steep slopes above the river, but there were plenty of bushes to hold onto. After a quiet night at the Beansburn rock biv., we had an endurance exercise on the last day. It was a long march down the Beansburn, and along the Dart, with the worst part at the end between the Rockburn and Routeburn. By this stage we were tired and dehydrated and kept thinking about the Glenorchy Pub and a nice cool beer.

Shirley McQueen

MISTAKE CREEK – HUT CREEK

Date not recorded

Author: Elspeth Gold

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

11 experienced OTMC members decided to go bush for the weekend, a van was hired and parties arranged. We got away from Dunedin about 5.30pm on Friday night. Nothing was a problem until we got to Gore when it was realised that the poles and pegs for one of the Olympus tents were still in Dunedin. Pegs were bought in Gore and much discussion was had over what we could use as poles.



Mistake Creek, Earl Mountains (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We set up camp at Smithies, about 5 kms away from the start of the track. Next morning it was realised that the fuel bottle for the MSR was sitting back in Dunedin as was the coffee, soup and there was only one map between the 11 of us. A bit of experience goes a long way aye!

Beautiful weather all weekend and two people decided to stay on the Mistake Creek side of the pass. One with an exceptionally sore Achilles tendon and the other for company. We got two bivy bags, a metal plate to cook on, half our party's food and a WHOLE cheesecake, just in case we couldn't manage to cook. We spent the afternoon getting into some serious sunbathing and solitude. Much gossip around the campfire beneath a full moon was the order of the evening.

We awoke to very cold weather and NO sandflies, breakfast was left over cheesecake and we took a quiet stroll out to meet the others at the van. A cruisy weekend in great company

Elspeth Gold

BUSHCRAFT '93 RIVERCROSSING

March 7, 1993

Author: Peter Aitcheson

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

A nice day dawned and I was met with all the smiling faces of Bushcraft at Outram Glen. All fresh after a weekend off and before that a beautiful weekend in the Silver Peaks playground.

We were all issued with a manuka pole, enough to build a bridge across the river if we had wanted. Then it was a quick run through with the flip chart before heading off up the track to warm up our bodies. First stop, Antony inspected the river and found a safe crossing point with good entry and exit points. We all watched as Antony crossed first, demonstrating the individual method with the pole. With Rhonda and Neville positioned downstream to catch any floating bodies, we all followed. Next was Rhonda's demonstration on the NEW two-piece rivercrossing pole with dry rot - handy hint; not good to use.



OTMC Bushcraft River Crossing – Taieri River (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

A quick walk upstream to find the next deep dark hole with a safe exit point and then a leisurely lunch in the sun. Antony took the first expedition into the hole full of slippery rocks using the mutual support method with pole. They safely made it across and the next wave was leader and water baby Debbie. Debbie said "More to the left, it's not so deep". Their next step found an even deeper hole! Mutual Support pulled Hamish, Brit, Stephanie and Jeanette deeper into the cold water, right up to armpit level, but all still smiled.

Eventually after reaching both sides a number of times after trying all methods it was time to watch Antony, Andrew and Trevor demonstrate pack floatation. A brisk walk back to the car park and into warm clothes with everyone feeling more confident in rivercrossing.

A good day had by all and thanks to all the Bushcraft leaders.

Peter Aitcheson

BUSHCRAFT 1993

February – March 1993

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

Thirteen participants in Bushcraft 1993 have just completed this year's course, and now is a good time to reflect on this year's somewhat unusual course. The difference this year is that there were 13 participants rather than the 50 plus we had got used to.

Obviously there will be many reasons why the low number, but I think two of the main reasons were lack of extra money to afford courses of this nature and the market being satisfied by other courses on offer (WEA, MSC, Schools, etc.)



Bushcraft Tirohanga Practical Map & Compass Exercise (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Although there were only thirteen people, this year's course was a total success making me proud of the way everything and everyone molded together. Having such a small group made the course much more informal, which was very apparent at Tirohanga, and the rapport between instructor and pupil was excellent. There were no problems as in previous years where instructors stuck together, etc.

The course was much the same as previous years, with the only exception with fire lighting being dropped. The number of instructors was limited to four instructors each weekend, with guest speakers as required. We carpooled instead of hiring buses, and other financial costs

were economised. In a way the small number was good as it proves the OTMC can continue to run Bushcraft courses for the public ranging from ten people up to 60.



Yellow Hut, OTMC Bushcraft Silver Peaks Weekend (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

I have enjoyed being part of Bushcraft '93 and hope you enjoy the trip reports from the course. Lastly, I must thank the course instructors Doug, Teresa and Debbie for Tirohanga, Debbie, Peter O and Neville for Silver Peaks and all those who helped and supported the course. See you all next year!!

Antony Pettinger, Course Director

TOPPING TAPPIE (MT. TAPUAE-O-UENUKU)

January 1993

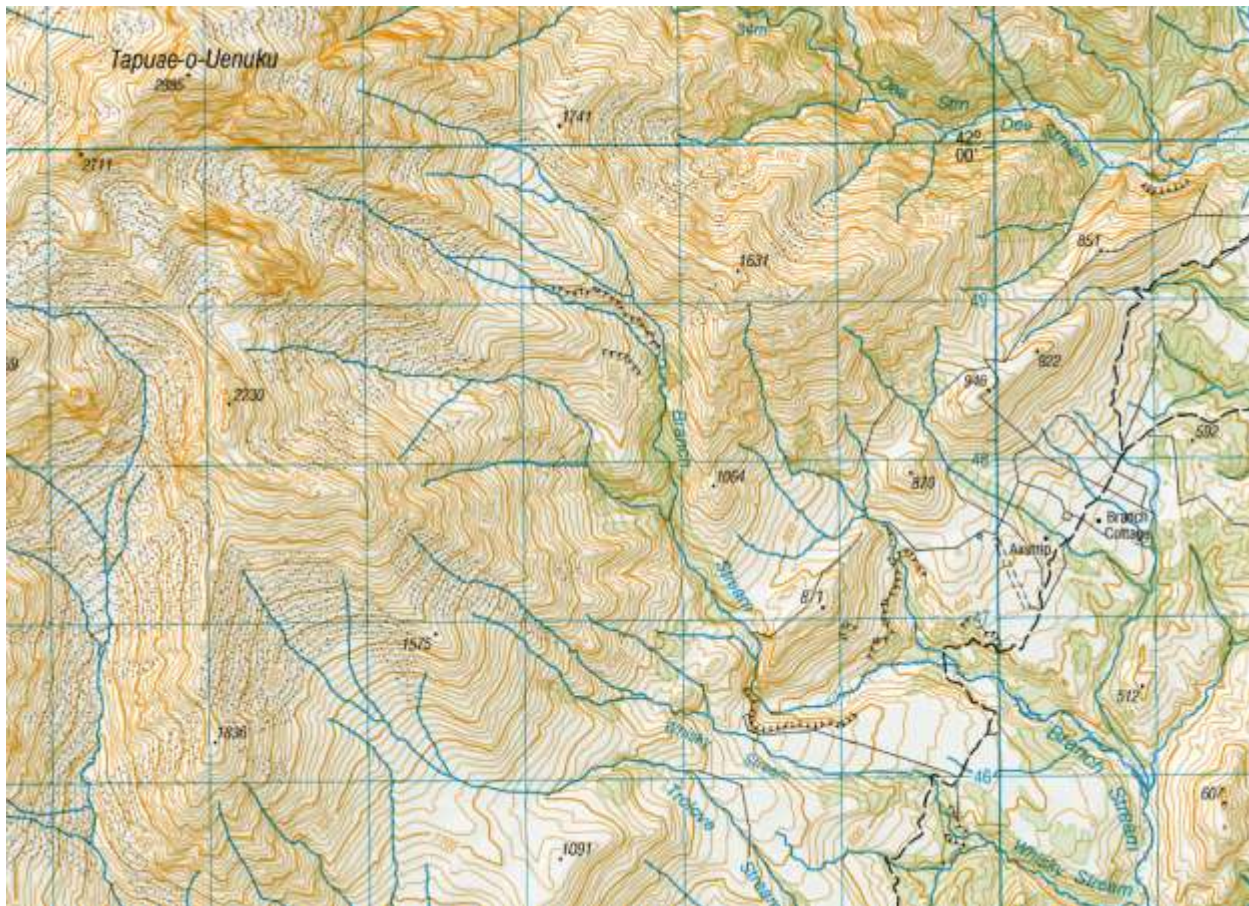
Author: John Galloway

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

Mt. Tapuae-o-Uenuku, or Tappie, as it is known to those of us of intimate acquaintance who have left skin on its rocks, stands 2885 metres tall (9467 ft). It is exceeded in height only by Mt's Cook, Tasman, Sefton and a few neighbouring peaks, next is Aspiring, then Tapuae-o-Uenuku. As you can't leave your vehicle in the morning, go to the summit of any of the higher mountains and return to your vehicle on the same day, Tappie, from the Clarence, is the highest day-walk in the land.

As we rafted down the Clarence, we often glimpsed Tappie. When we got out of the river at the Clarence Bridge, the weather was glorious. I had an ice axe and crampons, and it wasn't too far back in for a quick walk up Tappie, before motoring home.

The sensible way would have been to drive north to Seddon, then up the Awatere Valley to the Hodder River and then a two-day tramp, with huts, up the mountain from the north. However, I reckoned on getting to the southern base of the mountain via Bluff Station on Friday evening, up and down the mountain on Saturday and drive home to Waiholā on Sunday.



Richard Murray of Bluff Station was very helpful giving good directions from aerial photos. Fifty kms of station road, numerous fords, two of which could convert a small car into a raft, but the Crumpmobile coped - and the gates!! 22 closed. Two stops at each gate to open and close (because I was on my own), 44 stops each way; 88 gate stops going in and back out!

Because of good directions I made steady progress initially, three goats guided me through lower sharp rock ridges. All the way up the rock was chunky, but not very stable; wobbled underfoot and had grips come off. As if to emphasise this instability, while plodding and puffing upwards on this beautiful calm day there was suddenly a loud banging and crashing directly above me. I looked up to see a rock, about the size and shape of a household appliance (oven range or washing machine) fully air-borne; and I was right in its flight path. I looked around for something to shelter me, saw nothing, looked up the mountain to get another line on where it was coming and mercifully all was still. Later I found it had come off bluffs high on the mountain, slid a long way down the show, hit rock scree, bounced about and presumably lodged in a less steep place. A moment of total terror!

By noon I reckoned I had done about 6000 ft (started at 1900) so it was around 8000 feet, with 1500 to go; but worryingly the scenery was getting much more alpine. There is a vast snow filled basin, encircled by high rock walls, with only one chute that leads up to a gently sloping seaward facing shoulder. I wasted a lot of time and energy, exploring in the wrong places; and when I found it, I was only able to get up the correct route because the snow was easy to kick steps in, if frozen it would have been too steep and high for a geriatric flat land tramper. After that it was easy to the top, photographing my pack propped against the peg on the summit, the 360 degrees photo sequence, studying the vast view; and horrors!! It is after 4 pm and I still have to get down!

Well, I did stumble into my tent, by the truck, in the moonlight, 16 hours, 22 minutes after leaving in the morning. The same time as for the OTMC marathon, but I would give Tappie a higher gut-busting rating. There is no soft snow and wobbly rocks in the Silver Peaks in February. Two-day trips aggregating 32 hours 40 minutes - I am only going "fossicking" from now on!!

John Galloway

WALK WEEK TRIP

March 20, 1993

Author: Elspeth Gold

Published in Bulletin 519, April 1993

I volunteered to lead the OTMC walk week trip on Saturday afternoon up Peg 41 to the Soldiers Monument then back to the cars via Centre Road.

Even though the weather was cold, and rain threatened there were still 12 people who turned up. Everyone admired the scenery and enjoyed their walk. All were enthusiastic about the concept of walk week, and all were thrilled such a network of tracks existed on the Otago peninsula.

If anyone in the club hasn't walked Peg 41 you should do so!

It was put in by the Peninsula Walkers with financial assistance from the Heart Foundation and is well maintained and easily graded with superb views. Access to the Soldiers Monument is now via Centre Road only.

Elspeth Gold



Soldier's Monument, Otago Peninsula (PHOTO Debbie Pettinger)

CAPLES APPRECIATION SOCIETY

February 26-28, 1993

Author: Elspeth Gold

Published in Bulletin 520, May 1993

The mission we chose to accept was to introduce some novices to the joys of tramping and where else to take them, but to the magnificent Caples Valley, and to show them how it is done in true style and so a gourmet menu was organised for the weekend.

Nine of us headed off on Friday morning to Kelvin Heights, where we caught the water taxi to the Greenstone Wharf. The lake was like a mirror so there was no danger of losing our breakfast. Once across the other side we walked along the road and lunched at the track beginning. A slow amble up the Caples Valley enjoying the scenery was next on the agenda. We kept walking until just before the less experienced people lost their sense of humour. Found a wonderful campsite and set up home for the night.



Caples Valley, looking upstream from Mid-Caples towards Kay Creek (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Rain forced us to bed at about 10 pm. We awoke to rain and copious amounts of sandflies on Saturday and crawled under the trees to have breakfast. A couple of people decided to head for McKellar Saddle while the rest huddled under the trees beside a fire. When the rain reached a torrent and it was no longer dryer under the trees than out, we packed up and headed back to the Mid-Caples Hut. We arrived just as the weather broke and fine periods amid torrential rain was the order for the rest of the day.

Shortly after we reached the hut four people arrived from Queenstown. A Caples Appreciation Society with a difference. Two gentlemen (lawyers) were entertaining two ladies in true style. My impression was that they were somewhat peeved to find so many people in the hut. But they soon recovered from their disappointment and were entertaining (if somewhat loud) company. We retired to much singing from the Queenstown party, with the amount of alcohol they consumed - no one was surprised they thought they were in fine voice.



Caples Valley, near the Greenstone confluence (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Everyone achieved what they wanted in the weekend, relaxing, a break from the rat race and an introduction to the finer side of tramping.

Menu's for the weekend:-

FI'S TEAM:

Breakfast- Muesli, toast and fruit

Tea 1: Biscuits & cheese

Soup & Papads

Lamb & bean chili with corn chips American brownie and cream coffee & liqueur

Tea 2: Biscuits & pate

Soup & Papads

Tuna Feticcini

Cheesecake

Coffee & Liqueur

ELSPETH'S TEAM:

Breakfast: Croissants filled with Bacon, pineapple and cheese gently heated through, and coffee.

