

OTMC TRIP REPORTS

1994

Sourced from the 1994 OTMC Bulletins



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INTRODUCTION

Early 1994 brought widespread damage to many of our favourite tramping areas, with the most reported at the time being to the Routeburn Valley side of the Routeburn Track. As I recall, a jam of logs occurred at the outlet of Routeburn Flats, causing a large volume of water to build up – when the pressure became too much, the logs released themselves, causing an almighty torrent of water exiting through the gorge, completely destroying the bridges, as well as the track where it was close to rivers edge – it required the army to get the track rebuilt. The storm also caused other damage that can still be seen today, such as the Big Slip, located on the track between the Flats and Routeburn Falls Hut.

The storm also caused significant damage to many other areas from Fiordland through to Ohau. One example is the Temple Stream – the valley upstream of the South Temple Hut was a pleasant grassy valley (in my memory?), but today is covered in gravel. The same happened in one of the nicer valleys we tramped in, Kay Creek (Caples Valley) – check out the trip collection from 1988 to see 'then and now' photos.

Reports in this collection remind me again of the Silver Peaks weekend, run as part of Bushcraft 1994. Events from this weekend shaped our decision making for future Bushcraft Silver Peaks weekends. The weather was probably not too bad in Dunedin City, but as we all know, conditions in the Silver Peaks can be widely different. The weekend wasn't overly cold, but the 'Peaks were covered in mist all weekend (no views at all) and raining most of the time. Overall, everyone handled the trip fine, but we know the first impressions are important, therefore this trip didn't do much to inspire the participants to continue with tramping. Since this trip we have been a lot more cautious in running the Silver Peaks weekend, with several postponements or cancellations over the years.

Another worrying event on the Silver Peaks weekend occurred as we were waiting the bus for the ride home – we were missing one party. We knew Elspeth Gold's party was due to come out at the Tunnel's Track – we hung around as long as we could (including a quick run down to the river to see if they were trapped at the crossing). We decided we had to get everyone else home (they had been wet all day) and made the call to the Police that we were missing four trampers. A couple of us returned to the Tunnels Track that evening for another trip down to the river – no sign.

Monday morning dawned fine and sunny (typical!), and the official search started. As it turned out, I was about to get a helicopter ride to look for them when we came across them at the top of Yellow Ridge (where we thought they should be) – a great relief as we walked them back to Mountain Rd (another trip up the Tunnels Track) and back to town for a debrief. A good outcome, and the party made the right decision when they missed a turn-off in the fog and retreated to shelter (you can read Elspeth's trip report in this collection).

As a club we learnt a lot that weekend, and it certainly proves that the Silver Peaks can never be taken for granted, even in summer.

Antony Pettinger
August 2021

**Cover Photo: Near Dandy's Saddle, between the two branches of Skippers Creek, with Mt Aurum behind.
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

MAVORA LAKES

December 4-5, 1993

Author: Elspeth Gold

Published in Bulletin 528, February 1994

As the Maroroa is part of the Ngāi Tahu claims I wanted to check out the area to be better informed so to say. So, we decided to head as far up the Maroroa as we could in the weekend. We dropped the other parties off and Jim took the wheel to see how much further up the lake we could get the van, suffice it to say it wasn't far and the potholes were big enough to lose a van in.

We camped under the trees, the boys in the fly and the girls in the van. A later start than planned was had on Saturday due to sleeping through the alarm. The walk was on a 4-wheel drive track so the pace was fast. Morning tea was had at the head of the lake beside a hut complete with a wetback and hot shower. Then it was on with the task in hand, suffice to say the valley is very long, brown, devoid of trees and has a lot of bog. By about 3pm with more of the same the only thing in sight we started to lose motivation, so when we reached Taipo Hut, we decided that was the base for the night.



Our plumber had to be utilised as the hut was still in winter condition (no water). Jim had the problem fixed once all the parts that were hidden were located. Taipo has a flush loo which at the best delivers one flush a night. There is no winter loo and no cover at all in any direction. The hut is like a container and the primuses going were all that were needed to heat it.

The wind started to pick up and the roof on the hut started to rattle something wicked. Jim couldn't stand the noise so a few large rocks were employed as footing nails. Every now and

then there would be a thump outside and we'd lost a roofing nail. Any subsequent exits to the loo involved a dive over the banister and a quick roll away from the hut just in case of stray rocks. An earlyish night tucked into bed with Baileys and a not too sound sleep due to high winds and rain and the odd thump of rocks.

The next morning it was an early breakfast and back down the valley amid high winds and showers. Along the way I've left a note to Tipene O'Regan regarding the desirability of the Maroroa verses the Greenstone and we got out to the van between 4 and 5 pm, some of us much blistered and sunburnt.

Jim was on deck to get the van out of the spot it was in. The ones in the back were employed as bouncers, upon reaching a tricky bit on Jim's command we'd bounce up and down in unison, using this method we didn't have to push at all. We met Dave and Sue who had come along the road looking for us and then we picked up the Kiwiburn team and it was onward home somewhat sunburnt and foot sore. Mission for the weekend accomplished by all.

Elsbeth Gold for Robin Frame, David Barnes, and Greg Wood.

(Thanks, guys, for not complaining too much about the uninteresting scenery,
whose idea was it anyway?

KIWIBURN OR BUST (THE CRUISEY WEEKEND)

December 4-5, 1993

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 528, February 1994

FRIDAY: Leave OTMC usual time. Dropped into the Pie Cart at Gore and so far so good. Turn off to North Mavora - clear night - Four novices attempting to pitch tents in the dark. It was finally organised and off to sleep at 11 pm. Still reasonably CRUISEY.

SATURDAY: We woke up to a three-degree frost but perfect skies. Time to take the usual tourist photos, this was too good to miss! Leader takes ages to get packed up, all the time reminding troops that this is a CRUISEY weekend and there is no rush. We were supposed to meet the Southland Tramping Club around 9:30 am but no sign of them.

We set off in search of Kiwiburn Hut using Elspeth's map with a pink route marked so we were all very confident. Over the bridge at the bottom of the North Mavora (I believe we were supposed to be at the bottom of the South Mavora - someone got their directions mixed up with North and South). Anyway, over the bridge and down the South Mavora with still NO SIGN OF SOUTHLAND!



Kiwiburn Hut in 1994 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We stopped off for a bit of R and R and still it was 11.30 am when we arrived at the bottom of South Mavora, that means three hours to Kiwiburn Hut. We were definitely on the right track; the map doesn't lie! Still NO SIGN OF SOUTHLAND!

We will be at the hut by 3 pm! Well, 3pm came and went and we weren't at the hut. We had a bit of confusion when we lost the track for five minutes after lunch and then took the terrace

route and had a spell up on the tussock in the sun. It was a change from beech forest. It was time to consult the map and I decided that we definitely weren't going along the pink route but we seemed to be going in the right direction and the Mararoa was still within sight.

Finally at 5.15 pm we hit the Kiwiburn Hut!! Still NO SIGN OF SOUTHLAND! We did the usual things like lighting the pot belly and reading the hut book, and generally feeling good about the day. Wendy makes the most wonderful desserts! Highly recommended that she be elevated to chief desserter of the OTMC. It was time to light the candles and we took to our sleeping bags about 10 pm. Still NO SIGN OF SOUTHLAND!



Kiwi Burn, looking downstream towards Kiwiburn in 1994 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

SUNDAY: Olive had been checking out the route for today and the troops were up at 6.30 am. Hey! this was supposed to be a CRUISEY weekend, and we weren't due to be picked up till 4.30 pm, what's the rush! We set off up the valley, now following the pink route on the map looking for the track out. Great! We hit on it and passed the turn-off to the Whitestone and round to the Mararoa River track. We knew we definitely weren't lost. We reached the swing-bridge at South Mavora at 2.30 pm, right-on time. They had packed up, but we met up with Dave and Sue who had the billy boiling.

By 4.45 pm there was no sign of the main party so Dave and Sue set off to find them. Party was located and all well. It was back to the Pie Cart at Gore then off home. A real CRUISEY weekend - and still NO SIGN OF SOUTHLAND!!

How many times do you pump the stove ANN?? Thanks, team, for a great weekend and we didn't get lost. (NOTE: none of our party had been to the Kiwiburn so I think we did well and I look on it as a great CRUISEY weekend.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE (MARATHON)

February 5, 1994

Author: Russell Godfrey

Published in Bulletin 529, March 1994

Well, this year I had to sit the OTMC marathon out, so I decided to play my part by organising it. Despite every effort to get more people to take part in either the full or half marathon numbers were still low, but I knew I could rely on the hard-core enthusiasm from previous years. These few always rise to the challenge, usually to better their old time or because they had forgotten the pain of previous years.

Now here is a quick rundown on how my day turned out.

3.20 am BUZZ BUZZ BUZZ BUZZ - SMASH!! Alarm goes off and is quickly stopped.

Up and a plate of muesli before grabbing my gear and away to Booth Road to be meet by a handful of smiling faces all kitted up for a day in the hills.

4.00 am and away they go. Four accepting the challenge of the full marathon and three with a dog for the half marathon. Back in the car and race around to see them pass through the Bullring about an hour after the start. It was bad luck for Ross Chambers at this stage as a twisted ankle meant he had to pull out, there is always next year though. At this stage Peter Mason and I leave them to it and for me it is off to work for an early start. It was an interesting morning as I kept watching the clock, trying to anticipate whereabouts they would be. 11.00 am Leave work and hit the shops for supplies, pick up Peter, Greg and Trevor before heading for Green Hill ready to man our checkpoint. Meanwhile Peter Mason and Paul Bingham were heading towards the gap for their checkpoint. We met Shirley McQueen, Phil Towler and Nemo (the dog) on the track into Green Hill, time to stop for a quick chat, drink and biscuit before they off again to complete the half marathon.



Pulpit Rock (right) as seen from Long Ridge, 1986 photo (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Carrying on to Green Hill where Trevor McDonald had left a note confirming that all on the half marathon had passed through. The time at Green Hill passed quickly as we had lunch and told jokes. Doug Forrester was the first to arrive looking rather tired and scratched but smiling. A quick drink and biscuit and away he goes. It is a while later when both Arthur Blondell and Mark Planner appear. Arthur looked a little worse for wear. I, of course being a courteous tramper, advised them about the upcoming track conditions i.e., hills, boring gravel roads over Swampy, etc., definitely not a place to be if you have sore feet and aching legs and all they could do was abuse me!

Well, it was back off to the finish just in time to catch Doug driving away looking absolutely out of it, as he had pushed so hard and had the misfortune of going astray on top of Swampy Summit (you know how an old man's mind can go astray when talking to a couple of ladies - I'll leave the rest for Doug to explain)

After a couple of hours, Arthur and Mark appear, looking happier that it was almost over for another year, that is of course except for the pain and tiredness that follow for a couple of days.

If you are thinking of entering next year, have a talk to these guys as I am sure they will give it another go next year (unless Teresa has her way of course) CONGRATULATIONS to Doug Forrester, Arthur Blondell and Mark Planner for completing the full marathon and also to Trevor McDonald, Shirley McQueen and Phil Towler and Nemo (the dog) for the half marathon. Also thanks to Peter Mason, Peter Aitcheson, Trevor Deaker, Greg Panting and Paul Bingham for the support

Russell Godfrey

OTMC PICNIC (LONG BEACH)

February 27, 1994

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 529, March 1994

The Annual OTMC picnic was held on 27 February, and it was a great day (weather wise). Five keen and enthusiastic members arrived at Long Beach at about 5 pm Saturday night and enjoyed a barbecue tea, a few games of frisbee and settled down in front of a fire before sleeping out beside the caves. The sunrise was amazing and it was great to see it rise out of the sea. After breakfast it was time again for frisbee's and french cricket.

With lunch time came more club members for a good time at the beach. The volleyball net was erected and a fast furious (?) game was started. The winners had to be my team and then it was time to hit the surf.

It was good to see a lot of less active members along with their children and all those that went enjoyed themselves. The sun, food (accompanied with plenty of sand), surf and company proved to make a great combination. To those that did not make it, you missed an enjoyable day and to those that were there, see you all next year. The weather is already ordered.



Looking north along Long Beach (PHOTO Jade Pettinger)

WILMOT SADDLE OR BUST

November 1993

Author: Peter Aitcheson

Published in Bulletin 529, March 1994

What a great way to spend election weekend, no phone, no radio and best yet no election news. Just mountain cliffs, snow and avalanches.

The three of us headed off to the East Matukituki, alas missing the old fella (Doug - where were you??!) After a quick stop off at the DoC office to sign in we soon left Wanaka behind. We set up the tent at Cameron Flat. It was off to bed early. Saturday dawned and it was wet feet within 200 yards of leaving camp, what a great way to start the weekend. It was good to warm up the muscles as we crossed the flat in full sunshine before heading into the bush. It was a quick run into Junction Flat before moving up to Aspiring Flat for lunch. Next we headed into Rainbow Stream, always mindful of the lack of camping spots. We found what must have been the only spots in the valley and set up camp away from the avalanche runout. We cooked tea with the sound of avalanches from the Kitchener Glacier rolling continuously around us. After tea it was early to bed, and it wasn't too long before the rain started.



Rainbow Stream (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We woke to a clear sky and with a quick breakfast we left camp with the sun rising. From our campsite we headed up the creek bed onto the snow grass, working our way up the ridge towards Wilmot Saddle. From the ridge it was easy but steep snow grass slopes leading onto

softish snow fields up to Wilmot Saddle. Although it was November, there was no hazard to be had with avalanche debris coming our way. Two fresh feeling trampers raced to climb Sisyphus Peak, this peak is the best vantage point in the East Matukituki. Well worth the effort. The old fella, had he been there, would have enjoyed the views across to Mt. Aspiring. Upon returning to the saddle, the peak was renamed Mt. Weetbix (due to the layered texture of the rock).



Sisyphus Peak – best route to Ruth Flat is via the top, not the left hand side! (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

A light lunch was had in the sun with Mt. Aspiring in one direction and the Volta glacier and the Dome in the other. Getting up to the saddle was relatively easy, going down was hell. The good book (Moir's) said to sidle east from the saddle, avoiding the bluffs directly below. We followed this piece of advice to the T. We headed right across the snow grass where ice axes were a must, wet snow grass, wet boots and a little snow with huge bluffs below were a great mixture. We worked our way around to the leading ridge. From here we took to a rocky gut which seemed to lead down to the top of Ruth Flats. Soon the rocks gave way to chest high scrub with the ground underneath becoming steeper all the time, until the bush hid any and all steep drops. Tarzan Pettinger swung from bush to bush until the weight of his pack caught him. Easy escape - drop pack down the bluff, hang by one hand until weight and gravity take over. Antony landed next to his pack, bruised but otherwise unhurt. A new club sport must be pack throwing. From here we gingerly made our way hand over hand through the scrub and boulders down to the relatively flat creek bed with easy travel to Ruth Flat. Antony said, the right route is down the main ridge through the heavy stand of bush. Now he tells us!! (in retrospect we have since been advised that the best route down to Ruth Flat is via the top of Sisyphus Peak and down Ruth Ridge, a bit late now). A quiet tea was had as the sun set on the mountains. The dishes were washed in the steam and another early night.