Tea 1: Biscuits & Cheese
Soup & Papads
Sweet & sour with noodles
Brandy cups filled with Chocolate Mousse & fruit
Coffee & Liqueur

Tea 2: Biscuits & Cheese
Soup & Papads
Spinach & Feta cheese tortellini
Brandy log
Coffee & Liqueur

THE QUEENSTOWN TEAM:

Breakfast: Bacon, eggs & toast.

Tea: Biscuits & Cheese with a suitable wine
Soup with a suitable wine
Steak, mushrooms, candied carrots, potatoes and peas with several bottles of suitable wine
Plum Pud with custard & cream with a suitable wine
A line bottle of champagne to finish
Port & Coffee and much singing.

The Queenstown team made such a superb effort they were invited to our Mid-Winter Wine & Dine Competition.

It was a quiet stroll out to meet the boat. The lake was fairly rough, so it made for an eventful trip back.

Pete and Andrew faxed the two young ladies from Queenstown on Monday, saying we had been contacted by Mountain Scene for comment as to how two leading lawyers had spent their weekend, we had no comment but could supply them with photos if they wanted.

All in all a fine weekend, and a tramp with a difference.

Elsbeth for Fi, Mike, Rachel, Andrew, Jim, Brigitte, Lynne and Peter.

SKIPPERS ROAD ON TWO WHEELS

Date not recorded

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 520, May 1993

At Skippers Saddle I left my car and headed down Long Gully on my mountain bike. The skies were clear, and the road was busy with vehicles full of tourists.

The ride down was exciting as my body was thrown about over the corrugations, down past Hells Gate and Castle Rock to the old Hotel remains. The road then continued on up beside the Shotover River, past Pinchers Bluff and the Devils Elbow down to the junction of Deep Creek and the main Shotover River. Here rafts full of tourists were being loaded and jet boats were creating plenty of noise further upstream.



Skippers Schoolhouse (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

I made my way further on following the road as it wound its way up and down, in and out of gully's. The scenery was superb with golden tussock hills and poplars in their autumn colours. From the road I looked up the interesting stony creek valley to Mt. Butement (6900 ft) on the Richardson Mountains. Here at this viewpoint some history was given of its gold findings and a Chinese man who came to make his riches. The first gold was discovered in 1862.

Eventually I made it to the Skippers Bridge which was first built in 1866. Nowadays it is another tourist attraction as people take a \$145 leap from the bridge on a bungy. Up through forest to Burkes Terrace which was the main settlement for this area and at the turn of the century it

had a population of 700. From Burkes terrace it is an excellent weekend walk up the Skippers Creek into Bullendale or the historic site of the-first hydro-electric scheme in New Zealand. I have done this weekend trip twice and it is well worth it, especially if you have Bruce Mason along to help tell the history of the area as I did.

Around at Mt. Aurum Station there is an interesting display, giving history in all aspects of the area. Lunch was then had in the sunshine before the hot slog back. This is an area which is best seen by bike up to Skippers Bridge, and highly recommended for moderate fitness riders over an easy day trip with lots of exploring.

Michelle Williams

DRAGONFLY PEAK

March 27-28, 1993

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 520, May 1993

What an enjoyable way to begin the weekend, as we left Cameron Flat and began our journey up the East Matukituki. It was early morning with a heavy dew as we took our boots off and waded across the West Matukituki River. Feet felt dead as we exited the other side and put on lovely dry boots! Sharon led the way, and it was an enjoyable walk up to Junction Flat for lunch in the sun. We crossed the river again and began our climb up above the bush line. Here we branched off, leaving the trail which descends back through bush towards Ruth Flat.

At a plod we climbed up through quite steep scrub and tussock, often stopping to enjoy the views down the valley and up into Aspiring Flats.

Camp was set up around 4600 feet in a basin sheltered from the wind. Up went Sharon's complete tent while Russell and I pitched only a Hallmark tent fly. While Sue and Sharon put J.R. on a diet for the weekend by forgetting some of the main ingredients such as rice and instant pudding, Russell and I stuffed ourselves silly and as the rain came, we crept into the little fly and continued overeating.



Russell Godfrey on Dragonfly Peak, March 28, 1993 (PHOTO Michelle Williams)

The night was long with strong cold winds blowing about our heads,

Russell's alarm went off at 5.15 am then mine at 5.30 am and another at 5.46 am. It was time to get a move on and climb Dragonfly. We could still hear the rain on the fly so we opted not to hang around and would head out early. Later on at 7.30am and I looked out from underneath the fly, clear patches of sky and fresh snow covered the peaks including Dragonfly and down into the Albert Burn Saddle (5500 ft).

We had breakfast and within that time the skies cleared more, and we felt keen to give Dragonfly a try. By 8.00 am we were away and there was a strong fresh wind as we followed a well formed track from the spur up into the head of the Hester Pinney Creek and onto Albert Bum Saddle. We carried on up the North Ridge through straight forward tussock and rocks, behind down on the spur three dark figures followed. We reached the summit at 9.45 am. The views were fantastic as the clouds dispersed and we were given fine views down to the Kitchener River and Aspiring Flats, high up to the Glacier Dome and upper Volta Glacier, unfortunately Aspiring was still under heavy cloud.

As we admired the views and took photos, we watched the rain flood down the West Matukituki and head our way. We left the summit and descended quickly, meeting Sue, J.R. and Sharon heading up. A quick chat before they carried on trying to beat the weather.

Back at camp we packed up quickly, bitter winds and snowflakes followed us down into the bush, where lunch was had. Heading out from Junction Flat was changeable, as the weather came and passed, leaving beautiful snow coated peaks in its path.

Michelle Williams for those other four keen bods, Sue, J.R, Sharon and Russell

THE DUSKY TRACK

February 1993

Author: Doug Forrester

Published in Bulletin 520, May 1993

Hoop de do, what a trip, I can never understand why people want to tramp in the rain, you get WET then feel miserable, then the cold sets in and the views are cancelled out, all in all the trip becomes a bit of a pain. No thanks, not for us!

We had a glorious five days on the Dusky Track and it was magic, loved every minute of it. About September '92 Sharon suggested a trip into the Red Hills in the Autumn, a great idea I agreed so roll on Autumn. A few complications arose and we had to settle for the Dusky Track as an off-course substitute, a good decision.

A real keen tramper in Bruce Glasier (a 1990 Bushcraft recruit), completed the party and one evening for a prep talk with a lot of yes's and minimum of no's so it was all go. Sharon takes care of the bookings at Tuatapere and at 6 pm on Friday night we are off on a seven-day Dusky Trip. Talk about go! We passengers got a real thrill on the occasions we touched the asphalt, some silly bugger suggests we shoot off the beaten track at Clinton and shoot down the back way, no one's been that way and shortly the doubts start to surface, where do we come out, do we have to swim the Mataura. So out comes the maps.

A couple of members in the party had a slice of humble pie in Mataura. Fish & Chips and humble pie, we are off across Southland to the Sausage capital on a magic night with the sun setting in golden yellow tones, someone suggested it was caused by some clown blowing up a mountain. Sausagetown at 10 pm, foo wee, hope that's not the pace for the week.

A friendly welcome by one of the local business men shows that a sausage diet does wonders. There's a truckload on the way to the Social Welfare staff in Dunedin. We settle for the Tuatapere domain and fair go three huskies settling in for the night would have been embarrassed, this'll do, no it won't, yes it will!

The jet boat up Lake Hauroko in calm and sunny conditions sure set the standard of the trip. By the way the boat tours owners, Helen and Val McKay are quite happy to take the car from Tuatapere to Manapouri at no charge, very kind and further examples of the results of a sausage diet.

The first day's tramp ended with a swim in the Hauroko Burn near the hut, it was an easy day and with our bathing suits draped over a matagouri bush drying out in the hot sun we washed our clothes for the next day. No smelly dirty gear for this trio. It's called the clean and green image.

Day two, this is the magic day on the Dusky, soon above bushline, great views, sunny and hot, and three neat little lakes. So, it's through Ferkert Pass (I would like to find out more about this naming) [I bet you would Doug - Ed] and there is Lake Laffy and Lake Roe Hut, a great spot and ideal for lunch. Left our packs at the hut and it's 20 minutes up to Lake Roe, beautifully set

amongst granite outcrops. Believe it or not, there sitting on a rock just out of the water's edge was the Lake Roe mermaid, I was impressed, Sharon was even more interested than I was!



Lake Roe Hut, Pleasant Range, Dusky Track, February 1993
(photo: Doug Forrester Collection)

Back down at the hut and the topic was compasses as the two of them needed some revision, I decided to give them both a refresher course. From A to B, then a back bearing, so far so good, now we'll identify a distant object so I made one slight mistake, do they call me Dougie the compass man, no way - I was totally rubbished, had to live with it for days [What else do you expect Dougie - Ed] These young people just don't understand, and so it is time to leave this magic spot, if you are planning a Dusky trip and it is good weather this would be a great rest day. Twenty minutes and we are at Lake Horizon, another gem, with spectacular views of Dusky Sound. We wander along the tops of the Pleasant Range and we're really burning up but loving it! Tarns everywhere. We start going downhill off the Pleasant Range and spy a larger than average tarn, ten minutes before bushline. This was our Shangri-La. 5 pm, we had a swim in warm water, and with our bathing suits draped over a matagouri bush drying out in the hot sun, we washed our clothes ready for the next day, no smelly dirty gear for this trio. Pitched our fly, lay in the sun, had tea, a calm beautiful evening, watched the sun set down the mouth of Dusky Sound, got a fire going, sat around and talked, TOP company, TOP day and so ended one of the nicest days tramping I have done. I'll remember it for a long time, thanks team.

It's 7.15 am and we are off, Supper Cove on Dusky Sound, here we come, all we've heard is how good the fishing is. In the bush now and it's incredibly hot, it's pouring out of us, West Coast temperatures eh? We are looking at these mud patches on the track and hell's teeth, thank god, it's been fine for 15 days. We are burnt out by the time we get to Supper Cove hut.

A swim in the warm waters of Dusky Sound does wonders, and with our bathing suits draped over a Matagouri bush drying out in the hot sun, we washed our clothes ready for the next day, no smelly dirty gear for this trio, and so it's fishing time, well the enthusiasm was electric. It's going to be fish for tea and there by gaining a spare meal in case things went wrong. The three of us are in the boat and there's hooks everywhere. We had macaroni for tea, one of my meals and I had slightly underdone the quantity, another rubbishing, [You should be used to that by now Doug - Ed], but you should have seen four eyes bulge when I fronted up with half a saucepan full of fresh lettuce, mushrooms, tomatoes, courgettes, carrots, the lot and as fresh as. Two more slices of humble pie thanks, starting to enjoy this!



Pleasant Range campsite, Dusky Track, February 1993
(photo: Doug Forrester Collection)

Next day at Supper Cove hut is our rest day and the sun is there again, we have a morning swim in the sound and - well you know the drill by now. It's now fishing time again, we fished and we fished and we fished, it's about now I want to wrap this bloody line and hooks around the dreamer we meet on the track who said 'You've got to hide while you're baiting the hook!' Suddenly Brucie boy catches a fish, well the excitement is overwhelming, he's out with the knife and gutting it until 6 inch spotty decides this is no place for him, so readers, picture Bruce juggling a slimy spotty while trying to keep his balance on the edge of an aluminum dingy, he lost. Spotty drifts into the deep and Sharon and I get a bit concerned because we don't know for sure whether Bruce is going after it or ending it all. What an act, wonder what he does for encores! We had rice for tea. The rest day was terrific, with a couple of swims, and the hut to ourselves was a real luxury, we felt great. Although one thing, I was very disappointed, I thought it was woman's work to do the cooking and also my shorts split up the seam at the back . . . oh ... I was so embarrassed, isn't that woman's work also? [Careful Doug! Ed]?

I was given the message, sad thing this changing world. Next day is day five and it's time to retrace our steps for a few hours, but because of a shitty bit of track decided to make use of low tide and cross the tidal flats, one channel is up to our shoulders so the packs are above our heads, Sharon swims it and we get it on film, great entertainment, away we go, a bit of cloud

about today, back past Loch Maree, a bit of danger spot, those god forsaken Namux are pretty thick. There are lots of signs of how bad the track gets with heavy rain, it floods badly. We arrive at Kintail hut at tea time so we have our swim, but this time our bathing suits don't dry on the Matagouri bush because the weather is changing. During the evening we hear this funny sound on the hut roof, can't make it out but decided to wear our parka's next day anyway.

Day six and things don't look so pleasant outside. Away we go in light rain and warm conditions and we are lucky to get views as we climb above bushline and look back. Shortly we are through Centre Pass which is the second time above bushline on the track. Would be great on a good day and then it's down to Upper Spey hut and no swim means the hygiene is starting to collapse. The hut to ourselves again. [You can't complain Doug - You've had it pretty good up to now - Ed]



Wilmot Pass entry / exit to the Dusky Track, February 1993
(photo: Doug Forrester Collection)

Day seven and there is four hours tramping left, still raining, not complaining though because as we tramp along we see signs of what it could be like in heavy rain and I'm very mindful that this section required a bit of swimming for Rhonda, Nev the Social Sec, John the farmer and Co. In no time we are out onto the Wilmot Pass road and it's nearly all over. We joined the tourists for the trip across Manapouri, (a different world) and in the camp at Te Anau for the night, and on the tarseal track home.

A great trip with lots of laughs, lots of memories. Thanks team

Doug Forrester for Sharon St Clair Newman & Bruce Glasier

SKIPPERS CREEK TO MT AURUM BASIN

March 20-21, 1993

Author: Sue Williams

Published in Bulletin 520, May 1993

We started off our trip on a fine Saturday morning at the crack of dawn (actually 11am). An easy stroll down the 4WD track was made more pleasant by plenty of blackberries ripe for the picking. I started counting the river crossings to see if there really were 60 or so. It took about 10 for my boots to get really wet and after that I lost interest. We reached the junction without feeling too hungry and so carried on to have lunch at the Dynamo Hut. On the way we had plenty of strawberries to snack on.



There are huge numbers of weeds in the area, it is really easy to spot the human influence here. I was surprised on the following Monday to see little bunches of marjoram for sale in the supermarket for \$1. It was one of the most common plants we saw, in flower on both sides of the track on the way in!