Mt Aspiring / Tititea from Sisyphus (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Next morning we had breakfast as the last rain showers cleared through, leaving an overcast day. This is the day we all looked forward to - the Bledisloe Gorge! We passed by a temporary DoC hut before heading into the bush. The track has been cut and remarked with all hand holds being trimmed on steep sections. We were passed by two kea talking and chasing us along the track as we headed towards bushline. We sidled around the snow grass under Dragonfly Peak - good views of Ruth Flat, Aspiring Flat and eventually Junction Flat, which is reached after a steep drop through the bush. We had lunch at Junction Flat before pressing on towards Cameron Flat and back to the car before heading home.

A great trip was had by all (Doug you should have been there!) My next trip into the area will be an assault on Dragonfly Peak itself. The team was La President (Antony Pettinger), Deaker kid (Trevor Deaker) and Peter Aitcheson (Scribe)



Ruth Flat & the East Matukituki from Sisyphus Peak (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)



Descent from Sisyphus to Ruth Flat, East Matukituki (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

BUSHCRAFT '94

February – March, 1994

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in OTMC Bulletin 529, March 1994

By the time that you read this, Bushcraft '94 will be over. This year's course saw 29 people participating (well up on the 13 from 1993). All feedback that I've heard is good. The tried-and-true programme was stuck to, with no major problems. The Silver Peaks weekend was different in that it rained continuously all weekend, with visibility to match. The April Bulletin will be a full Bushcraft one, so, Bushcraft people, get writing!



OTMC Bushcraft – Tirohanga Weekend, Tramping Etiquette – Trip Planning (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the leaders and instructors for their commitment and dedication to this very worthy course. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed - thanks guys.

Antony

LEANING LODGE

January 23, 1994

Author: Ian Sime

Published in Bulletin 530, April 1994

The first day trip for 1994 saw 15 people meet at Young Street and drive for over an hour in four cars to O'Connell's beyond Middlemarch where the 4WD track starts up the Rock and Pillars to our smaller hut there.

The 3000 ft climb is easier than the nearby one to Big Hut because the track zig-zags rather than going directly up the mountain face. However, after just two hours, we would have been glad to accept that the small two bunk hut beside the track was our 'objective. Unhappily it was the old hut which used to be the base for Otago University people servicing the weather station, now no longer in use. We needed another 45 minutes to reach our Lodge.



Leaning Lodge (PHOTO Peter McKellar)

Everyone declared it was a great place. The water wasn't connected to the tap over the sink, but the delightful stream just two minutes away which races down the hill in its clean channel, was easily accessible if needed. The hut was tidy, with the sponge rubber mattresses for most of the 12 bunk spaces tipped up on edge. After lunch, most of the party climbed the last 500 feet to get the great inland views from the top, while Peter continued sketching the hut. The

day was ideal for tramping, calm with full cloud cover, although a breeze kept us cool as we neared the top.



The turn-off from the main 4WD track to Leaning Lodge (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

At about Sutton we encountered light rain on our home which continued off and on back to Dunedin. An ideal way to start the tramping year for Tim Broad, Sally Coleman, Phillip Cowley, Terry Duffield, Bruce Johnston, Sandra Morris, Greg Panting, Trevor Pullar, Zena Roderique, Jonette Service, Murray and Wayne Thomson, Lindsay Warburton, Peter Weatherall and Ian Sime.

OTMC HALF MARATHON

February 5, 1994

Author: Shirley McQueen

Published in Bulletin 530, April 1994

Rising in time for a 4 o'clock start is a ghastly experience and then I couldn't find the back door key. This delay meant that I got to the start at the Pineapple track at 4.15 am for a 4.30 am start. The others had left, except for Phill Towler, Captain Nemo (my best friend) came too, just in case there was nobody else going.

The tramp over Flagstaff and down to Whare Flat was done in the dark, and I can't say much about it because I was asleep. Nemo had fun chasing hares on the road on the way up Powder Hill I thought that I was getting a nasty blister on my foot, but numerous coatings of Vaseline seemed to prevent it. The route from the top of Powder Hill was a challenge. We tentatively made our way across and through scrub and flax to the trig, and then SW to the road. Then along this until the route plunged down through gorse into a gully. Some clearing had been done here so that it was now not too bad, and then the gorse thickened to impenetrable, even for Nemo. We struggled on, unable to see our way, expecting to find skeletons of those who had attempted OTMC marathons in previous years. I was still removing gorse prickles weeks later. Apparently, Trevor McDonald knows an alternative route under pine trees, which sidetracks this masochistic bit. To complete the torture Nemo pushed me into a ditch. Fortunately, it was dry at the bottom.



Pulpit Rock as viewed from Long Ridge, 2019 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

With relief we emerged from all this and headed up the road on Long Ridge. The weather, views and conversation were great, and this was the most enjoyable part of the day, all the way up to Pulpit Rock. Nemo had plenty of puddles to drink from, the occasional snack from my pack, and lots of interesting scents to chase up.



Long Ridge emerging from fog, photo taken on track below Pulpit Rock (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

At Green Hut site I was dive bombed by a fern bird, which was a new and surprising experience. Further on, near the turn off to Swampy, we met Russell, Peter and Greg, who plied us with food, drink and general good cheer and encouragement. Thanks guys - that gave us the boost we needed for the long and boring trudge over Swampy and Flagstaff, with legs and feet getting sorer. Unlike one elderly, woolly headed person we had no trouble finding the route. Perhaps he encountered some 'MacBeth' kuje wutcgesm who deliberately led him astray. Hubble bubble toil and trouble - better stay in the kitchen Doug!

Thanks for the company Phil, and also thanks to all the supporting team.

Shirley McQueen

THIS IS THE SILVER PEAKS? (BUSHCRAFT 1994)

February 19-20, 1994

Author: Vivienne Bresnell

Published in Bulletin 530, April 1994

We started our trip into the Silver Peaks on Saturday, which was wet and miserable. We all arrived at the Clubhouse at 7.45 am, got into our groups and sorted out the food and party gear. Our group was the first to get off at the Quarry at the top of the motorway. We made our way down the road for a short distance before turning off and heading up past the water pipes. The Burns Track was muddy with a slight climb to the top where we had to negotiate some fallen trees. Another half hour on and we came across a lot of gorse and had to go straight through. Next was a compass reading at the top, near Hightop, just to make sure we were still on the right track.



Intersection of the Burns and Rustlers Tracks (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Upon arriving at the Green Hut site we stopped for lunch. In amongst the flax bushes was a black piece of tarpaulin which we didn't use as we quickly ate and then moved on before we got too cold. It was a steady climb up to Pulpit Rock and just past the rock we met up with Peter Aitcheson and his party. After a short break and chat we carried on to the start of the Devil's Staircase and from here it was straight down. There wasn't much to hang on too and I managed to slip over twice, but we eventually made it to the bottom without too much trouble. We made camp just before the river, on the other side of the river some of the other parties had already set up camp. After making camp, it was time to make dinner. Dinner that night

consisted of soup, followed by chicken, coleslaw, rice and mixed stir-fried veggies, dessert was cheesecake, strawberries and grapes.

Because it was quite cold Neville lit a campfire and we all sat around after dinner and had a few drinks, and I don't mean hot drinks! Neville also took his water pistol to try and keep the other parties away as Peter's party also came to join us around the campfire. A good time was had by all that night, even though it was still raining. Before it got dark Neville set off with his water pistol to see where the other groups were camping for the night. As it was late, and everybody had had a long day we all headed off to bed early.



1990's traditional Bushcraft campsite in Cave Stream (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Morning came, which saw no change in the miserable weather. After breakfast we cleaned up and headed towards Jubilee Hut and after a ten-minute stop took a compass reading, to confirm Neville's prediction where we were heading. We had another steady climb to the top of the hill, behind the hut and once again the weather remained miserable and foggy. We had all the confidence in Neville to get us across to ABC Cave and the Gap, and as you can guess we missed the cave so decided to carry on to the Gap. The Gap was lovely, and I am sure it would have given some great views had the weather been better. We didn't stop till we reached the bottom where we asked the farmer if we could use his shed for lunch, and it was a good place to eat out of the rain too. It was great to see the bus waiting to pick us up and even better to be able to change into some dry clothes

Thanks, Neville, for being our leader, we enjoyed it Vivienne Brensell for Katie and Jill

SLIGHT GEOGRAPICAL EMBARRASMENT PROBLEM IN THE SILVER PEAKS

February 19-20, 1994

Author: Elspeth Gold

Published in Bulletin 530, April 1994

The weekend of the Bushcraft trip dawned with grotty weather, lots of rain but it was nice and warm. The participants and the leaders set off rather subdued from the clubrooms. We missed Dave Levick's famous 'you're all doomed' because we certainly thought it was all a bad joke and sunshine was the only weather we were keen to go out in.

It rained most of the day on Saturday and lunch was had on the track just down from Pulpit Rock. POD's primus took an awfully long time to heat a small amount of water for his team for lunch, or was it there merely to warm his legs? The Devil's Staircase was tackled with flair and sore knees, we hopefully headed to the hut planning to ignore Antony's instructions of huts are out for Bushcraft. The hut was full of a private party so camping in the valley was the only option. After much wandering around, a great campsite was chosen around the left of the Staircase. A hot cuppa soup was first on the agenda once the ball of flames that was once a reliable primus was fixed, (any unsuspecting fool want to buy a primus?). Then I wandered off to socialise while the party organised a tea of spinach and ricotta pasta with fresh veggies and a tomato and herb sauce, followed by cheesecake and coffee. A comfortable night was had under the fly with not too many drips.



The view from ABC Cave (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Sunday dawned wet and foggy, so it was a quick breakfast (yes, the leader did allow the party the luxury of lying in while the billy boiled). Next stop ABC Cave. We arrived at the cave about 10-45am with Antony and POD's team in residence. A dry snack stop was had before climbing up behind the caves to reach the fence line. Next stop Yellow Hut for lunch. Well here the plans deviate somewhat from the expected. We took the compulsory compass bearing above ABC and headed in that direction. Visibility was about 10 metres (no excuses though we did have compasses). A couple of hours later when we had missed the Yellow turnoff and taken the next ridge (it don't go anywhere) it was a check of the compass and map and we beat a retreat to ABC Cave. Once we had missed the ridge we lost confidence and in the fog not a lot looked familiar. We arrived back at ABC Cave very wet and tired at about 5-30pm. We decided it was best to stay put and walk out the next morning as the cave was lovely and warm and dry.



**Yellow Ridge, Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve – not far from where the missing party was located
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

Food was rationed out, a fire lit and an early night had. Next morning, we headed out catching up with Antony and Peter heading in to find us. With everyone in excellent spirits (apart from the lack of ciggies) we headed for the Tunnels Track. Bit of an adventure really but it just goes to show that even those experienced in the Silver Peaks can become geographically embarrassed. The party coped superbly, thanks guys. Let's not do it again sometime.

Elsbeth for Andy, Mick and Anna

OHAU, I LOVE TO TRAMP

Date: March 12-13, 1994

Author: Jill McDonald

Published in Bulletin 530, April 1994

The day dawned bright and clear as Carol awoke to the sound of a mouse crawling out of her pack! The big question on all our minds was 'would our scroggin be damaged??' Close investigation found that all was well, leaving us feeling reassured as we prepared for the day ahead.



Head of Temple Stream, North Branch (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The 'A' Team was made up of Antony, Mike, Carol and myself, we set off up the North Temple which was a pleasant walk up the valley with the sun shining down upon us. It was a pretty valley that came to an end all too soon and it was ooooooover the pass we went. At times it was like rock climbing without a rope but, hey, that made it all the more interesting. The pass consisted of a three hour climb up a steep rock gut but the view from the top proved worth it. Next a twenty-minute descent down the scree slope on the other side - pretty awesome!!

We found a good camp spot down the valley (thanks to Trevor) and spent the night trying to spell our names with alphabet soup - apparently you can eat it too!

Next day was a cruise down the South Temple and an enjoyable water fight at lunch. An enjoyable trip that was topped off with a body surf down the river, it was wicked fun. All in all, a choice trip



Descending from Gunsight Pass into Temple Stream, South Branch (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Thanks guys

Jill McDonald

EASTER IN THE WEST MATUKITUKI (3 ½ GRUNTS)

April 1-4, 1994

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 531, May 1994

The forecast was for excellent on Friday, deteriorating on Saturday, lousy on Sunday and improving on Monday. As we headed off from the carpark, it looked spot on. However, by the time we got to Aspiring Hut the wind was coming up and cloud was appearing. A theory (later proven correct) was that the forecast was a day ahead of itself. We decided to chance the weather and headed up the Cascade Saddle track.



West Matukituki Valley, looking towards Raspberry Creek from the Cascade Saddle route (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Passing Neville and Co. just below the bushline we decided that we preferred a view to their company and carried on to a good platform for lunch. Aspiring was out of sight and the top of our route was looking a bit murky. Peter Dymock from COTC came zooming down the track, he'd been up for a day trip from Alexandra, and gave Neville some good info on Lochnagar. We decided to carry on in the hope of a view and were rewarded with a brief clearance on Aspiring. The top was reached, and the cloud at various times allowed a look at the Dart Glader and peaks beyond, Ansted, Tyndall, Governor's Peak and the valley. After a wander up the ridge towards Tyndall we quickly descended to the bushline, where we spent half an hour before dropping down to the hut. By this stage the hut was packed, and our gear had been removed from the bunks (what happened to hut etiquette?) so we headed away and camped.

On Saturday we were disturbed by what John thought was a black bird pecking at our groundsheet, daylight revealed that it was, of course, a kea. The weather was getting decidedly grotty and the prospects of a wet night in the fly or a crowded night at Aspiring Hut meant we stuck to plan A and headed for French Ridge. By the time we were crossing Shovel Flat it was definitely raining and piking was contemplated but discounted. After fording the river at Pearl Flat we saw Andrew MacKay's party piking back to Aspiring Hut from Scott's Biv. We thought that, as the climbing party, honour would indicate at least French Ridge for them. French Ridge hasn't gotten any less steep since last time and fortunately the steep bits being in the bush, there is still plenty to hang on to. It wasn't long before we were out in the open (with a non-view) and it was pretty bleak. Eventually the familiar cairn came into sight and the hut was just around the corner. Multiple brews and a late lunch were consumed and following the arrival of a party from Christchurch we settled down to an afternoon of cards and the hut library. The library consists mostly of 1976 Readers Digests, Westerns (mostly missing the beginning or the end) and half a copy of OUTC's Antics 1979. The weather continued to worsen and trips outside were only made when absolutely necessary.



Looking across to French Ridge, below Aspiring / Tititea from the Cascade Saddle route (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

When the alarm went off it was obviously still foul outside so no one moved until after 8 am. There had been a sou-westerly change with fresh snow to just above the hut and a bit of a clearance was underway. The loo is located across a rock fissure, atop a cliff that faces directly into a sou-wester. The booming sound as a gust hit the cliff had to be experienced to be believed. After numerous kea photos we wandered up the ridge for views of the Breakaway and Quarterdeck before returning to the hut to collect our packs. The day continued to improve and by the time we got to Pearl Flat for lunch it was sunbathing and sandfly weather. We left our

gear at the bridge and wandered up to Scotts Bivy. It is a bit steeper than it looks from above. Upon reaching the bivy (which is in the wrong place on the map) we opted to sit on it rather than inside the grotty thing. We could see the French Ridge loo and the alternative route down, as well as the Bingham Insanity route to the Breakaway. Then it was a quick dash back to our gear and then on to a campsite on Shovel Flat.



Shotover Saddle from the Cascade Saddle route (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Sunday saw us returning to Aspiring Hut and then heading to Red Rock Stream where we left our gear and headed for Shotover Saddle. The route is straight up and is initially through bracken, then dandelions, then some scrubby stuff before reaching tussock and lots of Spaniards. At that point the route becomes more of an ascending sidle which was hot dry work and eventually got to be the point of no return. John was a bit further ahead and travelling a lot quicker than Grant and I. John said he could see the top and it was only twenty minutes away, so he'd carry on. Inevitably it wasn't the top and it was more than twenty minutes, but he carried on to the top returning after seventy minutes. There was no sign of Neville crossing from the Shotover so we assumed they had piked (they had actually crossed the Tummel Bum Saddle and rather than sidle to Shotover Saddle had had an epic three hour descent through bluffs). By this stage we were running late, so had a knee jarring descent of 3000 feet in just over an hour. After a much-needed large drink we headed for the road.

David Barnes for John Galloway and Grant Burnard

SILVER PEAKS – BUSHCRAFT '94 (AH, SO THAT IS WHERE WE WERE)

February 19-20, 1994

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 531, May 1994

How I could have used my compass if I had been able to see it.

Self pity - its role in tramping.

"Going with the Flow" by A Pettinger et al.

My collected ideas on pastimes for indoors.

Thought transference - does it really work?

Evil thoughts I have had - and some I never knew I had.

Underlining the importance of keeping your toilet paper dry.

A thousand and one things to do with clag.

Ancient Chinese proverb - Never make plan when boot full of water,

How I got wet behind the ears - and everywhere else as well.

Rising damp - problems of being too familiar with wetness.

Were my friends at the dinner party I had turned down to come to this trip thinking of me as much as I was thinking of them?

How to modestly change out of your wet gear into something slightly less wet whilst standing under a dripping pine tree.

Anyone for tennis?

OHAU – BUSHCRAFT '94 (AT THE OTHER END OF THE WEATHER SPECTRUM)

March 12-13, 1994

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 531, May 1994

Camping out on Friday night under black velvet jeweled studded night skies.

Hot sunny days, huge wide river valleys (and bulls).

Magnificent 'molar' giant teeth mountains.

Masses of river crossings taught, learnt and practiced.

Hundreds and thousands of river boulders of every shape.

Violent slips and natural devastation (and bulls).

Magical beech forests with downy mosses (what was that crashing sound?).

The greeny blue of the hanging glaciers on the main divide high above the exquisite cool tasting glacial fed streams (who was that that mentioned giardia). Neat and tidy huts visited and their log books shared (and bulls).

Great camp sites, good company and lots of laughs, sore toes (and bulls).

An excellent finale to the Bushcraft course. Many thanks from the last tramper who nearly broke the bulls back- but that is another story.

FIVE SIX GO MAD ON THE MILFORD

April 23-25, 1994

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 531, May 1994

Standing on the side of the road, in the middle of nowhere, and watching the bus drive off is not how most people would want to start ANZAC weekend. This was how the weekend started for me and five others.

After wandering around in the dark for a bit we finally found something that passed as a campsite and then without wasting too much time, we hit the sack.

Saturday dawned clear and not too cold which encouraged us to get out of bed and pack up before we nearly missed our ride to the jet boat which took us over Lake Te Anau to the start of the Milford Track. The ride across the lake was impressive with the snowcapped mountains all around us and seeming to rise straight from the lake. It must be mentioned though, that the cold managed to override most other feelings we might have had but it was certainly enjoyable, nonetheless.



Clinton Forks Hut, April 23, 1993 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We didn't waste any time when we reached the jetty and after unloading our packs, we proceeded to follow the wide, flat track (or should I say road) to Glade House. The feeling in my fingers and toes was just beginning to come back when we reached Glade House (about 5 mins from where the boat dropped us off). It was a stop for the compulsory photo by the sign before the ritual of trying all the door handles in an effort to see if anything was unlocked (alas only the drying room was) Eager to get on our way we hefted our packs and headed up the

track. We made good time, while taking time out to look at the mountains and also any trout that we could see swimming in the Clinton River. It always amazes me how green and clear the river is here. We passed some good swimming spots (although we never tried them as the water was soooo cold) before reaching Clinton Forks Hut where we stopped for lunch. We were entertained during lunch by the fantails that fluttered so close to us. Robin looked good standing there holding out his hand (he did get the fantail to land on his finger three times though). It was with reluctance we packed up and headed off towards Mintaro Hut (approx. 4 hours). The forest is lovely to walk through before reaching the big land slip that created the Dead Lake. We spent about half an hour here while some of the more foolhardy amongst us debated whether to go for a swim or not. With some good sense it was decided it was a bit too cold for that sort of thing. Further on we took the detour to Hidden Lake and again took time out to enjoy the beauty and peacefulness of the area. All too soon it was time to pick up the pack and carry on our way. It seemed no time before we came across the THC lunch stop where we enjoyed a short rest. Further on was the Independent Walkers lunch stop (aptly called the Bus Stop), which looked very uninviting after the THC one. We carried on past without stopping and called into Pomplona (the THC huts) for a look. Again the ritual of trying all the door handles (again nothing open) From Pomplona it was another hour until Mintaro Hut, which was a welcome sight covered in snow and looking very inviting.



McKinnon Pass and Mt Hart, Milford Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

It was a surprise to us all, as to how tired we felt after only about six hours of the track, especially our legs and feet. We decided it must have been the pounding along the flat, hard track (well . . . that is what we told ourselves, anyway). Next came the social part of the day, where we got to socialise with the others sharing the hut. There were two other parties doing

the track and we certainly surprised them as we began to prepare dinner before them and finished well after them. We got a surprise just as it was getting dark when the light came on then went off again just as we decided to head off to bed. It was a very comfortable night and we woke early to a kea playing on the roof.



Bridge across the Arthur River, near Boatshed, Milford Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

By the time we had gotten out of bed, there was a bit of mist around the tops of the mountains but the valley seemed quite clear. The weather deteriorated as we climbed up the side of the pass and as we climbed above the bushline the view also deteriorated. The going was quite easy as people had been over the pass the day before and we had good tracks to follow which became even more important with the lack of snow poles or visibility. We wasted little time at the memorial for photos before heading for the shelter on the pass. It sure felt good to get out of the strong, cold wind that was blowing and we took time out for a hot Raro and sandwich before donning the windproof gear and heading down to Quintin and the waterfall. It was very enjoyable to wander through the snow and of course the odd snowball was thrown (who started it . . . Trev?) It seemed no time at all before we reached bushline and then Quintin Lodge where we had a short break before going onto Sutherland Falls. It was a quick jaunt behind the falls (very wet) before it was back to Quintin Lodge for another sandwich. From Quintin it is about an hour to Dumpling Hut and it was reached just as the rain really began to fall.

Another enjoyable night socialising and we were very thankful for the hut as the rain fell harder and harder. By the time we trundled off to bed it was really raining (I suppose we were in Fiordland . . . but still . . .) Thoughts of a wet walk out the next day were not inviting as I drifted off to sleep.

It was good to wake up and not hear the rain on the roof and this was a big reason to get up (also having to be at Sandfly Point by 2 pm was another) We were a wee bit late getting up so it was a quick breakfast and pack up before we were off. And off we were, charging along the track doing 16 minute miles and that included time to stop and admire the views. The number of waterfalls along the way was incredible (thanks to the rain). The pace slowed after the boat shed as we took time to visit MacKay Falls and Bell Rock. The forest from the start to the end of the Milford is beautiful and the mountains all around makes for many magic spots along the track. We reached Sandfly Point about half an hour before the boat.



Arthur River, and the head of Lake Ada, Milford Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

It was a very enjoyable trip and well worth the extra in cost for the boats. Thanks for a great trip guys. Debbie Pettinger for Antony, Trevor Deaker, Peter Aitcheson, Robin Frame and Jeanette Malcolm

THREE PEAKS RACE

Date not recorded

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 531, May 1994

Autumn is a time when most outdoors people are fairly fit, and this run is a good follow up to the OTMC marathon. The route is over Flagstaff, Swampy and Mt. Cargill, starting near Woodhaugh gardens and finishing at Chingford Park. Organisation is done by the Leith Harrier Club, and numerous drink stops and first aid (should you need it) are provided by scouts and the Red Cross. The race is well sponsored, as well as numerous prizes runners get a free lunch at the Normanby Tavern, a can of Speights at the finish line, etc, etc. There are two starting times - 9 o'clock for the non-racers and 10 o'clock for the incredibly fit. The argument for entering is that if you can walk the distance (which you most certainly can) then why not half run, half walk (?) And after all, there is a 70 plus year old woman who does it every year ... so no excuses.



Swampy Ridge Track, between Flagstaff and Swampy (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Doug Forrester decided to chaperone me this year, and we lined up with the early birds on a delightfully sunny morning. This was in contrast to the earlier scheduled date - the weekend of the floods - when the race was postponed. We cruised up Flagstaff enjoying the fine views. The sun was shining on the tops of the hills and the valleys filled with mist, just like it is in the mountains sometimes. I was taking things easy because I had recently recovered from the dreaded lurgy and Doug, the Champion Marathon Man, was pretending to be old and worn.

Over to Swampy we trotted in the most pleasant weather conditions. I had to wear sunglasses in the bright sunlight. Doug needed to be reminded that after Swampy there was only one more hill. The route down to Leith Valley follows the road under the power lines, before plunging down a steep, muddy path lined with gorse and bush. Trampers have the advantage

on this terrain, knowing just which branch to grab when the foot starts to slide. We emerged onto a farm paddock, then down the farm race. Around the back of the cow shed is the most foul smelling mud bath imaginable and my brand new white running shoes will never be the same. There was no way to skirt it, as it was from bank to bank. Best to get it over with and plunge on through.



Sunrise from Mt Cargill (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Down to Leith Valley Road, and up a farm road, across the farmers private motorway bridge, and there we were starting up Mt. Cargill. The hill was so steep that we walked quite a bit at this point, up paddock and then through pines. Just as well I was there or else Doug would have gotten lost again. He's vulnerable to mystical influences when alone in remote areas. The front runners of the late starters were overtaking us now, and they are most impressive to see. Doug and I kept telling each other that these fast people gave up most of their spare time to do the 200 kms training each week, and never do anything enjoyable like tramping or climbing.

After a quick drink and splash at the TV transmitter it was down, down to Bethunes Gully. Tree roots, small dogs and other obstacles all conspire to trip you and I believe that one runner did go over the edge here. Down towards the pine trees I found hidden reserves of energy (wanting to get it over with, as the end was in striking distance) so I pretended to be an antelope and stretched my legs out. I kept hearing footsteps behind but try as I might, I couldn't shake this persistent person off. Imagine my surprise when glancing over my shoulder I saw Doug! The agony really begins when you get to the sealed road. This time it was not too bad. I kept things horizontal rather than vertical i.e.: not pounding the road. This seemed to work quite well, and the soft grass of Chingford Park with the finish line not far away was soon in sight.

It all seems worth the effort when, to a round of applause from the spectators, you cross the line and are handed your free lunch ticket and a can of drink and it is all over, there are even hot showers for those quick to get in. Doug forgot to bring his towel and soap, and so borrowed mine but refused shampoo because it smelt too nice??!! The prizes are handed out after lunch and although we didn't win any this year, I bettered last years' time and Doug will be back in '95 to improve his time.

Next year, perhaps, we can organise an OTMC group entry and get a discount??!

WORKPARTY – ROSELLA RIDGE

March 27, 1994

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 531, May 1994

And what a work party it was!! Shirley and myself were very grateful for the support with 15 keen workers taking part. It was really great to see some new faces but the lovely fine day sure helped.

Shirley's decision to make Rosella Ridge the venue was a good choice as it really needed some attention. For those of you who haven't been to Rosella Ridge, go for it, it's really nice (and much easier now after a haircut) and is part of a good round day trip. I must admit that we didn't see many Cockatoos, Parakeets or Rosella's as I had promised but then we were just too busy and making too much noise. I vaguely remember one club night promising Devonshire tea at regular intervals during the work party and I regret that due to the pressure of work that was just not possible. I was truly disappointed no-one won the valuable prize that had been offered - what was it for? - it was for whoever could chop down a sapling with a Cockatoo still hanging onto the top of it.



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

A big thank you to those taking part in the work party. They were Shirley McQueen, Robin Bridges, David Fyfe, Arthur Blondell, Trevor Chew, Josephine King, Jonette Service, Olive Neilson, Peter Aitcheson (who was quite invaluable after he had come out of the alcoholic haze) Neville Mulholland, Chris Morris, Grant Burnard, Paul Bingham, Ann Schofield and Doug Forrester.

LOCHNAGAR – THE HARD WAY (EASTER 1994)

April 1-4, 1994

Author: Neville Mulholland

Published in Bulletin 532, June 1994

We arrived at the Matukituki Valley car park at about 11-30 pm on Thursday night, after stopping in Wanaka to pick up the third member of our party, a non-tourist from Manchester, UK. As the moonlight and weather were favourable, we set off to tramp for half an hour or so up valley before camping. We stopped after only 20 minutes when the four-wheel drive track we were following disappeared into the river where the river cut into some bluffs.

On Friday morning after a good night sleep and a hearty breakfast of porridge and hot-cross buns, we continued along the valley to the second side stream past Cascade Hut, where the photo in "Moir's Guidebook" indicated an old track heading up the spur on the true left of this creek, to Cascade Saddle. Well, we didn't find this track so we bush-bashed on until we found the new track, which we followed to Cascade Saddle. Just above the bushline we found David Barnes and his party having lunch, they were chatting to another man who had previously done what we were trying to do, and he was able to give us a lot of route information for where we were headed. We reached the Pylon at about 3 pm and found some awesome views waiting for us. We could see the Matukituki Valley in both directions, the Cascade Basin and Dart Glacier, as well as Mt's Tyndall and Ansted and the very top of Mt Aspiring, which was mostly obscured by cloud.



'The Pylon' – high point of the Cascade route from the East Matukituki to the Upper Dart (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We had intended to camp in the basin or just below Cascade Saddle, but with some party consensus we decided that a night in Dart Hut would be very welcome even if it meant another four or five hours walk. So we set off for Dart Hut, where we arrived at 8-45 pm on Friday night. There were even three spare bunks for us. We consumed dinner and then retired to bed fairly promptly, which was quite surprising as we had only done an eleven-hour day.

Saturday morning and we were woken bright and early by the hustle and bustle of busy trampers eager to move on to the next hut. So, we got up as well and after another hearty breakfast we were on our way shortly after 8 am. We followed the track from Dart Hut to Rees Saddle, which took about two hours. I presume there is a good view down the Rees Valley from the Saddle, but it was largely obscured by cloud. So we moved on, dropping down a spur to Snowy Creek. Once on the valley floor we followed the river until we spotted a definite spur to our right, heading from Snowy Creek to the Pine Creek catchment. We had lunch at the bottom of this spur while cowering from the strong winds that were blowing up the valley.