Dynamo Hut has the remains of the first hydropower system in the country. Powerlines ran over the ridge (quite an incredible feat!) to Bullendale where it ran the gold stamping battery and also for electric lighting for the township. We had a read of the hut book to see when we had last been there. The OTMC ran a trip to this area in 1987, so there is a long list of OTMC members in the book. After lunch we started the long trek to the next hut (actually took about 10 minutes). We then left our gear and headed off up to the Aurum Basin. The route heads up

through open grasslands and eventually joins up with a water race. After the water race enters the gorge, a fairly faint track joins up with it (about 300 yards on) which zigzags up towards the ridge top. We eventually reached the top hut in the Basin. It's quite a well equipped hut, with a little stove, bunks for 2 and even a small pile of firewood. Newspapers glued on the walls were dated 1947. There is another hut about 5 minutes further up, but it appears to have blown (or been knocked) over during the winter.



Archies Hut, Aurum Basin, Skippers Creek Left Branch (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Early the next morning rain started, followed later by hail and snow. However, luckily for us, the snow was not settling. We had planned to walk up to Bullendale, but the cold wind put us off and we set off for the car.

On the way out of the area, we looked across the valley to see the restored Mt. Aurum Station buildings. It is good to see this old building restored before it collapsed and was vandalised out of existence.

Dave and Sue Levick

SAR CALLOUT – 31 MAY, 1993

May 31, 1993

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 521, June 1993

8.00 am: Roger Barrowclough is on the phone 'There is a mountain biker missing overnight - can you be at the police station A.S.A.P' 'Only if I can find a babysitter.'

8.01 am: Get Dad out of bed. "Can you look after Siobhan today?" "When?" "As soon as you can get here".

8.02 am: Ring Roger to say I'll be there. In the meantime he wants six OTMC bods by 9.00 am. 14 calls later and we are set.

8.35 am: The babysitter arrives and I am off.

8.45 am: Stuck in a traffic jam in Dunedin! I don't believe it. Abandon the car and ran to the cop shop.

9.02 am: Start working on a plan. Fortunately, Roger and Brian Benn have some preliminary ideas and the vehicles and manpower are arranged. Mountain bike club guys are scribbling routes on maps, the missing guy's girlfriend is giving us information, teams are arranged, I need someone to bounce ideas off. Ring Ross Cocker.

9.25 am: Brief the team leaders and issue radios.

9.38 am: Team leaders get teams together and start heading away.

9.46 am: We are off to the Bullring in the command truck.

9.55 am: All teams in the field. We are still driving through Halfway Bush.

10.05 am: In position at the Bullring, trying to work out the next line of attack if reconnaissance fails.

10.20 am: Team 5 meet a locked gate where one shouldn't have been. Dispatch Ross with a key that should work.

11.00am: Ross arrives with two tired and muddy mountain bikers. Someone doesn't love the second one - no-one reported him missing. Some trumper with a mean streak had suggested Powder Creek - Racemans- Swampy as a good round trip for mountain bikes. A 2.30 pm start and long periods of bike carrying saw them benighted. Apparently just below bushline. Next morning, not knowing how much further it was (not very, in retrospect) they retraced their steps.

Our search plan would have been quite different had we known there were two of them. As with trampers, the importance of leaving clear intentions has again been highlighted.

Thanks to Arthur & Teresa Blondell, Dave & Sue Levick, Sharon St Clair-Newman and Debbie Pettinger for being the OTMC's contribution to the "front line troops", and Ross for being there (even if he stole the limelight on behalf of the Buller SAR) and my dad for babysitting.

David Barnes First-time field controller (and mightily relieved to get a happy ending)

EASTER ESCAPE (YOUNG TO WILKIN VIA GILLESPIE PASS)

April 9-12, 1993

Author: Kay Calder

Published in Bulletin 521, June 1993

The trusty forecasters got it right - rain in the ranges, it was bucketing down as we were dropped off in the middle of nowhere (i.e., 5 kms from Makarora at a rest-stop at 11 pm.

Good Friday dawned somewhat gloomily but slightly less wet than Thursday night but the Makarora was unfordable so it was a jet-boat ride across and a short distance up the Young for the 13 doing the trip. It was head down, bum up in the drizzle and we were surprised how soon the Forks were reached. A flash new bridge avoided a ford of the Young and we opted for lunch on the other side - the rain having given up.



Young River, Mt Aspiring National Park (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The track changed in character up the South Young with an après-lunch attitudinal gain reminiscent of Stewart Island! We admired the many waterfalls pouring off the valley walls and once above the bushline could see Young Hut on the skyline. It is beautifully sited with impressive views in all directions. The ten-bunk hut was extremely cozy by the time 20 of us were in residence. One occupant, low-flying Dave, was doing Gillespie Pass and Rabbit Pass in four days (or maybe three!). Saturday, the weather was better, and it was onwards and upwards - the climb to the pass was a goodly grunt and there was fresh snow for the last 100

feet or so. We rewarded ourselves with an Easter Egg while admiring the views and peering down the rather steep drop-off on the Siberia side.

My entrepreneurial companions planned a ski field on the side of Mt. Awful, whose top would be removed to provide fill for the car park. Rubbish would be dumped over into the upper Young which would have the added benefit of providing a Kea feeding station (perhaps DOC would provide funds ?!). The braking effect of a snowplow would need to be quickly learnt as the beginner slopes end rather abruptly!



Mt Awful from Gillespie Pass (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We continued up from the pass and sidled some distance over snow-covered rocks and eventually down to an inviting lunch spot beside the Gillespie Stream. It was great to see a pair of blue ducks flying over the stream. Eventually, after much sidling and steep downwards travel we were pleased to reach the grassed valley floor of Siberia. It wasn't far to the newly extended (20 bunk) Siberia Hut, which was home to about 30 that night.

Sunday dawned beautifully fine and so it was all day. Lake Crucible was our destination for a day trip, so it was back up the valley for about an hour to the start of the track, which is steep at first, but well-marked. Soon we were above the bush, admiring the cup containing the lake from below and what an amazing sight as we crested the cup's rim! You could imagine yourself being in the pack-ice of Antarctica - it was wall to wall ice floes. The ice actually drops off the steep walls of Mt. Alba which forms the backdrop for the Crucible. The braver explorers ventured well out onto the ice and seeing they had not fallen through some of us lesser mortals followed. When Elspeth and her travelling beach ball arrived it was time for ice floe volleyball, with some cautious back-stepping moves!

It was a quick trip back to the hut to pack up and get on our way to Kerin Forks to camp the night. We cursed the track which seemed to reach for the bush line before slithering and sliding

to the Wilkin Valley. Two of the Crucible Day Trippers got caught out by nightfall but arrived about 8 pm - a great effort with one torch and a candle!



Siberia Stream, below Siberia Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Monday was a pleasant stroll down the Wilkin flats, observing the passing jet boats (funny about the empty ones!). Then it was a trudge up and across the Makarora (a dry bum crossing) and back to civilization. It was a great trip in all respects.

Kay Calder

SEVEN BODS AND FOURTEEN PLASTIC BAGS OF FOOD

April 17-19, 1993

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 521, June 1993

Friday night was spent in a warm cozy bed up in Wanaka with some friends, then an early Saturday morning, I drove on up through the Haast Pass to Fantail Falls whereupon I left my car and begun the steep climb up through the bush and along the ridge to the cute wee Brewster Bivy. It was a late start, just before 10.30 am, so by the time I had arrived at the bivy it was time for lunch. The weather was excellent, clear skies and not a breath of wind. I was to meet up with the COTC (Central Otago Tramping Club) later on in the day, so I decided not to waste this lovely weather by sitting around and instead packed a few snacks and climbed up the tussock spur towards Mt. Armstrong sidling around a large bluff. I arrived at the summit of Mt. Armstrong (7150 ft) with snow underfoot, the wind by now had picked up and I could see clouds coming across from the west. I took a photo or two and enjoyed the breath-taking views of Mt. Aspiring and Earnslaw in the distance. As I descended back to the Bivy I spotted a tent pitched outside and guessed that the COTC had arrived.



Brewster Biv (PHOTO Michelle Williams)

I was introduced to six other bods and from that moment on words were on the go till 10.30 pm. They are all quite a hard case bunch, a range of ages and conversations. Dinner time came and out came five cookers, including seven billies between the seven of us, not to mention 14 plastic bags full of food. Everyone had brought all their own food for the two days, and it ranged from boil in a bag to tin corn beef and sausages. I found it hard to believe, especially as I am accustomed to the traditional OTMC methods of parties with one person organising food, primus, etc.

White four of us slept in the bivy, three others occupied one of the four tents which had been brought along for the weekend (I must admit though, only two were brought up the hill). Sunday morning brought doom and gloom, low cloud covered Mt. Brewster and the COTC opted out of the climb of Mt. Armstrong. Instead, we all packed up and headed back down to the vehicles, where they left for Alexandra and I drove down to Davis Flat. I parked my car, put boots on and refilled with food, deserting the sandflies by crossing the Makarora River I climbed steeply up beside the Stewart Falls before sidling around high into the Makarora Gorge. The track was well marked and climbed up and down through quite steep slopes to an open valley where it was an easy amble along tussock and stony riverbeds to the Makarora Hut. This was a welcome sight as cloud and light drizzle obscured the views.

I spent a quiet night in the hut by myself with a good book and when dawn broke, the ground was white with frost and lovely clear skies. A lazy morning before heading back out around 10.30 am. As I entered the bush the skies had clouded over, leaving the area as I had entered it.

Michelle Williams for those six crazy COTC members whom I'd like to thank for their company.

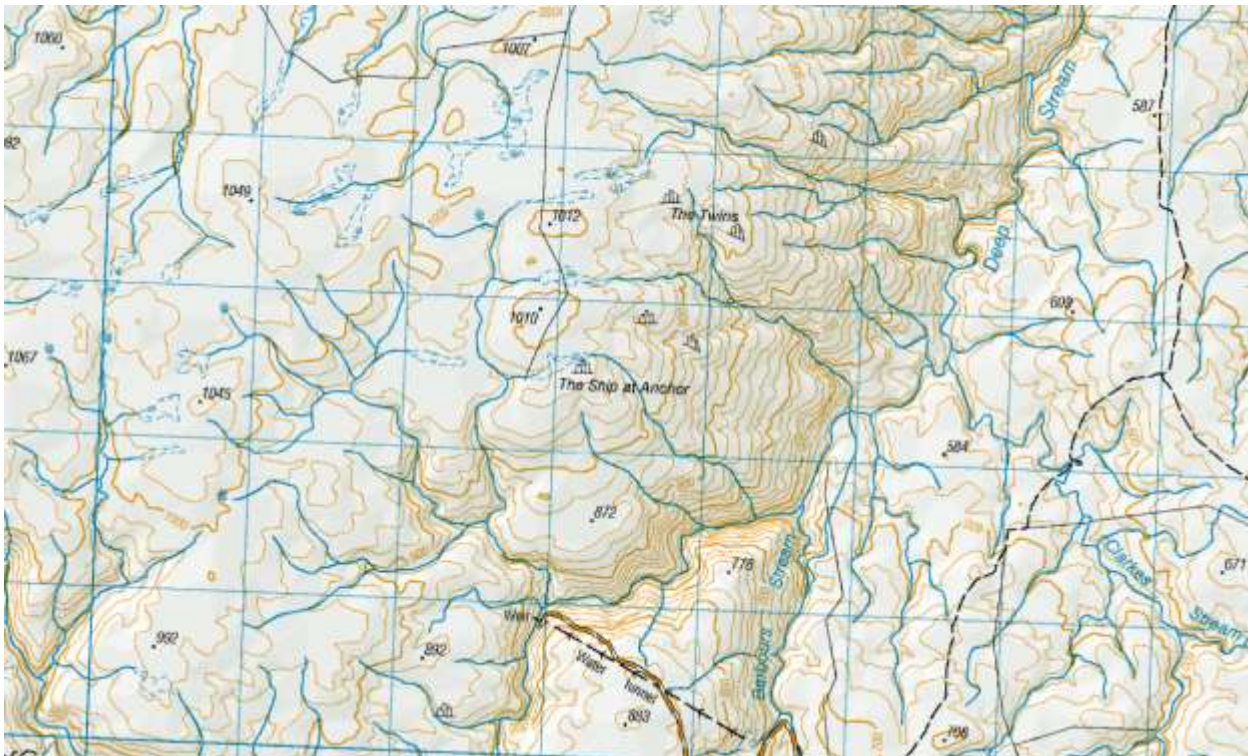
SHIP AT ANCHOR PLANS SUNK

April 18, 1993

Author: Ken Mason

Published in Bulletin 521, June 1993

The 'Ship at Anchor' in the Lammermoors was to have been our port of call. However, the eight of us would have been 'all at sea' if we had attempted to set sail into the cold southerly murk and rain to get there. An alternative course was set for the much more sheltered Woodside Glen area on Maungatua.



From the picnic area we followed a good track up to a crossing point on Lee Creek. A track on the other bank, marked with damaged 'new type' plastic roadside markers, climbed steeply to the bush edge. The weather was improving but was not the best for going fully onto the tops. We left the track and crossed the beech forested gorge of Lee Creeks' East Branch, worked our way under a large bluff and out across the more open slopes to eventually reach the slopes above the West Branch. Lunch on a rock outcrop actually had sun and a good view. We picked a way down into the beech forest and across the West Branch. For the next two hours we worked our way down through the rock outcrops and ridges on the true left bank to gain the track at the bottom and then back out to our cars.

Much of the bush we traversed had been eaten out by goats. Over the past 15-20 years I have witnessed this forest go from a good example of regeneration to a hollowed-out shell despite the "official" protection and outside complaints. Not very encouraging for the future. On the positive side it was fun taking a congenial party through such a relatively rugged country while still keeping it an enjoyable experience for all of them. Long live bush bashing, and some areas

left untracked. At least one person confessed to having never been off a high-quality track before.

Ken Mason for Trevor Blogg, Jackie Fogden, Jonette Service Shirley McQueen, Amelia McQueen, Bill McKenzie and Anna Kushlick

FLAGSTAFF WITHOUT WALKWAYS

May 16, 1993

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 521, June 1993

(The unofficial combined club's trip)

A combination of lousy weather and the wrong date in the Bulletin meant there was only one other starter at the Clubrooms at nine. Jonette's curiosity had overridden her common sense.