**Mt Tyndall at the head of Snowy Creek, Ridge to Pine Creek and Lochnagar is on the right
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

After lunch we climbed the 2000 ft spur to the top of the range, where winds were now gale force. On the ridge we clung to rocks while admiring the views of the Shotover Valley in front of us and Mt. Tyndall and Tyndall Glacier to our left. We crossed to the east side of the range where we were in the lee of the wind and overlooking a large alpine basin at the head of Pine Creek, which we had to cross. The only major obstacle stopping us from crossing the basin was the huge line of bluffs in front of us. So we had to detour back to the other side of the range then head north about 300 m to a saddle leading straight into this basin. We headed southward across this basin and onto the range between Pine Creek and Lochnagar where we were to

traverse to a saddle overlooking Lochnagar. The saddle we had been told to aim for would take us safely to Lochnagar, whereas the other two (three to choose from) were unsuitable as one was left by the landslide which created the loch and the other saddle would have led us to the loch safely, but we would have to swim to get any further. So we descended our chosen route, the first 1000 ft being scree which we covered in about 10 minutes, from the bottom of the scree we - were supposed to traverse to the spur on our right where we would find a goat track, but instead we just bashed through the scrub to Lochnagar Hut where we arrived about an hour after leaving the top, and nine and a half hours after leaving Dart Hut.



Head of Pine Creek, looking towards the Snowy Creek direction (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The hut is a nice cosy A-frame with a fireplace and enough room to sleep three people very comfortably. The winds were severe gale-force by this stage. So while Greg cooked tea, and Mike watched the fire, I found ways of draught stopping the door and window. The hut stood up well to the wind and by Sunday morning the wind had died down completely, the sky had cleared, and there was fresh snow to about 5500 ft. Lochnagar truly looked very picturesque. Unfortunately, we had to leave this beautiful place in order to continue our journey. We packed up and were on our way again. The trail from Lochnagar to the Shotover River, is marked for the first part by white painted rocks and leads through a boulder field. One thinks navigation here would be very tricky in snow. One also wonders why (or how) anyone in their right mind would carry a kayak up there??! (Paul Bingham). Two hours from Lochnagar we had travelled down Lake Creek and were having morning tea at Hundred Mile Hut beside the Shotover River. Hundred Mile Hut would be a very cosy place to spend a wet day as there are comfortable bunks, a good fireplace and shelves absolutely stacked with reading material. After a short break we took to the trail again, following for the first hour a four-wheel drive track. On our

way we had a great view looking up Pine Creek and could point out where we had traversed the previous afternoon. At the head of Pine Creek Flat the vehicle track came to an end. We then had to follow a goat trail, which went high across an overgrown slip. The trail took us through very dense impassable scrub to Junction Flat.



Upper Shotover, upstream of Hundred Mile Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Once at Junction Flat we turned right and headed up the eastern hillside of the Tummel Bum. Again, we followed a goat trail, which took us up a spur to climb high above some bluffs. However, this trail soon faded out and we had to pick our way through scrub, which consisted mainly of huge clumps of Spaniards. Two hours after we left Junction Flat we descended to the Tummel Burn, then followed the creek bed for another hour before we found a good campsite. We made camp at about 5 pm this day, our earliest day, having only tramped for eight hours. While Greg and Mike pitched the tents, I got a fire going and we had dinner. After a good feed we sat around the fire and tried to spot shooting stars in the cloudless sky above. I left my wet socks lying on the ground and by 9-30 pm they were frozen solid.

Monday morning and we woke early (actually we slept in until 7-30 am). During the night a breeze had come up and the frost had gone off, which meant a slightly more comfortable brekky than I had expected. All formalities were taken care of and we were on our way for another day. Not a single sign of where we had camped. Only one way out of this valley, and we headed upstream till we reached the spur we wanted. A steep climb for an hour and we were sitting on a ridge gazing at the views, with the Shotover Valley to the South, Mt. Aspiring to the North and the Matukituki Valley 4500 ft below us.

Next question, how to get to the valley floor. We knew there was a track from Cascade Saddle to Cascade Hut to the west of us, but we figured we could save ourselves two hours by making a B-line straight down the hill. We knew the hillside was riddled with bluffs but figured that if

we picked the right spur we should be OK. So off we went down the hill. The first 1500 ft was easy going with no bluffs, but after that we had to exercise more caution, occasionally coming across 20 ft bluffs where we would have to traverse until we found a good spur to drop us another 100 ft and repeat the exercise again. 300 ft above the valley floor we stopped for lunch then made our way extremely carefully down the last wee bit, which proved difficult. Eventually we made it safely to the bottom, watched by an audience of day walkers.



**Looking over the Upper Shotover from ridge between Tyndall Creek and the Tummel Burn
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

Lying on the grass on the valley floor we were astonished that we had made a safe descent. Actually, we had found it nearly impossible to identify the route we had taken. There are lines of bluffs right across that hillside. Still, we saved ourselves at least one hour and heaps of walking. Another hour, the easiest flattest hour of the whole trip and we were sitting beside the van reflecting on our achievement, we even bet David Barnes' party back!

I thoroughly recommend this trip to anyone, however, it is not for inexperienced or ill-equipped trampers as navigation can be tricky at times. An above average fitness level would also be essential. We did it in four days, whereas five days would have been preferred. We crossed five passes (or saddles), three 5000 ft and two at 6000 ft. Also, weather conditions would have to be right as Cascade Saddle would be treacherous when wet. Moir's Guide Book gives descriptions for most of the trip, but not from Snowy Creek to Lochnagar. The trip proved slightly more strenuous than we first planned. But the three of us agreed it was well worth the effort. I would like to thank Greg Wood (Entertainment Officer) and Mike Greenwood (Foreign Body) for their great company.

Neville Mulholland (Chief Cook and Scribe)

THE ICE GARDEN TRIP (CAPLES – GREENSTONE)

June 4-6, 1994

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 533, July 1994

On Friday of Queens Birthday weekend, three hardy souls got away on time for a weekend tramping the Caples and Greenstone tracks, starting and ending from the Divide car park. After the obligatory stop for gourmet takeaways (including utterly delectable banana fritters) the night was spent in the comfort of beds at Te Anau. Saturday morning dawned cold and very foggy, so the trip to the Divide was slow and cautious. Once there, the fog cleared, and the skies were clear for the entire weekend's tramp.

DoC Dunedin had a week-old notice saying the tracks were very muddy; DoC Te Anau had notices saying that we should watch out for snow, mud and an impassable bridge construction; and Transit New Zealand said that chains were essential on the Milford Road. They must have all wanted a quiet weekend off, as the roads were snow free, the snow line was AWAY above the highest point of the track, the bridge was quite passable, and there was no problem with mud. Why no problem with mud? 98% of the track was frozen solid the whole three days, even in the sunshine.



Upper Caples Hut, Caples Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

After meeting a woman at Howden, who had just come over the Harris Saddle (impassable said DoC) we had a delightful walk down to the start of the climb over to the Caples. Here we met the first of the three million tree roots which we had to climb over, before lunching on the top of the saddle under a perfect sky. Heading down the Caples we discovered that tracks which

also serve as watercourses can be unusable because of ice, and this condition was to stay with us for three days. It started to get very cold, and we discovered that if sweaty hats were swung in the hand for a couple of minutes they froze. Anyway, it was a wonderful tramp in a lovely valley. We reached the Upper Caples hut just after 4 pm, and decided to keep on for the Mid Caples Hut which was essential if we wanted to have a chance of a good three day circuit. This decision was made not without remorse, as a young woman was giving herself a leisurely nude wash inside the hut.

Our timing was a bit out, and we made the last hour to the Mid Caples by torchlight, with only a couple of easily caught wrong turns. Three hunters were in the Mid Caples, and had a cheery fire going to greet us. They had seen five deer but had been unable to get anywhere near them. We spent a comfortable night and woke to the most magnificent hoar frost, which didn't thaw while we were there. More rock-hard frozen tracks greeted us the next morning, and it certainly was no warmer. David's camera batteries died because of the cold, and when they came back to life the camera merrily rewound his only film into its cassette. We had all our gear on!! The impassable bridge proved passable, and we entered the beautiful lower gorge of the Greenstone. To think that greedy people plan to run a monorail up this area is really appalling. To think that cattle share the same trail isn't much better, especially when half a dozen of them have a group conference and then decide to stampede at you. For the record, David went down over the bank, Jonette went up off the trail, and Robin ran like the wind. Cattle 6, OTMC nil.



Greenstone Valley, near Slip Flat (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The frozen conditions made crossing scree slopes tricky because the rocks were greasy with frost, and you couldn't kick footholds. After a quick look at the gorge near the Slyburn hut we

reached the Mid Greenstone, where two German trampers were trying to light the fire. They were good company and had done more tramps here than most. They had even spent two weeks in Dunedin. It started to get colder, and some of us got the shivers in the hut, wearing full gear, and sitting next to the stove. The skies that night were marvellous! No light pollution, no moon for most of the night and one more huge frost made for a great spectacle of stars.



Key Summit and the southern Darran Mountains (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

In the morning there was a truly impressive amount of ice on the inside of the hut windows. A fair bit of it probably came from the steam generated by having to boil all water for at least three minutes. The last day we spent still deep in hoar frost, frozen tracks, and iced creeks, looking up at frozen waterfalls coming down into the valley from high up. It was 5-45 pm when we got back to the Divide car park and discovered with relief that the antifreeze in Corollas does work. It was a slow haul back to Dunedin because of reefs of fog alternating with icy roads, but Jonette Service, David Fyfe and Robin Frame were more than happy with their weekend. Special thanks to Jonette's brother for letting us crash at his house in Te Anau.

DINGLEBURN TO TIMARU RIVER

March 5-6, 1994

Author: Josephine King

Published in Bulletin 533, July 1994

Van Travel - isn't it funny how some trips are fine while others leave you feeling on the verge of ????, and all before you get the chance to put fish & chips on top of it. Such was the first part of this trip. Still, everyone's stomachs seemed to settle down after food at Alexandra, and we were soon travelling the 'interesting' road from Timaru Creek on to Dingleburn Station. Even at night some appreciation of the drops from this road could be gained.

Dingleburn - midnight. Velvet black sky studded brilliantly with a myriad of stars. . . Perfect! - we slept out.

"Trev, are you awake?" (6.20am , virtually dark - Arthur's voice).

"Yea". (Of course I wasn't - I don't really wake up before 9)

A couple of mouthfuls of muesli were forced down, gear shoved in pack, and we were away by 7.30am.

Three minutes down the track - our first decision. The sign said 'High Water Track'.... - did this mean that there was a low water track? We now know that yes, in 'low water' the Dingleburn River can be followed for 3-4 km to the point where the high water track drops back down off a ridge to the river's edge thus saving considerable time and energy.



Lake Hawea and the Hunter Valley from ridge between the Dingle Burn and Timaru River (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

From here we followed the track to Burns Hut. Some of us made it there in better shape than others! An anonymous member of our party managed to lose the track less than 50 metres from the hut and attempted to climb down a steep bank. Loud sounds of crashing followed - a heavy object rolling through the bush! Was this another club member taking up the latest craze of pack throwing? There goes the pack - no it's the party leader - now it's the pack - party leader - pack ... - both rolling, still attached, down through the scrub! The more sensible members of the party soon located the track and found Burn's Hut waiting in the bright sun around the next comer, (Arthur's glasses were held together with sticking plaster and fencing wire for the rest of the trip).



Lower Timaru River (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We left the track a little further on below a double knob, climbing over the right hand one and up onto the start of a ridge. The panoramic views from this point during lunch were superb but were surpassed a couple of hours later when the highest point (1703m) was reached to see Mt Aspiring prominent to the southwest, with Lake Hawea glistening in the middle distance. An exhilarating run down an excellent scree slope preceded our descent into the upper reaches of Timaru Creek and on down to Timaru Hut.

Sunday dawned cool but fine and calm, despite strong winds which buffeted the reasonably sheltered hut overnight. The track down the true left of the valley grows indistinct below the hut before it enters the bush. After casting around for a while we located it about 20m above the river - marked but quite hard to find. From time to time after this, we found it easier to drop down into the river rather than follow the sporadically marked track which rose and fell as it clung to the side of the bush-clad slopes and pushed past waterfalls. By early afternoon we were onto open river flats and faster country. 4pm saw us at the roadside - just in time to see the van appearing.

An excellent medium-fit trip with great company.

Josephine King, Peter Weatherall, Arthur Blondell, and Trevor Deaker

LAKE MONOWAI – GREEN LAKE

May 7-8, 1994

Author: Trevor Blogg

Published in Bulletin 533, July 1994

After a fairly frantic week in town, I arrived at the club rooms shortly before our normal departure time of 6 pm. I'd been nominated as group leader for our group, and had to supervise the food purchasing, improve my first aid kit and get a topo map of the area. I became aware of the anxiety that other group leaders must feel before each trip - did the three other party members buy and bring the right food? Were they all well-equipped? Had I remembered everything?



Green Lake with the Cameron and Heath Mountains beyond(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Well, my party all turned up on time, and the decision was to take two cars, Rhonda & Denis's and my own. After a slow drive to Gore, we made a stop at the famous pie cart, and enjoyed the best cheeseburger I've had since leaving Canada, this restored me for the drive to Lake Monowai. Under Zena's guidance I took the long route while Rhonda took the shortcut. We arrived at the trailhead quite late and did not know there were more sheltered campsites, complete with Rhonda's party only a minute's drive further on. At this point we thought we'd arrived first and wondered where Rhonda & co could be. Anyway, we set up two tents, the women and the mens. By this time it was damn cold, and it didn't get any warmer during the night.

Anyway as "leader" I felt obliged to stir first in the morning and decided to check for Rhonda & co. Sure enough they were in a much less frosty spot and just about to emerge as I arrived. As the campsite offered picnic tables, toilets, water tank and the rest of the party I wandered back to gather my group together. After consuming tea and breakfast, came the distribution of food, tent and cooking gear (I was feeling pretty school-masterish by now). Finally to the trail. A very nice trail, and obviously had been in the process of being worked on recently. We noted that "being worked on " included the felling of some pretty healthy looking beech trees which didn't seem to be doing a lot of harm. I had the impression that DoC had been getting ready to bring in a trail making excavator, a plan probably discontinued since the great flood reparations had effectively depleted their trail development funds. Anyway, the trail is straight-forward with just a few 'grunts' en-route to the open saddle at about 910 metres, the highest point on the trail. From here, we made a short side trip to enjoy the view of Mt. Cuthbert and various mountains to the west - not named on my topo. map, but probably including Kathryn Peak. The prominent bird we encountered on the first part of the trip was the New Zealand Robin, but there were more tomtits at the higher level.



Looking south over Green Lake (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

After a photo break we headed down the most problematic part of the track, a short but quite steep section that included a couple of descents of steep rocky streams with pauses to regain the track and avoid sliding over the waterfalls below.

Green Lake itself is very pretty and quite clear, with a low flat area of tussock, at its north end. The tussock is probably maintained by very cold air falling down the southern slopes of Mt. Burns and preventing the bush from developing there. The margin between tussock and beech provides a nice setting for the Green Lake hut, a cosy little 'A' frame with a stove which I rate

as impossible to light in cold weather (i.e.: when you need it most) Rhonda's party had planned to camp and my party had carried up one two-man tent as a precaution, but the hut was empty so we dropped most of our gear and carried on to Island Lake, a net descent of 115 metres, but with a biggish rise in between it and Green Lake.