We headed off to Glenleith where I'd arranged to meet Dad. While waiting for us, he had run into a fellow member of the WEA and YWCA tramping clubs, who was off to Swampy with two of his fellow Over Thirties members. On hearing of our proposed route, they decided to join us.



Top of McQuilkans Track, near the Swampy /Moon Track junction (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We started up the vehicle track in the bush before veering off up the Booth Road track. Although muddy in places, this route is fairly easily followed to the bushline below the low summit of Flagstaff. From there we waded through the soaking tussock in 50 m visibility until we hit the walkway. A minute later and we were off it and cutting across to Ben Rudd's.

The shelter was a welcome spot for a break. Suitably refreshed, we headed down the Jim Freeman track, grateful for the newly cut steps. Below the rhodo's we turned right onto Rawlinson's track and sidled towards Swampy climbing gradually. After a lunch stop just below bushline we crossed the walkway on the knoll between Flagstaff and Swampy before commencing the descent to Nichols Creek. Before long we had reached the muddy track to the

falls. All the rain we'd had made the falls more impressive than usual. After another detour to the water intake in the gorge, it was a short road walk back to the cars.



Nicols Falls, Leith Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

David Barnes for 2 OTMC members, 2 WEA members, 2 YWCA members and 3 Over Thirties members. Jonette Service, Peter Barnes, Frank Collins, Mary Atken and Liz Neville.

TOPPING TAPPIE – THE EASY WAY

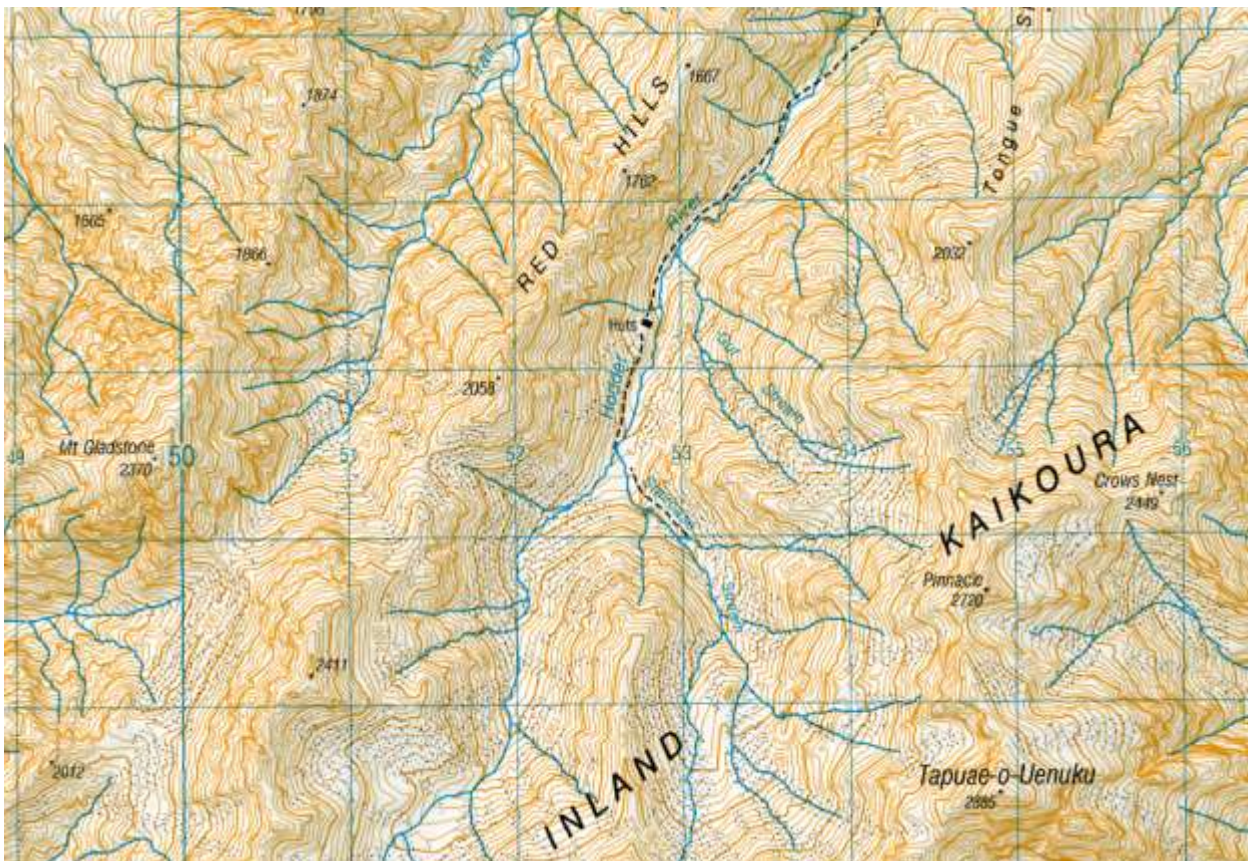
Date not recorded

Author: Peter Vollweiller

Published in Bulletin 521, June 1993

Having just read John Galloway's account of his ascent of Mt. Tapuae-o-Uenuku (9467 feet) in January, I marvel at his effort and congratulate him on achieving such an epic climb in 16 and a half hours. Shades of Hillary!

Four members of the Milton Sub-Branch of the OTMC (unaffiliated), after spending most of the current tramping season leading 11 groups over the Milford Track, six on the Routeburn Track and four in the Greenstone for Otago Youth Adventure Trust and the Milton Rotary Club, decided that it was time to wash the taste of track walking out of our mouths. What better way than to climb a real Mountain! So off we went on the ten-hour drive into the Awatere Valley, some 50 kms south of Seddon. Spent the night in Alan Pitts hay barn, by the Hodder River bridge on the Awatere Valley Road. The Pitts are "tramper friendly" and provided prior arrangements are made, will allow trampers to use their barn. Mrs. Pitts visited us and gave us good advice as to which track to use to give us best access to the Hodder River.



Next morning, after an hour or so along a farm track we descended into the Hodder River. We followed this river for some six hours, crossing and recrossing it 62 times (we counted!). We climbed some 3000 feet in our journey up the river, so there was very little still water! All of us

took a tumble at some stage, but even though it was raining the river level was safe enough. Eventually we climbed out onto a little plateau and found the two Hodder Huts. These are two excellent huts, owned by the Marlborough Tramping Club, strategically sited at 5000 feet to give easy access to Tapuae-o-Uenuku and other mountains on the inland Kaikoura Range.

Next morning it was foggy and damp. We headed further up the Hodder, crossing it and climbing up Staircase Creek following a well-worn track. We left the tussock and entered scree territory, picking up the odd cairn. Visibility and weather deteriorated - after a few hours we decided we were "lost", with no idea where the top was, so decided to turn back and eventually found our cozy hut again.

The following morning - still foggy, but we have a hunch that it is clear up above. So off again, a steady climb up Staircase Creek, into the scree and rocks, and hurrah! we break out of the cloud into brilliant sunshine. How marvellous when you can see where you are going! What a difference and what a boost to morale! A steep scramble through unstable scree and rock, picking up the odd cairn to confirm our route. The top is not visible until you finally reach a leading ridge. Some frozen snow gullies would have made the climb a lot easier if we had brought ice- axes and crampons. From the leading ridge it is an easy route to the summit, which is reached with great delight some four and a half hours from the hut.

The clouds are all below us, so the views are not great, but the sunshine is brilliant up here at 9467 feet and we all got burnt in the two hours we spent on the top. A break in the clouds allows us to peer down into the Clarence Valley, some 7500 feet straight down. Bloody steep, how in hell did John Galloway get up there? What unstable, broken but beautiful country this all is. So different from Fiordland or Mt. Aspiring country. Mostly scree and rocks and no bush. Reluctantly we depart, have some fun scree slides on the way down, and return to the Hodder Hut.

Next day, back down the Hodder River, shot a young Chamois at close range with my Olympus and after another 62 river crossings and several wet bums we got back to our hay barn and car for the ten-hour journey home.

Peter Vollweiler for Rex Spence, June Hayes and Peter Ballentine

A TOUGH LIFE

Date not recorded

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 522, July 1993

Living in Wanaka, waiting for the snow to come before my job can start is a tough life, as I have discovered.

One clear Friday morning recently I grabbed my pack and headed up into Mt. Aspiring National Park, the West Matukituki. By the time I reached the end of the road it was 10 am. The walk up to Aspiring Hut was crisp, as grass blades stood tall and white with heavy frost. Mud puddles were clear as glass, the sun still high up on the slopes. Aspiring Hut was deserted and only one entry in the hut book, I quickly had lunch and decided to carry on up to French Ridge hut. The walk up to Pearl Flat was lovely with views of Mt. Aspiring along the way and each time I stopped the air about me was silent with only the sound of Paradise ducks. I crossed the Matukituki and began the steep climb up French Ridge. Shortly after reaching bush line I struck old snow, frozen solid. It wasn't really a problem and I arrived at French Ridge Hut just before 4 pm.



West Matukituki valley, looking towards Cascade Saddle (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The hut was occupied by a young guy from Denmark who was set to do some climbing. The sun soon disappeared, leaving Mt. Avalanche a tinge of red and the temperature dropped

below freezing. The stars and moon shone bright. Saturday morning brought some light cloud as I left and dropped back down to the valley floor. I had heaps of time so I took a trip further up into the valley, as far up as Scotts Biv. It was lovely and peaceful as the huge mountains towered above me. The return journey back down the valley was quick and I arrived at Aspiring Hut in time for a brew before dusk. The wind came up strong and Aspiring Hut seemed to howl and creak as I spent the night alone with my book and a candle.



Upper West Matukituki Valley, at the Liverpool Stream (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Dawn broke late with yet another fantastic day, and as I left Aspiring Hut, it was surrounded by Jack Frost and the local cows. I made my way down the quiet valley to the Rob Roy bridge and with time still on my side I made my way up the well-marked track to the head of the valley where Rob Roy Glacier loomed above. This is a beautiful valley although this time of year, the sun doesn't reach into the base.

I was out by 3.00 pm and back in Wanaka in time for a good cooked meal by my flatmates, who all thought I was crazy.

Michelle Williams

UP AND DOWN THE REES

June 5-7, 1993

Author: Judy Maguire

Published in Bulletin 522, July 1993

To go to the Rees, first you sign up for the Rockburn

Friday Evening, Queen's Birthday Weekend, and only two cars head off for the Club trip. Was there something I didn't know about Bruce Newton's leadership or was it merely the Otago/Lions Rugby match?

With our group down to two and with Rhonda's advice we were now heading up the Rees not the Rockburn, while Bruce's lot were going for Mt. Earnslaw. We tented together at the carpark at Muddy Creek (boy, Rhonda was right about not drinking that water - we bought our own). Arthur's party also arrived and headed off to Lochnagar on Saturday. We watched a great lunar eclipse not visible back in our hometown. "Why is the moon getting covered?" was my leader's question. I was worried, is this a sincere question?

We were up and away on Saturday. Flashed past 25 Mile Hut ("too soon, can't be 25 Mile yet") A half hour later down the track and we decided we hadn't wanted to stay at 25 mile that night anyway. Kea Basin could wait. Way down in the deep subconscious, these decisions are made without one's awareness. "No, you can't stash the tent here Chris, YOU may miss Shelter Rock Hut too! We could need it".



Trampers in Rees Valley, between 25 Mile Creek and the MANP boundary (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

It was a lovely trip up the valley. We followed the river along the flats i.e. went over, in and out. It was a good track when we found it and we had a beautiful clear day. We could hear helicopters flying up and down all afternoon, it is a little disappointing to see and listen to. We

could not work out what was in what looked like fire buckets. The old Shelter Rock spot was a welcome stop and only 30 mins, or so, along the valley side to the present hut. The helicopter question was answered with six out of ten bunks and 1/2 the hut taken up with DoC workers and their gear for a week's work starting a new ten bunk hut alongside this one. Four other trampers arrived later that day and they were not happy chappies either. A little note in the intentions book at Glenorchy would have been polite we felt.

Early next morning the chainsaws were away, it did not worry us as we had already decided to change plans (and why not? - we were getting pretty good as this now) so off to the saddle we went. A short sit in the sun at the top (we didn't go over the saddle) then it was back down to pick up the rest of our gear and then off to find 25 Mile Hut. Another beautiful day with clear skies but very icy ground in places. Chris got a 9/10 for several of his ballet turns and pirouettes, my top mark was a 2/10 for a non-graceful, short, snappy slide down a gravel slope with a "would you mind hurrying up" and a "and clean up that blood as I have no wish to look at that when I'm walking behind you".

We picked our way down in places until out of the icy parts. I hadn't quite realised how steady the slope was as we came up yesterday, but it was a very good track though. We went over the bluffs this time and down onto the flats. I prefer the river course though as in these lovely conditions we can't quite see the point of going up and down two bluffs. It is very boggy for a way here at the base of the bluffs but we found the hut with the help of a hunter. Smoke was pouring out of the chimney which helped too. No wonder we missed it though as it is surrounded by trees and is not visible from the valley.

We carried water up as the hunter had suggested but there is a creek not far up from the hut. We also did some wood scouting. It is a VERY basic hut, I wore all my clothing to bed that night and our boots froze from sitting inside the hut that night. It was a beautiful morning again, clear blue skies with no wind AND we didn't have to throw the burner outside this morning so as not to burn the hut down. We were getting better at this! Stupendous view over the valley from the seat we flogged from the hut and the hunters. They weren't having a sit-down breakfast anyway, not that they could!

We packed up and took the rather tedious trek across the other side of the river flats to find the start of Kea Basin track. We had been told where to look which was great. We met Bruce, Paul and Nigel coming out so it was time for a short chat here. We only had time to go a little way over so that's for the next trip. An easy enjoyable trip back to the car which was sitting so nicely, waiting for us.

Judy Maguire for Chris Mansfield and myself

P.S. Since this was first written, I have had a profusely apologetic phone call from Michael Hutchins (DoC Glenorchy), obviously my phone call to DoC in Dunedin was acted upon. I rung complaining about the inconsiderate attitude of the DoC workers at Shelter Rock Hut. Michael said that with DoC contracting out a lot of services now, this still could happen at a main holiday weekend but they will be very heedful of trampers, notifications, etc. A great piece of public relations though on Michael's part.

SILVER PEAKS WORK PARTY

May 2, 1993

Author: Doug Forrester

Published in Bulletin 522, July 1993

Yellow Ridge track was the one we decided on and ten keen bods fronted up on Sunday morning. It was encouraging to see three new supporters amongst them, it certainly was a good turnout.

Sunday was clear and calm, one of those magic days when it is a pleasure to be in the Silver Peaks, even with a pair of pruners. It seems the tracks in the Silver Peaks are in pretty good shape, thanks to all the different organisations who make an effort to keep them clear. We must make sure we continue to do our bit, and it isn't all hard work either.

The next work party is on 29 August and the committee are organising it, so they'll all be there so let's support them. See you there! Thanks go out to Antony (de boss), Debs, David Barnes, Jonette Service, Greg Panting, Shirley McQueen, Jim Driscoll, Ross Chambers and Robin Bridger.



Yellow Ridge, Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

DINGLEBURN ACROSS INTO TIMARU CREEK

May 22-23, 1993

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 522, July 1993

I was picked up shortly after 10 pm Friday night in Wanaka by a lively van load of OTMC members. First stop was at Timaru Creek as Elspeth's party piled out into the crisp air. Six bods were left in the van as we continued around Lake Hawea on the narrow and at times, rough road to Dingleburn Station. Here we were greeted by a welcome sight as lights left on showed us our accommodation for the night, it was the Dingleburn Station's shearing quarters with comfortable mattresses, even a stove heater was left on to keep the place warm. Mr. Mead, the owner, was kind in his thoughts of us and this was much appreciated.



Head of Lake Hawea and the Hunter Valley from Dingle Peak (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

6.45 am and an alarm goes off, Doug was keen to get started as he was first up, dressed and almost packed. 8.00 am saw four bods amble across the fields, up the terraces as the track made its way through open bush. Suddenly the track descends steeply down an open ridge, a wire shows the route as we hit the valley floor. The Bush Hut was 2 1/2 hours from the van and it was time for a rest, drink, snack and then on our way again. The track carries on steeply up to a high terrace. The bush was open and Doug was keen to leave the track and make our way to the bushline with an open ridge leading up. It was hot work and a slow plod, we were all getting thirsty and hungry. Eventually we stopped for lunch, unfortunately none of us had water and the sound of water was far away. After lunch it wasn't long before we hit bushline

and had plenty of snow for water, as we made our way along the spur and up onto the main ridge. It was getting late in the day as we ambled our way down into the head of Timaru Creek. At the first flow of running water we stopped and demolished a litre of juice within minutes. We were all keen to spend the night in the hut as darkness fell. Our feet kept moving and we finally arrived around 6,00 pm at Timaru Creek Hut. It had been a long day and we were all tired and hungry. Two large billies full of main meal was no trouble to empty with three helpings each and dessert to follow!



Timaru River and Lake Hawea from above Junction Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We all slumped into bed within minutes, and not a sound until Barry's alarm went off again at 6.45 am. Doug was first up again. 8.00 am saw us away and I followed the creek while the others sidled higher. As we struck the bushline it was a hunt to find marked trees. The trail followed the creek down mostly on the true left, at times it was hard to follow, as with little use it had become overgrown. Time was ticking on and we didn't waste much time, not even for lunch. It had taken us much longer to get down than we thought, but we hit the road at 4.25 pm, only 25 minutes late. Luckily the van was only 15 minutes away.

It was a brilliant trip, with great company and excellent scenery. Thanks Team!!

Michelle Williams for Doug Forrester, Russell Godfrey and Barry Wybrow.

CROSSING THE WEST MATUKITUKI IN FLOOD (EASTER 1963)

April 12-15, 1963

Author: Bob Clarkson

Originally published in Outdoors 1963

Republished in OTMC Bulletin 522, July 1993

We moved as one. Ron, Garth and myself. It was our only chance to cross the raging torrent. We slowly inched our way toward our objective, the opposite bank. The water was so cold! Swirling and boiling around our bodies, trying its utmost to buffet us under its green surface. It was getting deeper, chest high. 'Do you think we will make it?' was heard above the roar of white foaming waves. The wind snatched away our voices. We had to concentrate on one goal. To get across. Suddenly, without warning, Ron was afloat. His toes desperately trying to regain a hold but to no avail. He was swung round. Now facing the current of which he got the full force. Water foamed up around his armpits. With one desperate hope I tightened my grips, straining to force Ron back into line, hoping that Garth could take the weight. Slowly, so slowly, it seemed a lifetime, Ron came once again to grips with the riverbed. His toes barely touching the bottom. Steady boys, won't long now be the comforting words flung into the wind. The rain was pelting down mercilessly onto our heads and shoulders which were above the swiftly moving water.



Crossing the West Matukituki at Cameron Flat on a nice day! (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Meanwhile, on the bank we had just left, the parties were watching in strained silence, all hoping we'd make it. Ross was out ready with a rope in case any emergency cropped up. If the water was an inch higher we would be floating around Lake Wanaka, but we refused to think of it at such a time. A few inches more and we could put our whole foot flat on the riverbed. It seemed an eternity before we moved again. Just standing there holding our own, not gaining nor losing. We were all straining to move forwards against odds bigger than we'd come across before (even in the Landsborough). We can't go back now. Have to keep moving. Each step in itself was an effort. Slowly, gradually, our feet would move forward, the wall of water dragging relentlessly at our trousered legs, throwing feet anywhere but the place you want them. Keeping upright was a feat of agony, every muscle was brought into play. Undaunted, we actually move, the rain streaming down our faces, into eyes, ears and mouth, unbearably cold was an added torture. The strain was telling, but we were beating nature by slowly progressing, 'it's getting shallower', an exaggeration of course, though the river was an inch or two further down our chests. At last we started making headway. Soon we were confident of victory over this roaring gulch. Then with a startled cry I went down feet frantically scrabbling for a hold. With an effort Garth and Ron hauled me up and tugged and putted forward till with a gasp of relief I found the bottom once again. A dozen torturous dragging steps later we staggered onto the opposite bank thankful.



Looking across the West Matukituki towards the East Matukituki Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

How we did it, I've yet to find. Literally blue with cold we reached the rope connected to the little craft which we then started to operate. In half an hour after we had the remainder of the parties and gear on this side, we then headed for Wanaka.

MATUKITUKI TRIP – MARCH '93

March 27-28, 1993

Author: Laurel Dunn

Published in Bulletin 522, July 1993

We set off from Dunedin at the usual time of 6.00 pm on Friday night heading for the West Matukituki, it was a lovely starry night on the trip up but arriving at the road end at about 11.45 pm it was blowing strongly. People quickly set up their tents for the night. We had a big fly which flapped about in the wind and in the end, we tied one rope around the wheel of the van as the ground was quite rocky and hard to get pegs into.

Up and away next morning to a lovely day with just a few clouds at the head of the valley blocking out Mt. Aspiring. It was easy going along a four-wheel drive track with plenty of friendly cattle grazing on the flats. Behind us Sharks Tooth Peak aptly suited its name. We met several people heading out and Ian did a good PR job for the club, inviting them along to our Thursday evenings if they were in Dunedin. We climbed a small bluff near Bridal Veil Falls before dropping down to the valley again and soon came to Cascade Hut with its chimney smoking, so we called in a chat with the only occupant.



Aspiring Hut (NZAC), West Matukituki Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Another 20 minutes and we were at Aspiring Hut, and it was only 10.20 am. A bite to eat, and we left our packs at the hut and carried on for another two hours up through the bush, across Shovel Flat and onto Pearl Flat. Here you can carry on for another few hours or turn left and

straight up to Liverpool Biv or on the right straight up to French Ridge. On our return to Aspiring Hut we called into a large hut, which was tucked away on the edge of the bush overlooking Shovel Flat. This belongs to Geoff Wyatt who runs Mountain Recreation. There was no one about but we noticed he was going to extend the hut. It wasn't long till we heard the drone of a helicopter and noticed it was ferrying loads of building materials up to the hut. They were loading the helicopter down in front of Aspiring Hut and we sat and watched for a while. It was a real struggle for it going up the valley with the load but a quick trip back, unfortunately one load of roofing iron was lost on a trip to the hut, scattering in all directions.



Rob Roy Glacier (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Aspiring Hut is very comfortable and spacious but since it was a lovely night Ian and I opted for the fly. Around dusk the clouds lifted from Aspiring and we were treated to a great view of it covered in the pink colours of sunset.

We awake to a good frost and a beautiful day with not a cloud in the sky. Our party returned back down the valley, and we headed up the Rob Roy Valley which is a two hour trip to the head of the valley. The glacier perched above the rock face looks so close. There is a lot of avalanche debris at the head of the valley and in some places you could walk through corridors under the avalanche and come out the other end. On such a peaceful day the insects were all in good voice as we had our lunch. On our way back we stopped at a seat aptly placed high up on the Rob Roy track where we sat and looked up the West Branch, watching the others making their way back to the vans. Everyone was just content to sit around by the vans enjoying the afternoon sun until the order was given to move it!

Thanks to Ian Sime, Mike McCartney and Rhonda for organising, by Laurel Dunn

COOKING UP A STORM! (KEPLER COOKING COMP)

June 19-20, 1993

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 522, July 1993

It promised to be a great weekend as we all piled into the van and headed for Te Anau and the Kepler Track. We arrived and unloaded all the people at the Control Gates at about 10pm and then took Michelle and Russell around to Rainbow Reach where they were headed to Moturau Hut for the night, then they would be walking around to Luxmore Hut on Saturday. The rest of us spent the night at the Control Gates where Saturday dawned overcast. Not wanting to waste the weekend, my party headed away earlyish, our destination Luxmore Hut. It was an easy walk around to Brod Bay where we had a break and bite to eat before the slow plod up the hill to the hut. The limestone bluffs on the way are impressive and here we stopped again, enjoying the break. Trevor invented a game of dodge the drops without falling over the edge. Too soon the rest was over and onwards we went.



Heading back to the Kepler Track from Mt Luxmore (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Upon reaching the bush line we discovered that the DoC prediction of lots of snow was slightly untrue as most had already gone, but there was still enough to play in. The hut seemed a good place for lunch and here we left our packs before starting an ascent of Mt. Luxmore. Not feeling like trudging up the hill in the snow, I begged off and left Antony and Trevor to conquer the mountain. Instead, I had a play in the snow around a half frozen tarn before heading back to the hut. It was encouraging to see the fire going and it wasn't long before Michelle and Russell

arrived dragging with them Justin and Kay Calder and Peter Lockhart who had also completed the round trip (they had left the day before to complete the trip). With everyone back from their jaunts in the snow, the serious side of the trip started with the cooks and helpers all getting into the act. Another couple arrived hoping to have the hut to themselves but instead found 18 O.T.M.C. members beginning their preparations for the cooking competition. They were a bit taken aback to see lace tablecloths, real flowers, bottles of wine, candelabra and napkins coming out of packs.

What happened next, I cannot divulge but the results will follow this report, if you want to know what happened then I suggest you sign up next year. This is one of those trips that was "You got to be there, to understand" stories. I can say that the couple who arrived at the hut enjoyed themselves and are adamant they want to be involved next year. Their words were 'Let us know the date and place and we will be there!'

Sunday was slightly miserable with snow and wind but that did not deter most who were keen to explore the caves before heading down the hill to the van. Thank you to a great bunch who all enjoyed the weekend.

Debbie Pettinger

Cooking Competition Prize List

The standard of competition was excellent and everyone deserved to win. Menus included:-

- Soup du Jour - Leek & Potato a la Fiordland
 - Consomme a i'oignon
 - Fresh Tomato Soup
 - Entree - South Fiord Seafood Cocktail
 - Main - Poutet au sauce du creme
 - Boeuf Kepler Avec Pasta
 - Spicy Chicken Kebabs with fresh coleslaw and rice
 - Dessert - Boysenberry Delight Manapouri
 - Truffles and Irish Coffee
 - Pancakes with a choice of toppings
 - Des Avocats au chocolat
-
- **BEST ENTREE** - Andrew MacKay, Molly Maguire, Peter Lockhart Justin & Kay Calder - Seafood Cocktail
 - **BEST MAIN** - Neville Mulholland, Rhonda Robinson, Dennis Price, Greg Wood - Spicy Chicken Kebabs with fresh coleslaw
 - **BEST DESSERT** - Nick Thomson, Michelle Williams, Russell Godfrey- Des Avocats au chocolate
 - **MOST BRIBERY** - Stu Mathieson, Shirley McQueen, Olive Nielson
 - **MOST DRIBBLERS** - Rhonda Robinson, Greg Wood, Dennis Price, Neville Mulholland

OCEAN PEAK OR?

July 31 – August 1, 1993

Author: Russell Godfrey

Published in Bulletin 524, September 1993

It was Friday night, and we were headed to the Winter Routeburn and Arthur and myself still hadn't decided what we were going to do. While travelling there we decided to climb Ocean Peak (or give it a go). After finally managing to drag Arthur away from Teresa we left the shelter about 12.05am heading for Flats Hut. We arrived at Falls Hut at 2.15 am to find four other bods from the club already there.

I was forced to crawl out of my pit (which never had time to warm up!) at 7 am, had breakfast and then made our way towards Ocean Peak. The weather was perfect, and the snow was high and looked in good condition. Before long someone made a suggestion to try the Mt. Xenicus (6274) - Mt. Erebus traverse. A quick map check and Arthur agreed, it was all go! (I didn't even need to twist his arm). By 11am we were on top of Xenicus with the only major rest to put on crampons. Arthur did manage to extend his rest by breaking his crampons but by the time I realised it I was up a steep gully, hoping to find another reasonably flat spot to put on my crampons.



Mt Xenicus from the Routeburn Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Just below the summit of Xenicus we anchored our packs and proceeded to the top, we took a few photos then a quick look at the traverse before heading back down as time was getting

short. We met Molly and Peter at our packs and had a quick chat before heading off (thanks for the water guys, much appreciated). Two and a half hours later, including our lunch stop, we were on top of Mt. Erebus with excellent views of Mt. Tutoko, Martins Bay, etc.



Mt Xenicus (centre of photo) from Mt Erebus (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The traverse itself was fairly straight forward and made easy by the ideal crampon conditions which included a short steep section of ice which was avoided on the way down. We completed our return journey via Lake Wilson (great sunbathing spot) and Lake Harris which we crossed, thanks to the ice covering. We arrived at the hut at 5.15 pm.

After a sleep in the next morning, and most people had headed down the valley, Arthur and myself climbed up to the tarns above Falls Hut for a look and even managed to find the track on the way down. Back at Falls Hut for a short rest and scroggin stop before the direct route down to Flats Hut to meet the others.