Original 4-Bunk Green Lake Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We planned to get a look at Island Lake and be back at Green Lake just around nightfall, as we weren't tempted to cook and eat too early, then be cold and bored till bedtime. Anyway we got back nearly in the dark then dinner was cooked and eaten and the 'tenting' party paid us a visit. We learned that both menus, independently planned, consisted of pasta with meat sauce for main and cheesecake for dessert. That night I made up for the previous night's poor sleep and got over ten hours "solid" in, as did my whole group.

It had warmed up during the night and was pleasant and frost-free in the morning. The return trip was a back track to Lake Monowai with the highlight for my group being a prolonged and very close quarters visit from a kea at lunch time. He/she was happily standing about one metre from me, pecking unconcernedly at a tree stump in search for grubs. It was then on down the trail with pauses for fine views of the Takitimus and glimpses of Lake Monowai. Several rest breaks later we all arrived pretty much together at the trailhead.

Our party had a final brew of tea for the road, then it was a long drive back to Dunedin with the obligatory stop at the Gore pie cart. The cheese burger wasn't as good as the Friday night one.

Thanks to all the participants - Olive Nielsen, Mike Giesig, Zena Roderique, Greg Panting, Rhonda Robinson, Dennis Price, Jeff Batts and myself, Trevor Blogg

KAYAKING ON LAKE MANAPOURI

June 4-6, 1994

Author: Bruce Newton

Published in Bulletin 533, July 1994

We left Dunedin in high spirits on Friday night for the bustling township of Manapouri. A stop in Gore for fish & chips and hummus - that's right, they sell hummus in Gore, just ask Barry!! We'd booked into the motor camp, very clean and tidy, cabins for \$12 per night. An action-packed visit to the Manapouri Pub. It was full, and so were the patrons! A roaring disco (ABBA!) and a good night was had by all. Barry was a great hit with some of the female patrons, Paul must be losing his touch now that he is past '30'.

We were up by 7 am, breakfast and we were met by Bill Gibson of Fiordland Wilderness Experiences. He drove us to Pearl Harbour and launched his boat. Attached were four single Kayaks, our transport for the next three days. After clambering into the launch, Bill promptly opened a thermos and we had a hot coffee stop. Most civilised and most welcome as it was a frosty morning.



It was a fast, cold trip up the lake, mist beginning to rise as the sun came up. After disembarking at West Arm it was good to get our wetsuits on and loaded up. These Kayaks are great for storage - they'll take two full packs equivalent of gear so you can take all those goodies you don't want to carry on your back e.g; wine, fresh veggies, canned food, more wine, etc. Bill explained all the safety gear and suggested routes. Boat hire includes flares, radio, sea anchor, paddle float, detailed maps, tow ropes, etc., as well as wetsuit, spray skirt, life jacket,

paddle jacket and paddle pogies (to keep your hands warm) and of course a paddle! Thanks to Barry's foresight in wearing gumboots we were launched minus wet feet - a blessing in subzero temperatures. An enjoyable 1/2 hour was spent paddling around West Arm and for diversion through the keel of the West Arm Catamaran. We then headed around the shoreline towards North Arm. The sun was coming through low cloud and all around us tall snow-covered peaks were appearing. It gives you a totally different perspective out on the lake looking up. Truly magical. The kayaks are very stable, and the water was dead flat, not a breeze. We explored up a small river, right into beech forest, then further up the lake for a lunch stop at a beach. The afternoon was spent cruising up North Arm surrounded by Mountains, waterfalls and delightful rock formations, right on the water line.

North Arm hut is a bit on the rugged side but definitely better than a tent. A family from Invercargill were there, the husband shot a deer just on teatime, with Paul's help. Unfortunately, we didn't get offered any venison. Next morning was an early start as it was our longest day of paddling. We were certainly blessed with lovely fine weather and sunny blue skies. At this time of year - no sandflies. A real bonus! You can have a lot of fun in a kayak - apart from splashing, a particularly devious trick is to come up behind someone and turn them around 360 by locking onto their rudder - perfected by Mr. Bingham & Mr. Wybrow. Sharon and myself were, of course, above all this sort of thing! Our leisurely paddling was broken by a lunch stop on Pamona Island. Words really fail me here. Kayaks were pulled up on the beach, sunbathing, birds fluttering around and surrounded by islands, mountains, snow and sky. We could have easily stayed there all day but reluctantly pushed onto Moturau Hut.

There were only four others in the big hut so we had a very social night and off to bed and a sleep in until 9 am. After breakfast we attempted to paddle up the lake inlet - towards Te Anau outlet - if this makes sense. Anyway it was very swift and it didn't take long to convince us this wasn't a good idea and a hasty retreat was in order. The morning was cold as the mist didn't rise until quite late. We paddled around towards Manapouri township, up Pearl Harbour and back to the main beach. Bill arrived to pick us up and load up the gear - the end to a magnificent three days. I thoroughly recommend this as a relaxing alternative to tramping. Staying in huts makes an ideal winter activity and the water is usually dead calm, no wind and clear sunny days. Also I must mention NO sandflies! It is also very reasonably priced through Bill's company. Hire of boats and all gear, plus boat trip to West Arm, etc. for \$120 per person. Not bad for three days of great fun!!

Thanks Bill and also thanks to Barry Wybrow, Sharon St Clair-Newman and Paul Bingham for some wonderful company, by Bruce Newton.

ROUTEBURN TRACK

May 13-15, 1994

Author: Laurel Dunn

Published in Bulletin 533, July 1994

We were keen to see the damage caused by the 1994 January storm, also Brenda and I had not been over to McKenzie Hut for ten years, however we had done the Winter Routeburn with the club several times. The Routeburn is one of our favourite tracks (in the off-peak season) because of the wide variety of terrain and scenery, especially across the Hollyford Face. We left Queenstown with all day to get to Falls Hut and had a few hold ups on the way. Among these were towing a car that had gone into a skid on the Glenorchy Road and had well and truly embedded itself in the gravel, then we encountered a huge mob of sheep that took their time to pass.



The Big Slip, Routeburn Track, between Flats and Falls Huts, 1994. L-R John Cox, Debbie Pettinger & Neville Mulholland (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Right from the start of the track we noticed big changes. More boardwalk and new bridges and just before Sugarloaf bridge we heard two enormous blasts that went right through us. By the time we got to where the two DoC men were blasting they were having their lunch. We stopped frequently to admire the force and strength of nature, and at the damage and height the river must have been, especially where the gorge is at its narrowest, the track is higher and to the right of Forge Flat there certainly is no shortage of gravel around for the tracks, which are now in excellent condition. Once across the Routeburn Bridge just before the flats the track sidles around the bottom of the hill and comes out virtually at Flats Hut. The flats are a mess,

covered in logs that have mainly come down from the North Branch. Lunch at Flats Hut before the slog up to Falls Hut. There was a lot of fallen trees just near the track junction along from the flats and a lot had been ripped apart about a quarter of their length from the ground. A new bridge at Emily Creek and a new track has been cut around a sheer rock face - a massive job undertaken here by the Army. Just a few minutes further on we came across the awesome sight of the huge slip that had cleared everything from the hillside and landed just up from Flats Hut. We arrived at Falls Hut feeling very warm and on opening the door found the hut to be like an oven. The only two Kiwi occupants had the range roaring so we were in for a cosy evening. Another five Kiwi's arrived and we had an enjoyable evening. Willie was the Hut Warden and if you have not come across him in your travels then you've missed a treat. He is so friendly and full of enthusiasm - especially to Kiwi's as he loves to see us out in the hills. He was Hut Warden on the night of the storm and told us of a wonderful but frightening display of lightning and thunder from his room.



John Cox & Debbie Pettinger at the Big Slip, Routeburn Track, 1994 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

A lovely day for our walk to Mackenzie Hut and Brenda and I were the only ones going that far. We came across the new track at Harris Saddle and a much larger shelter, obviously to cope with the hordes of trampers. We took a trip up to Conical Hill and were rewarded with lovely clear views down to Martin's Bay. We arrived at Mackenzie Hut to find there has been another

bunk room built separate from the main hut. There was only five of us in the hut and we had trouble keeping warm in such a big room and so we huddled over the fire. A good frost greeted us in the morning, but we had a beautiful day for our walk back to Flats Hut. Soon after our arrival we took time to wander up to the bottom of the slip site and poked around amidst the piles of rotting trees that gave off quite a powerful smell. Unfortunately, no one else bothered to have a look which was their loss. After tea, the weather packed up and we awoke next morning to snow down below the bush line. We admired the wonderful work the Army had done on the track. If you didn't hear Robin Thomas speak at club recently about the Routeburn damage, then you missed a very informative talk. Take a trip on the Winter Routeburn and see the damage for yourself.

Laurel Dunn for Brenda McAlpine



Routeburn Flats from the Big Slip, 1994 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

HOLLYFORD TRACK

Date not recorded

Author: Brenda McAlpine

Published in Bulletin 534, August 1994

Laurel, Wendy and I left home around 7 am and after a visit to friends in Te Anau, it was a quick call in to Park Headquarters. We arrived at the Hollyford Road end at 2-15 pm. The weather was predicted to remain fine, so under a blue sky and a bright sun with no wind, we loaded up and headed off down the Hollyford Valley. A reasonably flat track through the bush soon brought us to a well-engineered boardwalk section attached to the cliff above swampy ground. Across Swamp Creek and we soon joined up with the main river - deep, clear pools - we followed alongside before turning up through an open grassy area to arrive at Hidden Falls bridge. We walked up to the falls which spill out of a rocky gorge and into a lovely pool. The angle of the sun sent a perfect rainbow arching across the pool through the fine spray. We back-tracked to cross the bridge and wandered out way through the bush for a short distance to find Hidden Falls Hut overlooking a grassy terrace with the river in the distance. Just your basic 12 bunk hut but it was a welcome haven for the night and we were soon busy over the cooker. With appetites satisfied for a bit longer, we took an evening stroll across the flats and down to the river where we found some small fish in a warm shallow puddle trapped until the next rain, with a few more days of this and we would have a perfectly steamed delicacy.



Hidden Falls Hut, Hollyford Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Some small furry residents had a party in Wendy's pack during the night but thankfully they had small appetites. Away around 8-30 am in beautiful weather with only a gentle cooling breeze. Virtually flat going this morning away from the river in typical Fiordland forest. A long gentle climb brought us to Little Homer Saddle, at 168 metres supposedly the highest point on the track. At a break in the trees, we had a marvellous view across the valley to Tutoko and while gazing out a kaka conveniently flew across the clearing in front of us - the first we had seen. Striking orange underwing and a definite brown rather than the green of the kea.



Hollyford River (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We slowly descended to the flats again and after crossing the Little Homer Creek at the falls we rejoined the river. We met an English guy returning from Martins Bay and he couldn't believe we had had such spectacular areas as this with almost nobody enjoying them. In Britain and Europe it would be full of people. A bend in the river had us stopping for photos. Perfectly still deep green water littered with logs of varying colours and sizes, surrounded by the green forest and with a backdrop of snowy peaks. We emerged onto grassy flats to find ourselves at Pyke Lodge which is run by the Hollyford Tourist Co. and is where their guided parties stay. Nobody was around so we left a note about wanting to jet boat out later in the week. There is a memorial plaque here for Davy Gunn as he drowned near here on Christmas Day in 1956. On through the forest and we soon came upon the big swing bridge over the Pyke River, which runs deep, dark and wide. The bridge developed a good sway while each of us crossed over. Alabaster Hut is 20 minutes upriver from here but we decided to bypass it and get up as far as Demon Trail Hut. We spent the next three hours in forest skirting the southern end of the Skippers Range until we came across an old slip site and that we decided, was our lunch spot - beautiful, peaceful, hot but with a cooling breeze to keep the sandflies at bay. A couple of kaka

were here plus some tomtits, grey warblers, bellbirds, fantails and pigeons, and some very busy ants. We dropped down to river level occasionally and at one spot we saw a very big trout. Uphill and down dale we went, through the sun dappled forest with great sights of the mountains opposite. The track was a bit rough and rocky in places and I imagine it would be pretty slippery terrain in bad weather. We came to the first of three wire bridges but as one of the wires was broken we elected to cross the creek and it wasn't long until we came to another and I can assure you, it was a novel experience crossing one of these things for the first time - a bit of a balancing act. By 4-30 pm we came to a sign indicating the turn off to McKerrow Island and informing us Demon Trail Hut was one and a half hours away. Shoulders and hips were a bit chafed and tender and I'm sure the pack is heavier but finally at around 6 pm we reached the hut after 10 hours on the march.

This hut is on a cleared knob about 50 feet above the lake with a spectacular view across to the mountains on the far side of the lake - forest clad for most of their height and topped with rocky peaks covered in snow. The hut is reasonably new and backs onto the thick forest where, as usual, the dunny is found. We dumped our gear and headed down to the lake for a strip and scrub before getting stuck into a tasty pasta meal followed by carrot cake, cream cheese and a welcome cuppa. As the evening wore on the lake lost its ruffles and became a perfect black mirror. Only three of us here tonight and it is the middle of December - where is everyone??



Swing Bridge across Humboldt Creek, Hollyford Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We woke early then dozed till eight and then lay watching the sun creep down the mountains across the lake. It looked like another good day! With breakfast over, we moved off around 9 am. Up ridges and down gullies was the order of the day - after all, this is the Demon Trail. We travelled through beautiful ferny forest - one punga must have been all of 40 or 50 feet tall. We

caught sight of a red deer racing through the undergrowth, before more of the three wire bridges to cross. One of which was quite long and we waited for another party to cross from the other side. This group and two other guys were the only other people we met before Martins Bay. We crossed some big slip sites and the mosses and lichens added a huge variety of colour to these rocky areas, playing word games to break the monotony and eventually arrived at Hokuri Hut at 3-30 pm. This hut sits in a little grassy glade surrounded on three sides by forest and overlooks a lake with a lovely white shingle beach. A repeat of yesterday's strip and scrub but being mid afternoon we lazed away a few more hours lying in the sun while our clothes festooned the nearby trees to dry. According to the hut book it rained here on the 3rd and today is the 16th. I can't believe this Fiordland weather, but it has certainly made for a memorable tramp. After tea, Laurel presented us with a test of knowledge - naming all the countries on a blank map of the African continent. Stupid test, the lines were all in the wrong places anyway, and there aren't that many countries in Africa, are there??

I woke very early and crept out of the hut to sit on the beach for some morning solitude. It was almost as if the crunch of the shingle underfoot was disturbing the dawn. As the sun touched the Sara and May hills, the perfect mirror of the lake was still in deep shadow with the forest, a black presence in the distance. Peace, silence, and a panorama no photo could do justice too. I felt truly privileged to be witness to such a perfect beginning to the day. Next was breakfast, we packed and reluctantly departed at 8-45 am. After ten minutes through the forest it was out onto the grassy gravel flats of Hokuri Creek. This creek is on the boundary of the Pacific and Indo-Australian plates, and the fault line is clearly visible if you know where to look for it. Crossing the creek near the mouth gave the boots their first dousing of the trip. Apparently, there is an emergency wire crossing 15 to 20 minutes upstream. We crunched our way along the lake shore for an hour to reach the site of Jamestown where nothing remains but the odd scrap of metal, concrete and an old fence post. The forest has reclaimed the town but there is a private crib here and it's very well set up - obviously someone's favourite retreat. We carried on under a continuous line of Kowhai edging the shore with pigeons galore feeding in them. The lake was now rippling under a gentle breeze and we left the beach to enter the forest on the flats at the end of the lake. Boggy and gloomy - a goblin type place. What a contrast when we entered the gloom. We walked waist high through acres of golden buttercups and had they been red I would have sworn we were on our way to Oz. Cabbage trees dotted the area, flowering profusely and their perfume wafted around us. We eventually found ourselves on an air strip and followed this to arrive at Martins Bay Lodge. There is a large Kowhai tree here that is absolutely laden with buoys of different colours and shapes that have been collected from the area. We were invited in for a cuppa and stripped of \$200 in return for a booking on tomorrow morning's jet boat. We continued on down another airstrip and through some scrub to arrive at the Martins Bay cribs where we found Neil Drysdale. Since the Martins Bay Hut burnt down he has been accommodating trampers in the cribs, so he took us down to an old place beside the estuary, opened the shed so we could use the tap and left us to it. We dumped our gear, pitched the tent and went exploring.

Below low tide we decided to walk along the estuary beside the river. On the opposite bank was a long ridge of rolling sand dunes and we could hear the Tasman breaking on the beach on the other side. Numerous shoals of what I assume were Inunga darting here and there and in a

stretch of 50 or 60 metres we counted at least ten good sized trout sunning themselves in the shallows. We reached the lower landing where the river turns west to enter the sea and here we climbed up into the bush to follow a benched track just above the now rocky shore. The sea was a beautiful green and oily calm. Up over a promontory to arrive at the site of the Martins Bay Hut where only the piles remain. It would certainly be a great spot to camp for a few days. We continued on past Long Reef on the Big Bay route for half an hour or so until we reached a knob where we got a view of Awarua Point away up the coast past Big Bay. We then back-tracked to Long Reef and boulder hopped down to have a splash in the Tasman. Huge starfish in the rock crevices and a great variety of anemones. A nice big paua offered itself to us and we couldn't refuse. With the tide coming in we took the track through the mixed forest and arrived back at camp an hour after leaving the Landing.



View from the Hollyford Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We secured our night gear in the tent and adjourned to the shed to cook and eat away from the clouds of sandflies. Finally we crawled into the tent at 11-30 pm. The hordes of sandflies caught between the tent and fly sound like heavy rain so we had a squash session before getting into our sleeping bags. Bony people are definitely not made to sleep on the ground - all my corners are sore. In the morning we packed up our camp, loaded our packs and wandered down to the Lodge to await the jet boat.

Brenda McAlpine

MAUNGATUA TRAVERSE

July 17, 1994

Author: Shirley McQueen

Published in Bulletin 534, August 1994

Sunday morning, 9 am at the clubrooms. More and more people were arriving and Doug Forrester, our leader, had an anxious time trying to fit everyone into the few cars available. It worked out in the end and fourteen of us left for the Wesleydale Bible Class Camp, with one car being left at Woodside Glen for our return.

We trudged up the hill through farmland, stopping frequently to admire the wonderful views, across the Taieri Plains to the sea, north to Flagstaff, and south to the extensive wetlands near Lake Waihora. At Three Kings there was a chilly breeze, and so we did not linger there for long, but continued on up, following a fence line to the top. We had lunch tucked behind some rocks and then moved on into the DoC reserve area, where the snow lay in drifts. The tarns were frozen, and some dared to skate about, while our leader watched in vain for the ice to break. However, he was the one to break through and get wet feet.

The view was very beautiful, and the sun felt warm (probably an illusion, as the snow wasn't melting). We could see across to the Old Man Range and the Blue Mountains, with the Rock & Pillar's, Lammerlaws and Lammermoors having a good covering of snow. Our way was to the northeast, past a trig at the highest point. After some time we passed the occasional marker pole, these being too infrequent to be much of a guide, and I would not advise anyone coming up from Woodside Glen to rely on them, especially in poor visibility. After passing some prominent rocks on the ridge and dropping down the slope, the markers lead us down to the Woodside Glen track, and after an uneventful descent through bush (badly damaged by grazing animals) we were back at the car by dusk. While waiting for the drivers to return from our starting point with the cars.

Doug had a debrief - 'Who had carried torches and first aid kits?' he asked. Very few, as it turned out. A timely reminder, as it would have been dark in the bush very soon after we were there, and had the weather not been so kind we could have easily been delayed. Thanks, Doug, for a lovely day.

Shirley McQueen for 12 others

WAKATIPU WEST COAST WEEKEND

June 4-6, 1994

Author: Kay & Justin Calder

Published in Bulletin 524, August 1994

A long weekend, an excellent forecast and a trip to new tramping territory - what more could any keen tramper ask for?

The trip was from Martyr Homestead in the Cascade Valley to Jackson Bay and on my Mt. Aspiring Park map, Scale 1:150000, looked innocuous enough. The party of ten assembled on Friday night at the road end at Jackson Bay, camping by the visitor display ("no camping") area. Saturday was cool and dawn brought the wonderful West Coast vista of sea and mountain. By 10.30 am we had left the cars at Martyr Homestead - the homestead itself no longer exists, but there's a bach or two. The scenery is spectacular - inland to the incredible Red Hills and down the wide Cascade Valley to the sea.



Smoothwater Bay (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Hans, the trip leader, pointed out where we were headed - straight up through the bush to the Cascade Plateau. After only half an hour on the hoof we decided on an early lunch as the next few hours would be in the shade and somewhat less than horizontal in inclination. After two and a half hours climbing nearly 500m through trackless West Coast bush we were pleased to break out into the open of the Plateau. The vegetation is mostly low-growing scrub with small pockets of trees so it looks as if it may have been burnt at some stage. We climbed to admire

the panorama and discuss options for camping. Unbelievably, on the West Coast, water was in short supply but it was such a great campsite given the perfect weather, we made do with some from a nearby boggy patch. I was delighted to first hear and then see a fern bird as we were setting up camp. Other birds observed on the trip were kea - and once right on the coast, kaka and kereru.

The frost we had next morning was light compared to what we could see in the Cascade but it was good to get moving. The Plateau gently slopes towards the coast where it finishes in steep cliffs, but it's not easy going! It is full of unavoidable boggy patches and at other times the scrub seemed out to get us. Our next obstacle was Teer Creek which meant dropping (almost literally at times) through bush for half an hour, across the bouldery creek, then back up an equally steep opposite side. This was a trip when all four limbs needed to be in good working order. At times shortness was an advantage in crawling under obstacles and at others, I wished for long legs when scrambling over wet, slippery logs or trying a foothold while dangling from a hand-hold threatening to give way! After negotiating more boggy ground we found a dryish patch for lunch in the sun, then it was more bush-bashing towards where a track is marked on the map. We knew this to be long since overgrown but Hans expected us to find it and be able to follow its general direction. We must have intersected it without recognizing it and continued up some real monkey-puzzle stuff without any landmarks visible. After some time, it was decided to head for the ridge where we found more open going on a dear trail.



Smoothwater Creek (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

By 4-30 pm it was getting dark in the bush and we were still a long way from our destination, a hut at the mouth of the Stafford River. The river had been glimpsed far below, so it was decided to go for it and we took off down a steep slope which soon turned into the start of a

stream. This was relatively easy going and in about 40 minutes we broke out onto the Stafford River. This was easy to follow with frequent crossings but would be a problem in flood. Just on dark, about 6 pm we spotted a fishing float hanging from a branch which signalled the whereabouts of a slightly dingy but welcome six bunk hut.

Two tents were erected and four of us enjoyed a cosy night with only the sound of muffled snoring from the hut.

Monday brought a cracking frost - frozen solid boots for the second morning and wet feet as we crossed the river to the beach, the remainder of the trip was along the coast until Smoothwater Bay and is only accessible as tides and seas allow. A 3 pm low gave us plenty of time and when we reached an impassable gut at about 11-00 am we decided to soak up the sun for a while and have an early lunch while waiting for the tide to drop. This section of the trip reminded me so much of Stewart Island - sandy beaches, with thick vegetation behind, big boulders, rocky islets and scrambles up and down very steep headlands - also the fishing floats used as track markers.

At Smoothwater, we left the sun and headed straight up the river - there's a track of sorts, but oh well, the feet were wet anyway. A marker on a tree trunk indicated the track back to Jackson Bay - the well-graded track seemed like a State Highway and we were back in the civilisation of Jackson Bay in 40 minutes. After collecting the cars at Martyr we were soon being fed and watered at the Haast Pub before negotiating the perils of Haast Highway - a very frosty road and cattle who use it as a bedroom.

This was an excellent trip with lots of variety and I recommend it to those with an adventurous spirit. A good two day circuit could be done from Jackson Bay on the inland track over Stafford Saddle (I believe there is a track!) to Stafford Bay and back along the coast or vice versa depending on the tides.

MOUNT DOMETT

July 16-17, 1994

Author: Mike Giese

Published in Bulletin 535, September 1994

Saturday dawned cold and frosty, several hours after we left Dunedin. In the half-light we collected everybody, stopped briefly at the clubrooms, collected an extra ice-axe and said goodbye to Dunedin for two days. After a brief stop at Palmerston, we turned left onto the Pigroot. We eventually decided that the Pigroot had little to do with pigs, roots or any combination of the above, and that it was named after Pigroot Creek (mind you I could be wrong). Then it was up over Danseys Pass with views of breathtaking drops off the icy-road (Chris's 4WD was certainly proving its worth), before stopping briefly for half the party to put their boots on, only to have them take them off again when informed that they weren't starting yet! Another 10-minute drive saw us parked in front of a locked gate in the middle of a farmers paddock, when it was time to get going.



Mt Domett (left) and Little Mt Domett (right) (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The Domett area has very few trees, and although the Chinamans Hut we were heading for has got a very nice fireplace and stove, it has nothing to burn in either of them. So, after loading our packs with firewood we set off on the hour-long walk into the hut, up the Otekaieke River. Chris said you could usually keep your feet dry by sticking to the sides of the river - something which I think most members of the party had trouble doing. Sometimes it is far easier to brave the river and get your feet wet than try and scale the steep slopes lined with Matagouri and

Spaniards. The hut was really delightful, over one hundred years old and built from shingle rock by Chinese gold miners, it is quite something.



Grayson and Cone Peaks (both on the left) from Mt Domett (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

By now it was lunchtime, with the plan for the afternoon being to climb Cone Peak (1500m). So, it was onwards and upwards (mainly upwards) starting with the remarkably steep slope behind the hut to a small peak. Then north-west across a saddle, across a 4WD track and then an assault on the east face of the mountain (it sure looked a long way up). Snow was becoming a major feature for which ice-axes were produced but in many places it was tough going especially for the ones in front (knee deep snow is really exhausting to walk in). We grunted our way up to the north-east ridge and then followed it to the top. A picture-perfect view was spoiled by the howling wind at the top. By 3 o'clock we were at the top, after starting two and a half hours earlier. The view was really magnificent, and we spent a while appreciating it. Then it was a quick dash down the mountain before it got dark. For those of us in the party who were new to tramping on snow it was a great chance to practice some self-arresting and ice-axe skills. We made it back before dark, just (and I mean just) to settle down and cook tea. After a wonderful meal of Beef Ravioli (an old family recipe claimed Terry) and a failed game of cards, the main form of entertainment was found, telling jokes. After an hour and a half of poking fun at every minority and socially repressed group we could think of (and pretty much offending everybody else) my joke supply was exhausted, and Terry's was wearing thin. At last it was bedtime with vague utterances about an early start if we wanted to climb Mt Domett in the morning.

Next morning, "What's the time?"

"It's seven o'clock" silence.

At eight we actually made a move to get up. After breakfast and much humming and ahing we all set off for Mt Domett knowing full well that we wouldn't have time to climb it but it was certainly worth a look and we had brilliant weather for it. We followed the Otekaieke River as far up as we could go to a large waterfall and then it was up the steep snow spattered tussock slopes to the south ridge line leading up to the mountain. By lunch time we had reached the ridge line, and we were out of time. While we sat in the sun we had lunch and a wonderful view of the surrounding peaks, we had climbed a mountain and a half. Then it was a rapid descent down to the river and back to the hut (a descent made much easier by Trevor's alternative route). By four o'clock we had tidied up and left our historic hut and were heading back to the cars.



Chinamans Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Our trip home was punctuated by a stop at the Danseys Pass Hotel, which is a beautiful place and well worth a visit. Its attractions include a huge roaring fire, friendly owners and an enormous ginger cat. The trip overall was really great with lots of challenges and achievements, and I hope everybody got as much out of it as I did. Thanks heaps to everybody on the trip.

Chris, Trevor, Sue, Grant, Terry, Ross Jeff and me, of course, (Mike).

FLAGSTAFF WITHOUT WALKWAYS

July 24, 1994

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 535, September 1994

On a very frosty morning, ten people headed away from Booth Rd and ventured up the Booth Rd track. After a minor bit of confusion amongst the front runners at the junction below the bushline, we reached the scrub and tussock on the slopes of Flagstaff. A few hundred metres of walkway were traversed and then we crossed the saddle and dropped down to Ben Rudd's. We then dropped most of the way down the Freeman Track before turning right onto the obscure entrance to McQuilkan's Creek Track (or Rollinson's track). Lunch we had on a wee clearing, and then we headed up onto the Swampy Ridge Track. Another big descent took us down to the very muddy Nichols Creek Track. A short detour took us to the falls, and then we slithered down to the road. Ten minutes later we were back at the car.

David Barnes



Head of McQuilkin's Creek, near the Swampy Ridge Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

9 EBULLIENT SNOW CAVERS

August 27-28, 1994

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 535, September 1994

A brisk 6.00am start confronted the group led by Peter Aitcheson - destination the Leaning Lodge area of the Rock and Pillar Range.

After passing through the bustling and traffic clogged metropolis of Middlemarch, we only just managed to get a park at the bottom of the hill. Laden with shovels, begged, borrowed and otherwise obtained we started the gentle but constant climb. Nearing the tops the ever present and hardly variable Rock & Pillar gale made an appearance. Leaning Lodge was a very welcome sight around 11.30am, so welcoming in fact that there was an outbreak of spontaneous shovel riding!

A quick lunch and then the real work began. Shovels of every conceivable size and shape attacked the snow. Within half an hour stories of war injuries and 'compo backs' abounded. Two and a half hours of quite solid graft saw four complete a snow cave on a steeply pitched gully side behind Leaning Lodge, and five finish a snow mound on the flats below. The Strath Taieri Holiday Inn Complex was finished on time and within budget (disappointingly no swimming pool was in the plans). Seldom, if ever, have the Rock & Pillars been graced with such sturdy, functional and eye pleasing structures.



Leaning Lodge snowcaving gully in summer (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

By sunset nine, more than slightly tired men of snow, were back at Leaning Lodge for a delicious celebratory meal. Thanks to the culinary skills of Peter A. If we thought the food was good, the entertainment was superb. Surely one of the best 'bullshit by candlelight' sessions ever followed - with the assistance of some Mountain Thunder Rum and overproof bourbon. The after-dinner liquor field was covered with a drink which was the colour of meths and had the taste of aftershave. The free ranging conversation covered the unimportant politics, world peace and conservation to the vital (Mains v Hart and Kamikaze flies). It was during one of these argue.... oops, I mean discussions that the word EBULLIENT (E-BEAU-LEE-ENT) raised its ugly head. One of the group (who shall remain nameless) ventured that he 'had always found Sean Fitzpatrick ebullient'. When pressured for a meaning to the word none was forthcoming - some doubted it existed at all. Abuse and scorn and laughs that followed have now become part of Leaning Lodge lore. It was a grand night topped off by one of the group (who still remains nameless) completing a backward somersault with one and a half pikes from the seat to the floor. The degree of difficulty was 2.3 but the judges couldn't score it for laughter. The final act for the night was when one of the group (who still remains nameless - but we called him Eric) tried to stand up in the snow mound.