An excellent trip! Russell Godfrey for Arthur Blondell

GET LOST - SAREX

September 19, 1993

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 525, October 1993

A highly successful SAREX was held on 19 September with 16 participants (involving several survivors from the Annual Dinner the night before) turning up to brave the snow and learn a bit about Search & Rescue.

We started with a "theory" session that covered an overview of SAR, a profile of the ideal searcher, main search techniques and radio usage. Then it was into two groups, and we went looking for cardboard markers inscribed with such profound comments like 'This isn't the fifth time I've been lost' and 'If in doubt, pig out'. The close contact search differed from reality by not involving gorse or bush lawyer, but the manuka was thick enough and covered in snow. Both groups found all six markers in this phase. The general search involved a sweep down a gully, again most markers were found. Everyone also got a chance to practice using the handheld radios.

Thanks to Elspeth Gold for instructing and for setting out the markers in the snow on Saturday, and to Dave Stevenson from the Amateur Radio Emergency Corps (AREC) for providing radio instruction.

The participants were: Judy Maguire, Nick Thompson, Jonette Service, Sue Levick, Ken Powell, David Jackson, Paul Barber, Antony Hamel, Margaret Parle, Mike Hamel, Ricky Lane, Peter Aitcheson, Jeanette Malcolm, Greg Wood, and Diane Bandeen

by David Barnes

EXTENDING THE LIMITS (SECOND WEEK TIME TRAMP)

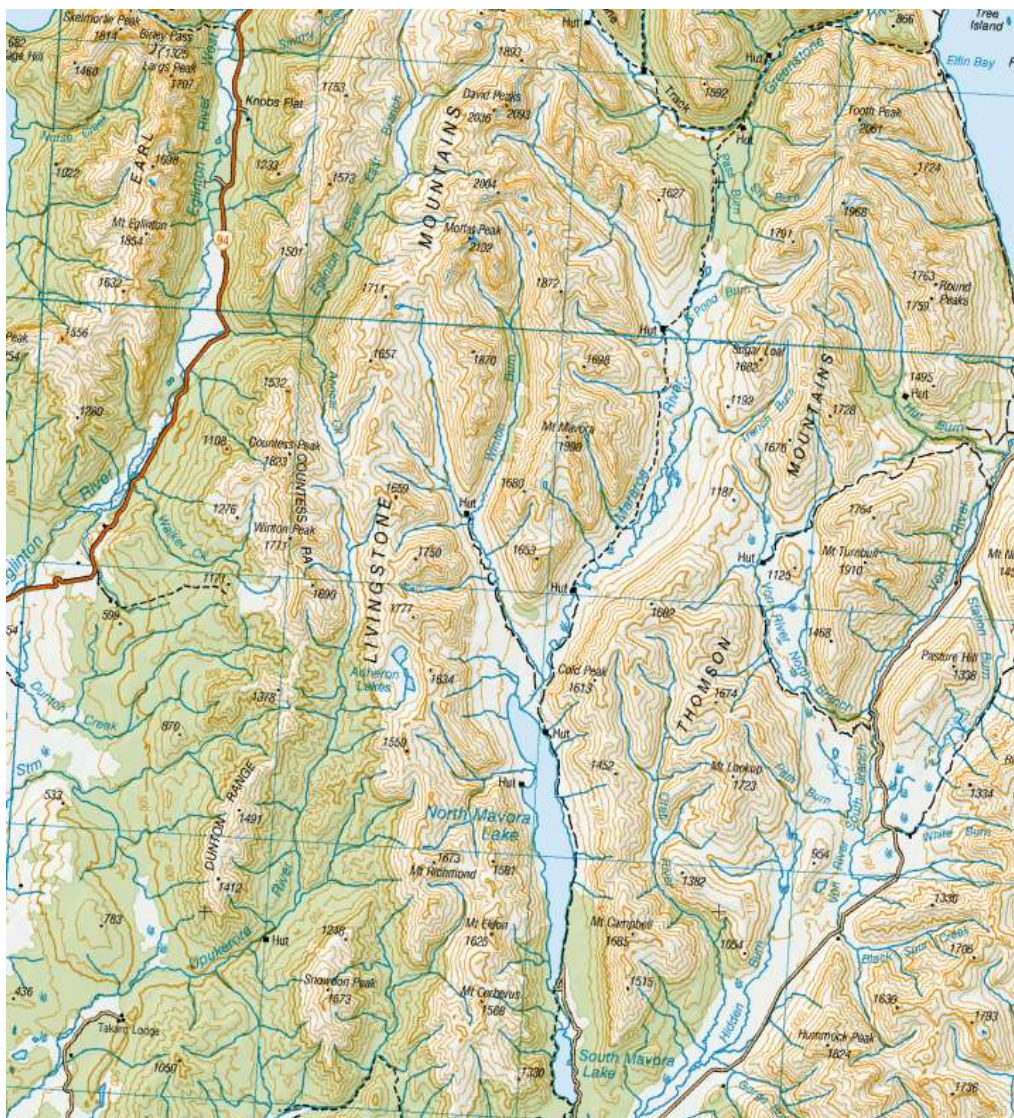
July 12-16, 1993

Author: Ian Sime

Published in Bulletin 526, November 1993

Two factors swung the decision finally to visit the Upper Mararoa Valley; Alan Thomson's offer of his 4WD van, and a warning that the Winton 4WD track is not easy.

Alan collected our eight on Monday around 9 am. At Hikuraki Station we were lucky to meet both David and Diane Walsh, who believed Alan's Mazda would have problems with ground clearance and some steep sided streams. In the event, the beach along the North Mavora Lake shore was firm enough, and we reached Careys Hut at the top of the lake in an hour from the start of the 4WD road, only stopping to open gates. After a brief look inside (it was empty) we took only another 45 mins, to reach the door of Boundary Hut at 4.30pm.



From 7 pm that night till 5 pm on Tuesday it rained incessantly. By midday the Mararoa was flowing over the swing bridge, usually more than 2 m above water. Wednesday dawned fine with a northerly wind which quickly dried the ground. It took over four hours to walk up to Taipo Hut. We had intended to use it as a base, for at least a full day in the Upper Mararoa which joins the walkway from the NW at that point. Now we had only 2 half days available because we wanted to be back at Boundary Hut on Thursday night, since we believed we would need a full day to get home on Friday with the road work required after Tuesday's flood. And we didn't want to camp up the Mararoa because the forecast on Alan's van radio warned of a southerly change that night.

After lunch we divided into two parties: four climbed the ridge just north of the hut, while the other four walked upstream for two hours till trees came right down to the east bank, blocking easy progress. Twenty minutes downstream we were able to cross to the true right and so return to the hut. It was a pleasant easy stroll, mostly in open country, but sometimes through scrub. Good animal tracks were always there when needed. An extra half day would have let us explore right to the valley head.

The climbing party got back soon after us, ecstatic about the views they had from their high point almost at the 5300 ft summit. Thursday was again fine with a northerly wind. We walked for an hour up the walkway towards the Greenstone to the locked private Pond Burn Hut, out of sight in the first bush opposite the lower end of the second pond. After lunch we made our way back to Boundary Hut, climbing to the private Bushy Creek Hut on the way. The wind shifted to the south as we arrived, and the Mararoa was getting back to normal.

About 6.30 pm steady rain set in from the SE, giving us uncomfortable visions of the next day's track conditions, but it stopped soon after we hit the sack. In fact, on Friday morning there was a frost and clear sky apart from some low valley cloud. About 9 am we were off in the van. A few minor washouts had to be dealt with by shovel, ice axe, and hand. On the high ground before Careys we were surprised to meet a Ute with four fishermen from Winton. They were even more surprised to meet us! We had a long chat. They told of having come in to Careys the day after the rain, basing themselves there, and spending several hours digging a new track up the far bank of the creek just north of the hut. They also warned of another washout a little south of Careys. This turned out to be our most difficult one, taking about 20 minutes to deal with.

By 12.30 we were at the north edge of the 2 km bush section which ends at the start of the proper road. A short look at the lake edge showed water covering the shoreline gravel we had travelled over on the way in. The alternative bush road goes high for the first 800 m and was no trouble there, but after it descends to almost lake edge, where it is muddy and deeply rutted with some quite tricky parts. The worst patch had a bypass which was a little better. The van stopped with wheels spinning, but with some assistance from the passengers, Alan was able to first back and then drive through. Once on solid road we parked, unloaded, washed and changed, and ate lunch. Reloaded, we drove to Hikuraki Station to check out. No-one was home so we left a note. At the tea-house at the Mararoa Road Te Anau Highway junction, we handed Yvonne over to waiting husband Don, headed to Lumsden for petrol and after an early tea, we were home by 7.30 pm.

Ian Sime for Yvonne Greer, Doug Jenkins, Bruce Johnston, Ken Powell, Zena Roderique, Jack Roy and Alan Thomson.

UNDER MT. LUXMORE

Date not recorded

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 526, November 1993

Saturday dawned overcast but that did nothing to dampen our enthusiasm for the weekend that lay ahead. We were packed and on our way by 9 am, taking our time to wander along the track through the beech forest to Brod Bay where we called a rest stop. Trevor was determined to use the long drop where it must be mentioned he got the fright of his life (I can't elaborate much but Trev was lucky to be sitting where he was)

We didn't waste time before hefting our packs and starting on the plod up the hill to Luxmore Hut. A couple of rest stops and we made bushline for an early lunch. This was a mixture of who had what, and what can I swap for that affair but it was definitely good eating. The wind was starting to pick up and buffeted us along the last 20 minutes to the hut. After picking out our beds, we donned overalls and grabbed torches, then we were off to explore the caves.



Exploring the limestone caves near Luxmore Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

I must admit that when I first entered the caves, I had an overwhelming feeling of them closing in around me but after the first five minutes it didn't seem to worry me as much. We followed the main cave to its full length and spent plenty of time marvelling over all the stalactites and stalagmites, and crystal pools. There were a few tight squeezes, a lot of duck

walking and climbing over rocks etc. (it was well worth wearing the overalls as it is very dirty underground). We also ventured into a couple of the side caves but eventually hunger drove us out into the light after about 2½ to 3 hours of being underground.

Back at the hut, we changed into the usual tramping gear before starting to organise tea and a general social time before bed. Tea was quite a long process from before dinner drinks to soup to tea to desert and then onto the Mountain Thunder. (have you ever noticed how well you eat while out tramping - better than at home almost) The dishes were done and we headed off to bed just as the wind started to pick up. We were woken a few times in the night with the hut shaking and when morning came it was still blowing hard.



Brod Bay, 1993 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We had a leisurely breakfast before leaving the hut around mid-morning and were buffeted around by the wind until we reached bushline. (It was interesting to try to stay on the boardwalks while the wind did its best to throw you off.) From the bushline it was all downhill and we reached Brod Bay in good time. We spent about 15 minutes lying on the beach enjoying the sun as it was very peaceful with very little wind. Of course, it didn't last and a cloud covered the sun which forced us back to our packs for lunch. Again, it was a pick and mix lunch before we packed up and set off for the control gates and the car.

We arrived back just as it started to rain and by the time we had driven to Te Anau to sign out it was fair bucketing down. It was ice creams in Te Anau before heading home to Dunedin

Thanks guys for a great weekend

Debbie Pettinger for Antony Pettinger, Jeanette Malcolm, Trevor Deaker and Peter Aitcheson

BEN RUDD'S WORK PARTY

October 3, 1993

Author: Peter Mason

Published in Bulletin 526, November 1993

As expected, Sunday was warm and sunny for our little work party. Three intrepid bods gathered at the clubrooms, we gathered the necessary tools before setting off to the Bullring on the Whare Flat Road.

Here the red truck provided quick transport to the Ben Rudd property on the track off Flagstaff. The day's work centred around the Shelter. Kay and Jonette, armed with pruning saws and loppers eagerly attacked the Old Man Broom and Himalayan Honeysuckle surrounding the clearing. I tied up some axe damaged trees and stacked the rubbish. Later in the day the Kiwi Conservation Club arrived armed for a short visit, fresh from pulling out wilding pine trees up the hill at the old plantation site.



View from the former skid-site, Ben Rudd's, Flagstaff (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Excellent views can now be obtained on the hill behind the shelter - under the young beech trees, looking out over the Silver Peaks. The day finished with Kay and Jonette returning to their car via the Flagstaff walkway and myself later checking the plane table on top of Flagstaff, giving it a 15 year clean up and polish at sunset, much to the surprise of three walkers on the track.

Peter Mason for Kay Calder and Jonette Service

TO SKIPPERS FOR LABOUR WEEKEND

October 23-25, 1993

Author: Nick Thompson

Published in Bulletin 526, November 1993

The Bad Bits:

Lorraine's windscreen shattering just short of Alexandra;

Negotiating the Skippers road in a very ordinary station-wagon;

Realising that the Skippers road is a piece of cake in comparison to the Branches road;

Elsbeth losing the buckle on the waist-strap of her pack;

Lorraine losing a crown;

Rose hip, Matagouri, Spaniard, Spaniard and still more Spaniard;

Frozen boots (solid);

The stock bridge from hell (over the raging Shiel burn) and the track leading thence.



Crossing Lake Creek en-route to Lochnagar (PHOTO Allan Perry)

The Good Bits:

The weather (there was the slightest hint of rain on Saturday at lunchtime but otherwise the sky was blue and the temperature on Monday was positively balmy for a Labour weekend);

The food (Elspeth excelled herself and Becky was introduced to such gastronomic novelties as chutney, papads and Stone's Green Ginger Wine);

The sophistication and ingenuity that enable us to fit nine people into the hut at Lochnagar (be warned, it does not have 8 bunks as has been alleged - just two mattresses: one on the floor and one on a wire bed frame);

The sophistication and ingenuity that enabled Elspeth to do up her pack's waist- strap with a stick and some string (MacGyver would feel humble); 'The company' 'The scenery.



Lochnagar (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The Superlative Bits:

Lochnagar first thing on a clear October morning;

Tea at the Branches Station at the end of the trip (Scones, lashings of wild-raspberry jam, homemade biscuits and hot showers for some.)

Notes of the route:

On the first part of the route you can avoid sidling along sheep tracks beside the Shotover (through Rose hip and Matagouri) by walking up the river bed itself until you join up with the vehicle track shortly before the Shiel Burn.