The morning saw a beautiful sunrise but a hazy start for some of the party. Mid-morning saw all with ice axes in hand making our way up to Castle Rock. The last 70 or 80 metres to the lee was a real test with the wind howling, simply staying upright was a trial. Then across to the trig, weather beaten, forlorn and lonely. The views alone made the trip worthwhile. The snow had thawed a bit by the time we had a play, sliding and self-arresting back to the Lodge. If the snow had softened the wind hadn't! Some of the shovels acted as sails and gave some excitement on the way back down. Obviously, Ross's worked the best - he must have reached the cars before some had left the hut.

Great weather (wind excluded), great accommodation, great food, great company, great laughs. A Great Weekend!

by Anonymous Snowcaver

HINDON – THREE O’CLOCK STREAM

August 7, 1994

Author: Sharon St Clair-Newman

Published in Bulletin 535, September 1994

After a couple of excursions into Three O’clock stream via Orbells Cave I was interested to visit the lower end of the stream. On 7th August I was to lead a day trip, so this seemed a good destination.

By 9.00am 10 brave souls had joined me at the clubrooms, and by 10 past we were on our way to Hindon. Trevor felt the road I had intended to take might still be frosty so we took the longer route via the Middlemarch Road leaving the Outram Glen Road for the return trip. I picked Doug up at Concord, a necessary addition to a trip to ensure good weather. After rendezvousing with Trevor at Outram we carried on, meeting up with Dean who was studiously examining a map. After a quick discussion we finally arrived at Hindon, carried on over the bridge and followed the left-hand road for a few hundred metres until it's condition forced a stop.



Appropriate gear was donned and our happy little band set off over the concrete bridge at the outlet of Three O’clock Stream and up the ridge following quite a steep farm road. I had intended to follow the ridge on the true right on the way in and dropping into the stream on the way down, but after a view into the stream it was obvious that it was quite gorgy in places and wouldn’t be an option today.

Onwards and upwards we trundled as the day became warmer, until we came out on the top. Our party was of a good fitness level and we made very good time along the well-formed road until we came to an empty house beside a stock shed, possible shearer's quarters. At this stage the map came out and possibilities for the rest of the day were thrown about. After a snack and a drink, we left the road and headed up the wind break before cutting out to our right to intersect with the stream.

Once we were overlooking the stream a lunch spot was found, and a very pleasant hour was spent working out where we were. Considering the long drive in, we were surprised to find how far we had walked in such a short time.

A farm road was evident downstream and according to the map it continued up to the top of the ridge we were on, so my second option of crossing the stream and going back on the other side was decided on. Doug suggested sidling along to the farm road as travel was good, so off we set.

We had good views of a very attractive little river valley with numerous pools and a few flocks of resident geese. This would be a very nice place to spend a weekend in summer and maybe link up with the other end of the valley.

Crossing the stream was uneventful as no one provided any entertainment by falling in, although the looks on a few faces as the cold water filled boots gained a smile. Once again, we were soon plodding uphill on another good farm road until it left us to continue up to the top of Lamb Hill. We sidled out to our right keeping our height, while Trevor decided to go a bit higher to avoid climbing in and out of a gut. He eventually met up with us again and on we went until once again we were overlooking the lower reaches of Three O'clock Stream. Once more decisions were discussed as we had the choice of gaining height to follow the ridge out to our left or dropping steeply into the stream and climbing over a bluff at the end. The drop won, as time was marching on, and in no time we were clambering over the rocks at the edge of the water. Trevor had opted to go down a gut and after quite a bit of trouble finally managed to get onto the flats. He then proceeded ahead of the rest of us and up and over the gut. We, being slightly lazier, chose to find a way around the bluff and to our surprise someone had put in fixed ropes around the rocks which made it easy going. In no time at all we were back at the cars and headed off home.

Thanks to Rob and Linda, Rob and Alison, Dean, Peta. Ken, Trevor and last but not least Doug for providing a wonderful sunny day.

by Sharon St Clair-Newman

KAYAKING ON MANAPOURI

September 24-25, 1994

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 537, November 1994

The weekend started well with a good night's sleep at the Manapouri Camping ground, (what a way to start the weekend!), and with an early rise the next day - for some anyway, eh Trev? A quick walk down to the shore of Lake Manapouri in time to meet the kayak's at 8 am. We were each allocated a kayak in which we would start the day and after some instructions on how best to pack the gear and a sort out of the life jackets, wetsuits, etc., it was time for a lesson or two about what to expect, how to get out in a hurry (Doug was most interested in this one) and what to do if the conditions rough up. We were shown how to paddle, how to steer using the rudder and how to adjust the pedals - a half hour of valuable lessons.



Lunch on Lake Manapouri Beach, September 24, 1994 (PHOTO Doug Forrester Collection)

We were keen to get under way, so it wasn't long before we were all getting in and heading out onto the water of Lake Manapouri. The first ten minutes on the water was spent near the shore, getting used to the kayaks and after a raft up we were on our way to the other side (well not really, we headed out to a point in the middle of the lake). No matter how easy kayaking may sound, it does take a bit to get used to the rudder and paddle (especially in the double!!) Antony and I were in one of the doubles and trying to get our paddles going at the same time took a bit of concentration and I can tell you it was a bit frustrating sitting in the

front and not being able to steer - Antony is not very good at listening to my directions. The lake was reasonably calm and we made good time to the predetermined point. Once there we enjoyed travelling close to the bluffs and admiring the rugged shore, something we would not normally see out tramping. As we travelled closer to the rounding the point the waves and wind came up and travelling together as a group we headed around the point into the full force of the wind. This was a real test for those of us who had never kayaked before but it was also exhilarating and a good example of how quickly the conditions can change. Once around the point we headed for a sheltered beach where it was good to get out and stretch the legs. Being cramped up in a kayak and only using your upper body is a bit tiring on your legs and butt (Bruce will tell you that). Somehow our morning tea stop turned out to be a lunch stop which wasn't so silly as it was already 12-30.

As we drifted back to the kayaks after lunch some took the opportunity to swap kayaks and try out others. The water had calmed again and it was easy paddling out to an island near the middle of the lake, from here we jumped from one island to another and took the time to enjoy looking at these islands from a different, much closer angle than we'd ever done before. With one such small island, Antony and I decided to do a circumnavigation and were surprised to see everyone else follow suit. Why? - because it was there!!



OTMC kayaking on Lake Manapouri, September 25, 1994 (PHOTO Doug Forrester Collection)

After a few of these island's we headed to the far shore and a very sheltered cove where we pulled up onto the sand for an afternoon tea stop (again a good time to stretch the legs and butt). I must admit, it was about now, that I didn't seem to drink much and maybe the reason was what to do if I did want to go, most difficult!! Again we had a swap around of kayak's, with Antony and I both swapping our double for a single each. A single kayak is quite a bit different to a double and one thing I noticed straight off was the difference in speed. A double can build up a lot of speed with two people paddling together (as we found out reasonably quickly), whereas with a single, if you stopped paddling, usually because it was very tiring work, pretty quickly you stopped moving. We headed down the coast of Hope Arm and up onto the beach in

front of the hut, where we found approx. 12 kids and three adults already in residence. Never mind, that's what the tent is for anyway.

The weather had been beautiful all day and the night was no different, it clouded over which made the night very warm, quite a contrast to the snow all around the hills. This night was one of those magic nights spent around the campfire, telling jokes and enjoying a good yarn or two. It was still reasonably early when we all decided to trundle off to bed, I suppose the change in activity was the excuse.



Sharon St Clair-Newman kayaking on Lake Manapouri, September 25, 1994 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Anyway, the next day dawned clear and the lake was amazingly calm so Antony and I quickly had breakfast, packed up and headed out onto the lake first. We made good use of the extra time and as Trevor followed us we took off up into the lagoon. We were rewarded with great reflections in the calm lagoon waters. We decided to follow Trevor up the creek a bit further before the trees closed in too much and James was quick to follow us. One thing we did learn, and that was, that a double kayak is bigger than a single and the camera has proof of that with a good photo of Antony and I trying to get out of a tight spot, much to James and Trevor's amusement. By the time we had got back out through the lagoon and into the lake again everyone else seemed to be on the lake so we meandered our way along the shore on our way back towards home. We headed towards a beach which had the track up to Monument Peak and it was good to take our time and enjoy the calm peacefulness of the lake. We all arrived and were enjoying a morning tea break, debating the idea of climbing Monument Peak and then discarding it, before we realised we were missing a couple of our group. Some of us headed back the way we had come to see if there were any problems when we met the missing two coming around one of the headlands. Again, we meandered along the coast and headed off to another beach for lunch. I'm still impressed with how calm and relaxing paddling

along in the kayak is, maybe it had something to do with the flat water, beautiful clear skies and warm weather - simply magic!

Lunch was another noisy affair with everyone trying to outdo each other, Antony set a precedent by going for a swim and was quickly followed by a few other keen souls. Sharon impressed us all with her culinary skills and produced a birthday cake for Jared and of course, we had a rendition or two of 'Happy Birthday'. It was an enjoyable break from the hard grind of paddling. We were all reluctant to leave our sunny spot and head back out onto the calm waters of Lake Manapouri. It was a quick dash out to an island (only to see if the green stuff really was grass - and no - it was lots and lots of bird droppings!!). Here was a compulsory raft up for the team photo. It's a funny feeling watching as your camera is passed along the line of kayak's, knowing that it's a long way to the bottom if someone drops it. Anyway, it was worth it as the photo tells. We paddled our way around towards the windy point from the morning before and came across a guy photographing us from the shore. We did the obligatory posing for him before someone started a water fight, which meant Jared had to have a birthday dunking.

The windy point turned out to be calm today, so it was easy paddling all the way. We had hoped to head around to the beach via the coast but time was running a bit short so it was straight across the lake and a compulsory trip up to Pearl Harbour, where some tom-foolery took place. Now how Doug lost his paddle to Trevor, I'm not sure but I do know he was hanging on pretty tight to our kayak and as Antony gave him a push (we just wanted to see him float honest!), well what can I say - Doug ended up in the water. Now I'm not one to tell tales . . . but there were a few laughing even before he came up! Poor Doug, he did look like a drowned rat, and again we had practice with our rescue of getting him back in again. As we realised time was getting on, it was a quick trip out of Pearl Harbour and around the shore to our meeting place for the kayak's.

A great trip topped off with a compulsory water fight and who started it??! Sharon doesn't seem to know either. Till next time, thanks guy's, you made it another one of those memorable trips.

Debbie Pettinger for the 20 other kayakers

EXCITEMENT AT HISTORIC SKIPPERS

November 5-6, 1994

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 538, December 1994

Saturday morning and things were looking good! A good night's sleep in the shelter and with only a few scattered clouds around, enthusiasm was high. After packing up, we headed down the track, which followed the old Skippers township main road past the Otago Hotel. The only remains of this hotel is the stone outer wall, a reminder of gold days gone by. The track/road gently slopes down to the river where we came to the first of our 102 river crossings of this trip (a good estimate I would say!) We watched as another party scrambled around the hillside before taking the plunge and crossing. From here we crossed another couple of times before some of the unsuspecting parties carried on along the track and up the hill, those of us that had read our handy historic trail guide (courtesy of Antony) left the track and meandered up the river's edge until we came to the dam which seems to block the whole valley.



**Descending to Skippers Creek from the old Skipper township, Mt Aurum on skyline, November 5, 1994
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

A compulsory photo stop before continuing around the side of the dam and up to the top. Here it is amazing to see how shallow the dam really is (about ankle deep), and it is hard to believe that 100 years of sluicing/water have filled it (is this what the Clyde dam will be like in 100 years?). The next 40 or so crossings are relatively easy as 4x4 vehicles regularly follow this part of the route. A stop at the forks to enjoy the warm weather and catch up on the other parties before we hefted our packs and carried on up towards Dynamo Hut. Again we were fooled at Fools Bend and innocently followed the river around in an almost complete circle (some people will just never learn!) before the short trudge up to Dynamo Hut. A good look around and an

informative lesson on how the Dynamo actually worked and powered Bullendale before settling down to lunch. After this compulsory stop we had hardly started walking again, when Antony decided to make a detour to the top of the rock face that the water gushed down to the Dynamo at the bottom. It sounded like a good idea and everyone else quickly dumped their packs and followed. We found a tunnel that the water would have flowed through which led us to the top of the chute. It is hard to imagine men chipping away at the rock without the modern instruments of today. Standing at the top gave a good view down to Dynamo Hut and towards the Skippers township, but it was an eerie feeling standing so close to such a steep drop, and it really brought home the number of sacrifices the men of the gold rush era made.

Back to the track and we wandered across the tussock basin before following a track that cut down into the bush and across the river before heading up to another flat where we found a couple of private huts. Although it was still early we set up our fly and then followed Antony's memory of how to get to Curry's workings which is an old stamping battery in the bush. The harsh winters have paid their price on this battery as most of it is now lying scattered in a small area but enough is still standing to show how they worked and to impress on all of us just how hard life was. We followed the workings up into the bush and found the opening to the tunnel where the quartz would have been dug (this is now filled in and blocked off). We spent some time exploring the immediate area before heading back up to the basin and then followed the water race around the hillside. A lot of the water race is still in good order however the parts that went around the bluffs have now all fallen away. It was here that some of us decided to head back to camp while others branched off and went to see what was on the other side of the ridge.



Curries Claim – remains of stamping battery, Skipper Creek (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

By now the clouds were starting to form around the mountains and we set about having tea. This was a very social occasion and we all ended up around a fire where we spun a few yarns until it was dark enough for Liz to produce the box of sparklers that she had bought for Guy Fawkes. I have not seen so many adults so excited about sparklers before! A good idea - thanks Liz!. It wasn't long and we were heading off to our beds. During the night it began to rain and the thunder and lightning storm that followed was truly awesome. There were huge flashes of lightning that lit the whole valley and these were followed by loud claps of thunder that rolled around the hills growing quiet then rising in noise again, it was a magnificent show!

In the early morning we decided that the rain was not going to stop so we packed up and headed out with the thought of all those river crossings keeping us occupied. The river had risen and turned a slightly dirty colour so we stopped to link arms for all the crossings. At Fools Bend we decided to head for the ridge to avoid the gorge around the forks. We traversed the top until we reached a bluffy piece near the end and then we dropped down onto the Bullendale branch. Here the river looked a disgustingly dirty colour and after some debate we crossed and tried to scale the shingly, rock slope. Here Teresa got half buried in the shingly, muddy stuff before we decided this was not a good option (what a way to treat a non-member!). So back up the river we trudged until we came to an easier crossing, next was straight up the bank to the old road into Bullendale. It was an easy walk from here with some good views of the river valley down towards Skippers township. We followed the road back down to the river and ended up just below the forks.