Lochnagar from ridge east of Rees Saddle (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Climbing up to Lochnagar follow the vehicle track when it crosses over to the true right of the Lake Creek. The vehicle track eventually turns into an ordinary track which leads to a rock bivy marked 'Goatel' in orange paint. You can climb up through a crack in the rock marked with a painted arrow in the right back corner of the biv.

From the Goatel the track is marked on the rocks in stripes of white paint (easily mistaken for lichen) and the odd cairn.

Nick Thompson

TWO ON HOLIDAY – THE COPLAND

Date not recorded

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 526, November 1993

I have recently finished working up on Cardrona Ski field as a liftie and most times on my days off, I spent my time skiing, although I must admit I did manage once to take time out and head for the hills. While the Main Divide and eastern areas were battered about by strong South Westerly winds and snow, the West Coast lay in clear blue skies. Andrew, an American friend, and I took three days off skiing to go tramping.

Day one took us up through the Haast where we were met by those blue skies. We took our time and enjoyed the sights all the way up to the Fox Glacier. That night we camped with starry skies and next morning we drove back down to the start of the Copland Track where we filled our packs with lots of food delights - no need to skimp as we were on holiday. It was an enjoyable six hour walk in with heaps of photo stops along the way. It was a good laugh for me as Andrew had never had to tackle bridges such as those on the track. We arrived around 4.00 pm in time to hit the hot pools and enjoy the lovely atmosphere with clouds hovering over the mountain tops further up the valley while above us the skies were still clear.

We were joined by three West Coasters and a German couple. The night passed quickly as we feed on gourmet delights such as Taco chips with Salsa. I rolled into bed, full as a barrel only to be joined by the last of the sandflies.

Dawn broke clear to the west again, and it was an early start for us as we headed out back through the lush green vegetation to the coast. We spent no time at all getting changed back at the car with the sandflies having a field day. The drive back to Wanaka was just as pretty as on the way there although once we over the Gates of Haast bridge we were met by the rain.

Thanks to Hughie and Andrew for an enjoyable trip

Michelle Williams

LOCHNAGAR – OR MY GOSH!

October 23-25, 1993

Author: Greg Panting

Published in Bulletin 527, December 1993

Friday night saw five trampers assemble at the clubrooms at 6pm and after 30 minutes waiting for the sixth person to turn up it was decided to depart and head to Alexandra for tea. If you think this is not an uncommon occurrence - wait, there is more. 30km out of Alexandra, Lorraine's vehicle received a shattered windscreen. The vehicle was driven to and left in Alexandra for the weekend. At 9.45pm we piled into Nick's car and drove to Cromwell where we met Mike. After some gear and car swapping we carried on to Arrowtown where Peter, John and Robin had already set up camp. We found our missing sixth person who had made his way to Milton to get his ride.

Saturday morning saw us wake to a fine day and we left at 8.30am with one 4WD and two 2WD's. We headed on up to the Skippers Road which was in reasonable condition until the Skippers Junction but the road to the Branches Station was very rough and tricky in places for even the 4WD. The car drivers did very well to get us to the station in one piece. We began tramping around 11am from the Branches and it was almost immediately sidling around the island for an hour through Matagouri. After lunch we carried on up the easy valley walk and by 3pm it was clear that we would not make it to Lochnagar that day. We camped at a spot at the junction of the Shotover River and Lake Creek about three hours from Lochnagar. Sunday morning dawned fine and frosty and all our boots were frozen solid so some people began to complain (we won't mention any names, Elspeth). Robin, John and Peter went straight up to Lochnagar in the morning and the rest of us went up to 100 Mile Hut for a look then up the lake after lunch. The track was not too difficult to the end of the 4WD track but then it turned into a real scramble up through Matagouri and bog. The track led up to Goatel Bivvy and then it was onto the rocks. The white painted markers were difficult to follow as white lichen also grew on the rocks. The moraine wall that caused the lake was the result of an amazing rock fall from one of the peaks. The lake itself is an amazing site, being surrounded by snowcapped mountains. John and I were the only one's brave (mad) enough to have a swim.

The evening was very social and late in a small hut built for two (we got 9 people in) Monday morning was again fine and frosty when we set off all the way back to the Branches homestead. There was a lot of complaining about lunch time at Sixteen Mile Gorge and we finally got back to the Branches at 5pm. Arthur and Lorraine Borrell had a cup of tea and freshly baked scones and cookies for us.

We set off back home at 6pm and having tea in Queenstown was a real plus for Becky who had never been to Queenstown before. We arrived back in town at 1am on Tuesday morning.

Thank you Mike Floate and Elspeth Gold for an enjoyable and well organised trip and also to the Burrells for a great afternoon tea.

Greg Panting for the nine others who made the trip so enjoyable.

SKIPPERS – LABOUR WEEKEND

October 23-25, 1993

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 527, December 1993

Saturday dawned overcast and after a false start, we were on our way. Any thoughts of keeping dry feet were dispelled within the first ten minutes as we made our first (and certainly not the last) rivercrossing. It was an easy walk along the riverbed to the forks with an impressive view of the old goldminer's dam about a quarter of the way in. For those that have not been there, it is well worth visiting as the dam seems to tower above you and fills the whole river. It is amazing to think how deep the dam must have been when first built over a hundred years ago. Now it is less than knee deep, having been filled with a hundred years of gravel.



Weir in Skippers Creek, near Fergusons Creek (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

After a scroggin stop at the forks, we strolled up the right branch, continually crossing the river until the easy climb to Dynamo Hut. Here we took the time to inspect what had been rebuilt of the dynamo and read the hut book, which showed a number of club members had already been here before us. Our packs went back on, and we continued on our way, stopping for lunch at Dynamo Flats. There was a bit of worry as it started to spit but luckily it never eventuated and that was all we saw of any clouds for the rest of the weekend. The route then took us up to the water race which we followed until it abruptly stopped, and we were left to

make our own route up to the hut situated at the flats before Dandy's Saddle. There is an excellent tent site just outside the hut door and we decided this is where we would stay.

Russell and Trevor decided to take advantage of the weather and off they went to climb a small nameless peak to the side of Mt. Aurum. Antony and I went to look at the old stamping battery not far from the hut. After trying to turn the wheel to no avail, Antony headed off to climb the ridge between the branches while I trundled back to the hut and set up camp. It was a lovely afternoon and I relaxed in the sun watching the progress of both Russell and Trevor on one side and Antony on the other. Antony arrived back first, and we had tea ready for when Trevor and Russell returned.



Dandys Saddle and Mt Aurum, Skippers Creek (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Sunday dawned very calm and sunny with an extremely hard frost. It was agreed that the guys would attempt a climb of Mt. Aurum, so we packed quickly and headed for the pass where we were rewarded with some amazing views. The guys dropped their packs and set off for the mountain. Meanwhile I found a tarn just below the ridge and proceeded to sunbathe while I waited for their return. Three to four hours later they arrived back with tales of avalanches which had made Antony and Trevor decide it was too dangerous to continue. Russell, however, had continued the last 800 feet by himself, dodging the avalanches as he went. He managed to reach the top took the time for a quick 360 then quickly came back down. We had a late lunch, then packed and headed down the leading ridge to the valley floor. Getting only slightly bluffed once but it was easy to reach the bottom. The route to the ridge is not as easy to find and would be hard if you did not know where to start up.

We made camp at the edge of the trees and proceeded to watch eat and eat and eat (it is amazing to think someone so skinny can put so much away!) It must be said that Russell did

not eat much the next day. Again, we woke to a hard frost. After breakfast we left our packs and walked to the head of the river, trying to find the reason as to the dirty colour of the water. We spent some time watching the goats running over the hillside but didn't find the source of the dirty water. Back at our campsite, we hefted our packs (which were a lot lighter by now thanks to all the eating from the night before) and took our time following the river down to Bullendale. There is plenty of old gold mining machinery left lying around the river but this only adds to the enjoyment. Bullendale must have been a large township in its time and we spent time fossicking around. We were a bit disappointed to find a tunnel which was blocked off about ten feet in (probably just as well!) Not surprisingly none of us were overly hungry so we carried on to the forks for a late lunch.



Prince of Wales from near Dandys Saddle, Skippers Creek (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We were surprised to find a four-wheel drive with some tourists trying to drive to Bullendale but after a word from us, they decided it wasn't such a good idea. From here it was a game of 'let's try to catch the four-wheel drive on the next tricky bit' and it must be said that if it wasn't for us, they could have been left in a tricky situation. We came around the corner to the dam and found the four-wheel drive stuck in a slightly deeper part of the river not far from the edge of the dam. After freeing the four-wheel drive, we continued on our way and arrived back at the car before the four-wheel drive (and no, we weren't really trying to race it). All in all, a great trip with excellent company.

Debbie Pettinger for Trevor Deaker, Russell Godfrey and Antony Pettinger

MANAPOURI KAYAK TRIP

November 6-7, 1993

Author: Elspeth Gold

Published in Bulletin 527, December 1993

This was to be a trip with a difference, kayaking instead of walking. We got to Manapouri before the pub shut so we had time for a couple before retiring to bed. Hot showers the next morning before meeting with the boats. About an hour was spent learning techniques then it was off on an adventure.

The lake was like a mirror so made for easy paddling. Before we knew it, it was time to stop for snacks. The beauty of the sea kayaks was the enormous amount of room to pack all sorts of goodies to eat and drink. People got more confident as the day wore on, we swapped singles for doubles so everyone had a turn in each type.



OTMC Kayaking Trip on Lake Manapouri (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We got to the hut at the end of Hope Arm about 4pm, after exploring around some of the lakes islands. There was hardly a breath of wind stirring the lake so we were all in good spirits by the end of the day. Once we reached shore the sandflies descended in abundance. Justin managed to avoid them by demonstrating his Eskimo rolls on the lake while the rest of us relaxed with a beverage or two. A gourmet tea was had beside a huge bonfire which was organised on the beach and the cups were passed around. Everyone retired happily filled, to a very comfortable night's sleep.

The next day dawned sunny and calm again so we had to chase each other's boats around to get some waves from their bow for excitement. Lunch was had early and most indulged in a swim and or quiet beverage in the sun. Once we reached where the shore was in sight away over there - Russell and Elspeth decided to practice their deep-water rescue by swapping boats and it was onwards back to shore.



Hope Arm, Lake Manapouri (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The weather was terrific, the equipment superb and the company divine! I reckon there's a few converts to kayaking after the weekend. Thanks Justin and Kaye for organising it, let's do it again soon!

Elspeth Gold

ROOM FOR TWO (A SARDINE FOR FOUR)

October 30-31, 1993

Author: Michelle Williams

Published in Bulletin 527, December 1993

It was my last weekend in the country, and I had to spend it out in the hills. A quick phone call to Sue as she is always keen and the weather forecast is clear and sunny till Tuesday.

Friday night saw us camping at the car park with a full moon and starry skies. The tent was roomy with two as strong winds battered the tent about. Saturday brought doom and gloom with thick rain threatening clouds looming above. We left around 9am, passing Monument Hut and taking the plunge on several river crossings up to the Huxley turn off. The conversation never seemed to stop and before we knew it we were at Huxley Fords in time for an early lunch. The mountain tops were covered in cloud and drizzle began to get a bit heavy as we left for the South Huxley. The track is clearly marked as it clumps up and down on the true left to open tussock where the dog biv sits some 2¼ hours from the Huxley Forks Hut. Our home for the night was the 5.5ft high dog kennel with room for two comfortable but a sardine can for four and impossible for more.



Hopkins Valley from near Monument Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

It was early and the rain continued so it was a hot brew and into the pit for the afternoon. I read the hut book which dates back to 1970 where Bruce Mason had been some 23 years prior to us, Dick (Richard) Pettinger was another name mentioned in early years. The hut book was

very interesting afternoon reading. Nightfall came early and rain continued to get heavier and the temperature dropped.



Huxley Forks Hut (Officers Hut behind), Huxley Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We spent a comfortable night in the biv and awoke early at the crack of dawn to check the river level which had risen about a foot and we decided to leave early, linking arms to cross the river. It was a quick descent back down to the Huxley Forks Hut and a hot brew before we continued out. There was plenty of fresh snow low on the mountains. The wind battered us down the flats of the Huxley and by the time we reached the Hopkins we were beginning to feel quite miserable. The wind kept forever changing directions, with pelting rain, freezing cold and no shelter we took the most direct route across the flats. We were almost at Monument Hut and the river was very swift and getting deeper so we linked arms and plunged in only to retreat and grovel our way up the bank in search of the high river route. We got back to the car and it was very pleasant as we chanted from our wet gear into dry clothes which soon got soaked in the rain before we had finished changing.

Thanks, Sue, for another of your adventures which I am sure I won't forget in a hurry. Pity the weatherman got it wrong again.

Michelle Williams for Sue Robinson

MT. EARNSLAW

October 16-17, 1993

Author: Bruce Newton

Published in Bulletin 527, December 1993

This trip had been a long time in the planning, nine years for Doug, two years for Paul, three weeks for myself and five minutes for Fiona!!

We left Dunedin at 6.10pm after a nice cuppa and some of Doug's fruit cake. It was tea in Alex, a fuel up in Queenstown and Paul took over the driving. Here we discovered a definite dark side to his nature as possums on the Glenorchy Road will attest. He managed to get four definite "kills" and two possibles. Paul even ran off the road to get them! We made it to the Rees Road end at midnight, set up the fly and went to bed.



Doug Forrester in front of Esquilant Biv, October 17, 1993 (PHOTO: Doug Forrester Archive)

We woke to a lovely morning at 6am, packed and were away at 7.10am. The two hour walk up the valley is marked by orange waratahs to guide you around the boggy bits and at the 25 Mile Hut sign we crossed the Rees diagonally to the start of the Kea Basin track. The river was thigh high and very cold. The track commences on a raised plateau type bank amongst beech trees. It is very well formed and an hour and a half brings you to Kea Basin rock bivvy - very cosy. An hour's further climbing and we were above Kea Basin on a promontory looking down on the Rees. An ideal spot for lunch on a lovely sunny day. The views are magnificent, in front of us Aspiring, Tyndall and more snowcapped mountains stretching in the distance. Behind us is Kea Basin, a vast Amphitheatre with sheer bluffs and a large waterfall streaming down the middle and overlooking everything is Mt Earnslaw, Birley Glacier and the snow fields that we

would soon be on. As we climbed up to the snowline, I turned back to look at the water in the distance with the sun shining through, creating a beautiful rainbow which swirled and flared as the mist spray caught the sun's rays. We stopped and looked as the coloured effect moved up and down the waterfall - what a sight!

The cairned track runs out as we hit the snow which was firm and reasonably easy to walk on. It was borderline crampons which surprised us as the sun had been on it all day. Initially it was a straight climb up the zig-zag sidle, still up we went, aiming for the saddle at the base of Earnslaw. It was hot, sweaty work for several hours with the feeling of getting sunburnt in spite of covering up. At last, we reached the saddle following a long sidle up the glacier (no crevasses!). It now flattens out and becomes quite windy. Three quarters of an hour later we reached Esquilant Bivvy. Earnslaw above us, Leary Peak to the right and the craggy peaks of Pluto in front. What a magic place! In the middle of all this snow and rock, the bivvy is a welcome shelter. Only two years old (the one it replaces is still habitable), sleeps eight with a small cooking bench. There is even an outside toilet.



Doug Forrester on Mt Earnslaw with Aoraki Mt Cook behind, October 17, 1993 (PHOTO Doug Forrester Archive)

Paul and Doug surveyed the mountain. The best route appeared up a steep (near vertical!) narrow gut, opposite the hut. This had a snow/ice covering, then onto rock/snow scree for 500-600 feet, then into another steeper snow gut and snow to the top. I was weighing this up as well and decided vertical front pointing with two tools was not my scene - but I would cook breakfast for everyone at 5am. We turned in at 9pm, after a lovely meal courtesy of Fi, Paul and Doug's dehy veges. It was a very windy night with fitful sleep and the alarm signalling 5am. Doug's up and keen as mustard - it's blowing a gale, cold and dark - what a guy! Paul follows and while they gear up I cook the porridge and tea. They leave at 6am. Fi and I expect them back in ½ hour but we are back asleep till 9am (bliss). Looking out the door at 9.10am and it is a white out. Then it gradually clears and at 10am we see two dark specks

picking their way down the steep slopes. After a final slow precise descent down the gut, two thirsty and elated climbers appear at the hut. They are full of the excitement of the climb, of kicking into the ice beneath a thin crust of snow, a vertical climb and with all four points in most of the way, of negotiating bluffs and of the view from the top. We have hot tomato soup ready, and they gulp it down. They had somehow forgotten to take water on the climb and after leaving at 6am had reached the top at 8.30am before being back at the by 11.30am - thirsty work and extremely well done!



Paul Bingham on Mt Earnslaw, October 17, 1993 (PHOTO Doug Forrester Archive)

After packing up we start on the journey out. Crampons on, sun shining, lighter packs and downhill. We had a lot of fun glissading down the snow slopes - semi self-arresting and it didn't take long to lose height. We stopped to fill up water bottles from some tarns and used Paul's Betadine drops (two drops per litre and wait 40 minutes) so we could have a drink during lunch time. The Earnslaw/Kea Basin area is reputedly full of nasty Giardia (it's been over ten days since returning so I think it is safe to assume the drops work). A packed lunch at Kea Basin Rock biv and then the long slog down the hill and the valley to the car. In an attempt to miss the boggy pieces we kept to the true right for a much longer time before crossing the Rees. On reflection I don't think it made much difference, unless you walked virtually the full valley on the true right.

Blissful to take boots off and change into "real" clothes. Back to Queenstown for tea - Zinger Burger with the works - and into Dunedin at midnight. Good weather, good food, great company and boy were we stiff and sore on Monday and Tuesday!!

Bruce Newton for Doug Forrester, Paul Bingham and Fiona Buchanan.

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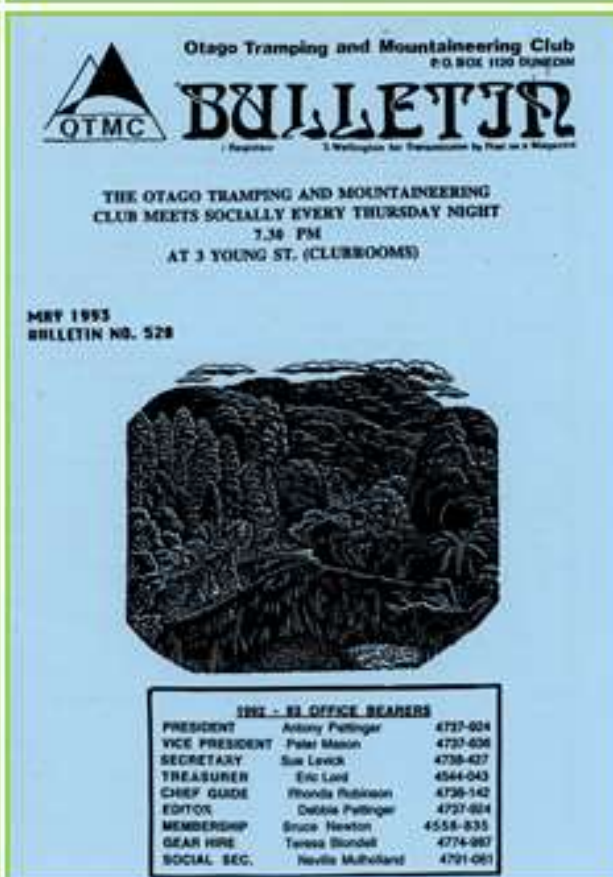
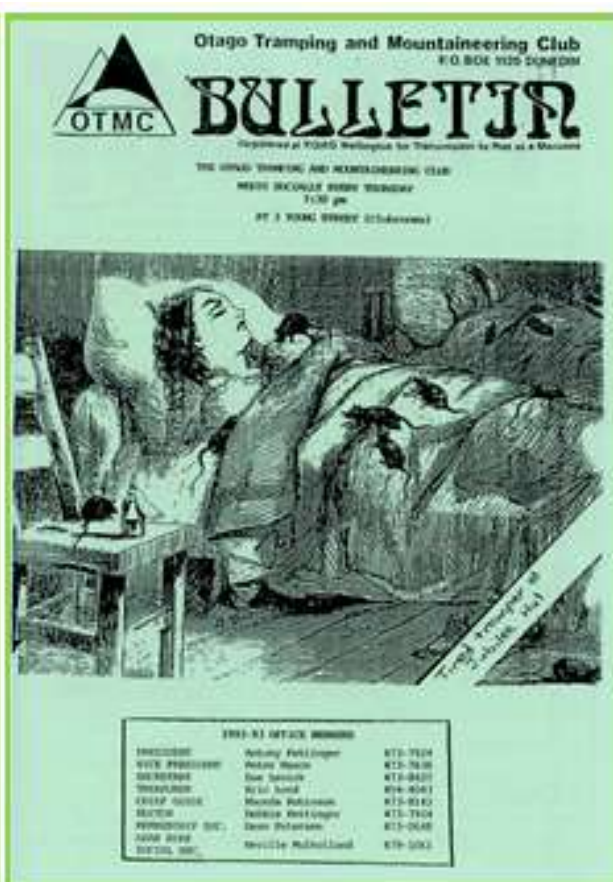
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OTMC TRIP PROGRAMME 1993

January	24	Nuggets	Elsbeth Gold
January	30-31	Mt Fortune	Peter Mason
January	31	The Crater	Paul Bingham
February	6	OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon	Antony Pettinger
February	7	Burns Track	Jonette Service
February	13-14	Bushcraft 1993 (Tirohanga Weekend)	Antony Pettinger
February	20-21	Bushcraft 1993 (Silver Peaks Weekend)	Antony Pettinger
February	28	OTMC Picnic - Pipikaretu Beach	Elsbeth Gold
March	7	Bushcraft 1993 (Rivercrossing - Outram Glen)	Antony Pettinger
March	13-14	Bushcraft 1993 (Optional Ohau Weekend)	Peter O'Driscoll
March	14	Silverstream Circumnavigation	David Barnes
March	20	Ben Rudd's Revegetation	
March	21	Ben Rudd's Revegetation	
March	27-28	Matukituki	Eric Lord
March	28	Work Party	Peter Mason
April	4	Berwick Forest	Hugh Dickson
April	9-12	Makarora Area (Easter)	Antony Pettinger
April	18	Ship At Anchor	Ken Mason
April	24-25	Garvies	Mike Floate
April	25	Flat Hill - Pigroot Hill	Peter Mason
May	2	Work Party - Tunnels Track - Yellow Ridge	Doug Forrester
May	8-9	Remarkables	Paul Bingham
May	9	Seal Point / Chasm	Peter O'Driscoll
May	16	Flagstaff without Walkways	David Barnes
May	22-23	Timaru River / Dingleburn	Elsbeth Gold
May	23	Peninsula Gutbuster	Bruce Mason
May	30	Around Shag Point	Peter Mason
June	5-7	Rees / Routeburn	Bruce Newton
June	12	Yellow Eyed Penguin Habitat - Tour and Revegetation	Lynn Dowsett
June	19-20	Mid Winter Wine And Dine Cooking Competition	Debbie Pettinger
June	20	Government Track - Waipori	Bruce Newton
June	27	Silverstream Circumnavigation	David Barnes
July	3-4	Manapouri	Arthur Blondell
July	4	Hindon Mystery	Peter Mason
July	11	Rongomai Ridge / Honey Comb	Eric Lord
July	12-16	Hopkins (Mid-Week Trip)	Ian Sime
July	18	Remarkable Rock - The Catlins	Ian Sime
July	24-25	X/C Ski Intro (beginner to intermediate)	Ken Mason
July	31-1	Winter Routeburn (Falls Side)	Antony Pettinger
August	1	Freeman Track - Craiglowan Falls	Mike Floate
August	8	Stony Creek - Shap River Mouth	Peter Mason
August	14-15	X/C Ski (Beginner to Advanced)	Dave Levick

August	15	Mt Trotter - Mt MacKenzie	Peter Mason
August	22	Peninsula Bike Trip	Russell Godfrey
August	28-29	Key Summit	Teresa Blondell
September	5	Peninsula Double Traverse	David Barnes
September	11-12	Snowcraft Course	Arthur Blondell
September	12	Maungatua Traverse	Doug Forrester
September	18	OTMC Annual Dinner	Neville Mulholland
September	19	SAREX (Search & Rescue Exercise - Flagstaff)	David Barnes
September	25-26	X/C Ski (Old Woman Range)	Mark Planner
September	26	Taieri River	Fiona Buchanan
October	3	Work Party	Committee
October	9-10	Purakanui Bay - Catlins	Peter Mason
October	10	Orbell's Cave	Sharon St Clair-Newman
October	17	Hightop - Rocky Ridge - Tunnels Track	Stuart Mathieson
October	23-25	Skippers - Mt Aurum	Antony Pettinger
October	31	SAREX (Search & Rescue Exercise)	David Barnes
November	6-7	Manapouri Kayak - Tramp	Justin Calder
November	7	Mt Cargill - Organ Pipes	Greg Wood
November	14	Taieri Mouth	Trevor Blogg
November	20-21	Footstool - Mt Cook	Barry Wybrow
November	20-21	Women Suffrage Year Celebration - Matukituki (ALL Women)	Rhonda Robinson
November	21	Mt Trotter - Mt Mackenzie	Peter Mason
November	28	Yellow / Gap Ridge	Peter O'Driscoll
December	4-5	Mavora Lakes	Elspeth Gold
December	5	Intro to Half-Marathon	Trevor McDonald
December	11-12	Mt Fortune (Xmas Social)	Peter Mason
December	12	Mt Fortune	Peter Mason
December	19	Family Xmas Party at Clubrooms	David Barnes

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (FEBRUARY TO MAY)



OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (JUNE TO SEPTEMBER)

Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club
P.O. BOX 1120 DUNEDIN

OTMC BULLETIN
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THE OTAGO TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MEETS SOCIALLY EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT
7.30 PM
AT 3 YOUNG ST. (CLUBROOMS)

JUNE 1993
BULLETIN NO. 521

Sgt. Ingham watching



1992 - 93 OFFICE BEARERS

PRESIDENT	Anthony Pellingier	4737-924
VICE PRESIDENT	Peter Mason	4737-636
SECRETARY	Sue Levick	4738-427
TREASURER	Eric Lord	4544-043
CHIEF GUIDE	Rhonda Robinson	4738-142
EDITOR	Debbie Pellingier	4737-924
MEMBERSHIP	Bruce Newton	4558-835
GEAR HIRE	Teresa Standell	4774-987
SOCIAL SEC.	Neville Mulholland	4791-061

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JULY 1993
BULLETIN NO. 522



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AUGUST 1993
BULLETIN NO. 523

"So, Earl, what exactly are the rules?"

"I think it's at least after the Arthur."



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SEPTEMBER 1993
BULLETIN NO. 524

"I feel great, I feel great, I feel great, I feel great, I feel great..."




1993 - 94 OFFICE BEARERS

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EDITOR	Debbie Pellingier	4737-924
MEMBERSHIP	Bruce Newton	4558-835
GEAR HIRE	Greg Wood	4767-433
SOCIAL SEC.	POSITION VACANT	

TERESA TIES SOME POSITIVE THINKING AFTER LAST MONTH'S COVER AND DOWNHILL TRIP COURTESY OF ARTHUR AND RUSSELL

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

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OCTOBER 1993
BULLETIN NO. 525



"Well, we've lost. I knew from the start that it was just plain stupid to choose a leader based simply on the size of his or her respective girth belt."
Barry Cromwell.

PRESIDENT	Anthony Pettlingers	4737-924
VIC. PRESIDENT	Peter Mason	4737-436
SECRETARY	Elspeth Gold	4467-402
TREASURER	Debbie Pettlingers	4737-924
CHIEF COOK	Rhonda Robinson	4738-142
DRY TRIPS	Russell Godfrey	4557-295
EDITOR	Debbie Pettlingers	4737-924
MEMBERSHIP	Bruce Newton	4558-875
GRASS STIR	Greg Wood	4767-415
SOCIAL SEC.	SHUTTLE SERVICE	

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NOVEMBER 1993
BULLETIN NO. 526

The one sure for water is laughter. - BULLETIN NO. 526



"WHY WERE YOU SENT SO MANY WOMEN TO THE HILLS OF NEW ZEALAND LATELY? TRADING LEADERSHIP? WHO ARE YOU PUMPING? WHO'S GOING TO BULK UP FROM IT?"

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December 1993



Take the time to put your feet up

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