Antony announced that the river crossings should get a bit easier from here on down as the 4x4 vehicles made the bottom quite good. Taking his advice we linked arms and continued down the river. True to his word, Antony was right and things got a little easier although we still had to link arms at every crossing. I must admit that we were all getting quite good at them by now and it was second nature to stop at the river and hold out your arms, ready for the next person so you could cross. We followed the river until we came to the track that branched off up the hill in order to bypass the dam and the gorge just below it. Upon reaching the bottom it was one last river crossing before scrambling around the hill side and back up the track to Skippers township and the vans.

We wasted a bit of time in drying off and packing up before we all hopped in the vans and started on the long journey back to town. I won't bore you with the details but the road was very muddy and the two wheel drive vans got stuck quite regularly and without the help from Mike and his 4x4 and a lot of pushing from the rest of us, we wouldn't have got very far. Mike left us at the Shotover Canyon Jet Boats while he dashed out to get help for us while the rest of us got ready to spend an extra night there. Luckily Mike managed to bring back the AJ Hackett guys who did a superb job of driving the vans out for us and even gave us an exciting ride as well. Much appreciated guys!

All in all an excellent trip that combined great company with some superb views and interesting exploring with an exhilarating ride out.

Debbie Pettinger for Antony, Teresa Chan and Catherine Adnitt.

ANDERSONS LAGOON TO THE SHAG RIVER

November 20, 1994

Author: Trevor Blogg

Published in Bulletin 538, December 1994

After a week of poor weather, things picked up on Sunday and a sizable group set off for Palmerston, then to nearby Anderson's Lagoon which sometimes connects to the ocean at high tide. Despite this the water isn't brackish and is home to a large number of Black Swans.

Some months before, I had been told by one of my lecturers at Otago University, that the Lagoon had become 'eutrophic', i.e. unable to support life. I saw no evidence of this, and maybe some action has been taken to clean up the Lagoon.

On arrival two cars set off to the Shag River estuary, so we had cars at both ends. We walked along the beach on a falling tide in bright sunshine and a slight breeze. We had to climb up and over a headland that the tide had not quite cleared. All of this time I had been expecting to see Black Backed Gulls in profusion, but they weren't appearing. Back on the beach we came across a colony of Spotted Shags, though they had lost most of their spots and eye markings which appear for courtship. The numerous sloping ledges and relative isolation of these cliffs gives these birds a first-class nesting site, and they were present in their hundreds, possibly thousands. Only a few were performing courtship rituals, the rest being busy incubating their eggs. They are striking birds with hazel eyes and blue-green skin.



After an hour or so's pleasant walk on the beach we noticed a few Black Oystercatchers, before finding a sheltered spot for lunch. The wind had come up a bit by now and after a relaxed lunch, the wind was moderate and David decided to try flying his elaborate 'home-made' kite, which looks a bit like a flying sleeping bag, though more colourful. After 15 minutes or so we pressed on north up the beach, keeping an eye open for Yellow Eyed penguin tracks, or for the bird on the water. No luck there.

We shortly reached the estuary of the Shag River itself and headed inland. Someone spotted a group of white birds which I thought were Stilts but were correctly identified as members of the Ibis family. They were actually Royal Spoonbills, a native of Australia, which migrated here of its own accord.

We quickly crossed the peaty estuary land, and continued along the road which is very scenic, running beside a tributary of the Shag. Meanwhile, Olive was delivering the other two drivers to their cars, and all three cars soon arrived to pick us up. Three members of the party then went on to Moeraki Boulders while the rest of us drove back to Dunedin, ending a nearly perfect day.

Party members:- Trevor Blogg, Christine Murray, David Fyfe, Catherine Adnitt, Jeanette Malcolm, Louise Roberts, Andrea Foicker, Olive Neilson, Linda Miles, Rob Seeley, Michelle Arnaud, Trevor Deaker, Zena Roderique.

by Trevor Blogg

OTMC COMMITTEE (1994-95)

President – Peter Mason

Vice President – Shirley McQueen

Vice President – Teresa Wasilewska

Secretary – Sue Williams

Treasurer – Arthur Blondell

Chief Guide / Transport – Antony Pettinger

Bulletin Editor – Greg Panting

Membership Secretary – Bruce Newton

Social Convenor – Jeanette Malcolm

Day Trip Convener – Trevor Blogg

Gear Hire – Greg Wood

SAR – David Barnes

Bushcraft 1995 – Antony Pettinger

Property & Maintenance – Peter Mason

FMC – John Cox

Climbing – Arthur Blondell

Immediate Past President – Antony Pettinger

Outdoor Recreation Group – John Cox

Hon. Solicitor – Antony Hamel

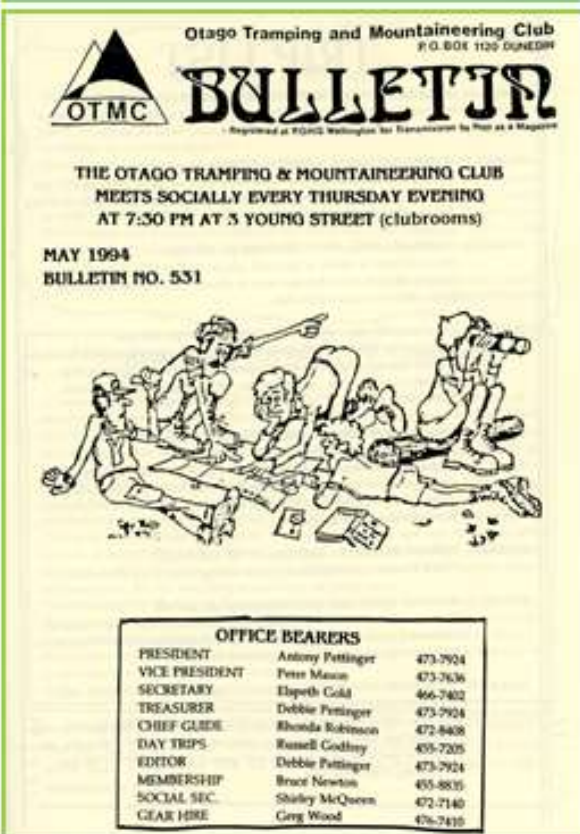
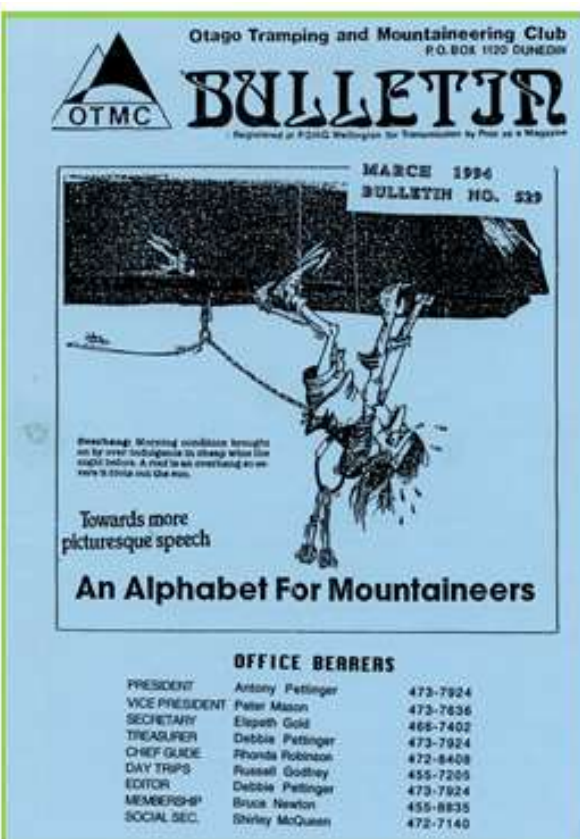
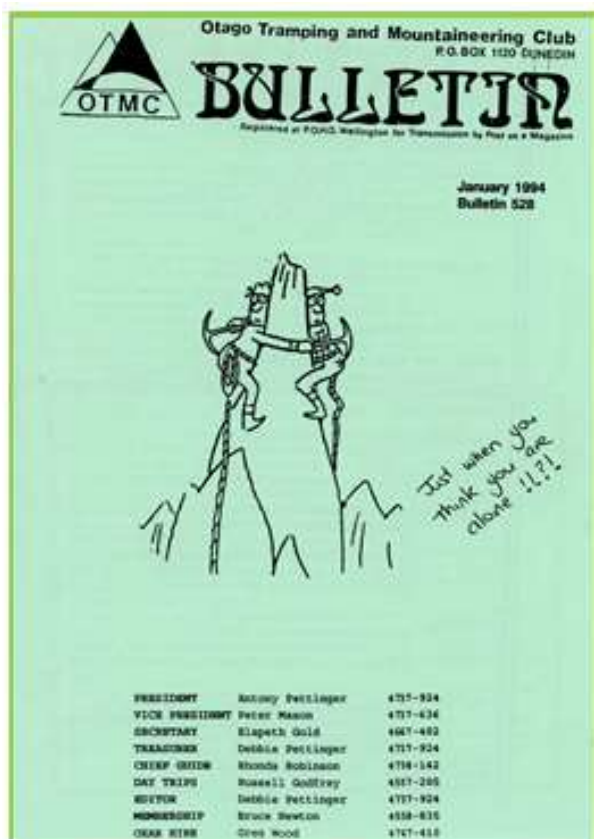
Hon. Auditor – Geoff Gray

OTMC TRIP PROGRAMME 1994

January	23	Leaning Lodge - Rock & Pillars	Ian Sime
January	29-30	Garvies / Blue Lake	Mike Floate
January	30	Peninsula Surprise (Mt Charles)	Jim Driscoll
February	5	OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon	Russell Godfrey
February	12-13	Bushcraft 1994 (Tirohanga Weekend)	Antony Pettinger
February	13	Bushcraft 1994 (Map and Compass Exercise)	Antony Pettinger
February	19-20	Bushcraft 1994 (Silver Peaks Weekend)	Antony Pettinger
February	27	OTMC Picnic - Long Beach	Elspeth Gold
March	5-6	Dingleburn - Timaru River	Doug Forrester
March	6	Bushcraft 1994 (Rivercrossing)	Antony Pettinger
March	12-13	Bushcraft 1994 (Optional Ohau Trip)	Elspeth Gold
March	13	Mystery Trip	Stuart Mathieson
March	19-21	Makarora / Mt Brewster (Anniversary Weekend)	Arthur Blondell
March	20	Mt Charles	Neville Mulholland
March	27	Work Party - Rosella Ridge	Shirley McQueen
April	1-4	Matukituki (Easter)	Antony Pettinger
April	10	Peninsula Mystery	Bruce Newton
April	17	Silver Peaks	Doug Forrester
April	23-25	Eglinton - Hollyford (ANZAC)	David Barnes
May	1	Government Track	Dave Levick
May	7-8	Lake Monowai - Green Lake	Rhonda Robinson
May	8	Rustlers - Swampy	Peter O'Driscoll
May	15	Burns Track	Jonette Service
May	21-22	Takitimus	Paul Bingham
May	22	Mt Charles	Neville Mulholland
May	29	Yellow Eyed Penguin Habitat - Tour and Revegetation	Lynn Dowsett and Rhonda Robinson
June	4-6	Queen's Birthday	
June	12	Rosella Ridge	Paul Bingham
June	18-19	Midwinter Wine & Dine Cooking Competition (Aspiring Hut)	Elspeth Gold
June	19	Berwick Forest	Trevor Blogg
June	26	Carey's Creek	Peter Aitcheson
July	2-3	Catlins River	Elspeth Gold
July	3	Allison Conservation Area	Ian Sime
July	10	Government Track - Waipori Gorge	Bruce Newton
July	16-17	Mt Domett	Chris Pearson
July	17	Maungatua Traverse	Doug Forrester
July	24	Flagstaff without Walkways	David Barnes
July	30-31	Winter Routeburn (Falls Side)	Sue Williams
July	31	Silver Peaks	Wayne Hodgkinson
August	7	Hindon	Sharon St Clair-Newman
August	13-14	X/C Skiing Intro	John Cox


August	14	Silver Peaks	Ross Chambers
August	21	The Crater	Andrew MacKay
August	27-28	Snowcaving (Rock and Pillar)	Peter Aitcheson
August	28	Work Party	Peter Mason
September	3	Annual Dinner	Bruce Newton
September	4	Kayaking On The Harbour	Peter Aitcheson
September	10-11	Snowcraft (Iceaxe and Crampons)	Barry Wybrow
September	10-11	Cross Country Skiing / Snow Farm	Mark Planner
September	11	Green Peak - Painted Forest	Greg Wood
September	18	Maungatua Traverse	Greg Panting
September	24-25	Manapouri / Te Anau Kayaking	Bruce Newton
September	25	Mystery Trip	Arthur Blondell
October	2	SAREX (Search & Rescue Exercise - Flagstaff)	David Barnes
October	8-9	Fiordland Area (Te Anau to Homer)	Antony Pettinger
October	8-9	Cross Country Skiing / Snow Farm	Dave Levick
October	9	Bendoran - The Gap	Trevor Pullar
October	16	Carey's Creek	Neville Mulholland
October	22-24	Port Craig - The Hump	David Barnes
October	30	The Gap	Peter O'Driscoll
November	5-6	Historical Skippers	Antony Pettinger
November	6	To be arranged	
November	13	Burns Track - Work Party	Dave Levick
November	19-20	Mt Cook - Footstool	Barry Wybrow
November	20	Shag River - Andersons Lagoon (Black Headed Gulls)	Trevor Blogg
November	26-27	Danseys Pass - Chinamans Hut	Robyn Bridges
November	27	ABC Cave	Arthur Blondell
December	3-4	Pisa Range	Mike Floate and Antony Pettinger
December	4	Taieri Mouth Gorge	Zena Webb (Roderique)
December	10-11	Otago Central Rail Trail Cycle Trip	Antony and Debbie Pettinger
December	11	Otago Peninsula	Neville Mulholland
December	17	Silver Peaks by Moonlight	Greg Wood
December	25	Christmas Tramp	Trevor Blogg

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (JANUARY TO MAY)



OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (JUNE TO SEPTEMBER)


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



BULLETIN

Registered at FIDIS Wellington for Transmission by Post as a Magazine

JUNE 1994
BULLETIN NO. 532




The Otago Tramping & Mountaineering Club
meets socially every Thursday evening
at 3 Young St (clubrooms)
starting 7-30 pm

OFFICE BEARERS

President	Antony Pettinger	475-7924
Vice President	Peter Mason	475-7636
Secretary	Elspeth Gold	466-7402
Treasurer	Debbie Pettinger	475-7924
Chief Guide	Rhonda Robinson	472-8408
Day Trips	Russell Godfrey	455-7205
Editor	Debbie Pettinger	475-7924
Membership	Bruce Newton	455-8835
Social Secretary	Shirley McQueen	472-7140
Gear Hire	Antony Pettinger	475-7924


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JULY 1994
BULLETIN NO. 533

Wow! GET A LOAD OF THAT BEAUTIFUL DIAMERAL!

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AUGUST 1994
BULLETIN NO. 534




"He's an excellent guide."

OFFICE BEARERS

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September 1994
Bulletin No. 535



OFFICE BEARERS

President	Peter Mason	475-7636
Vice President	Shirley McQueen	472-7140
Secretary	Sam Levitt	475-4927
Treasurer	Arthur & Thana Shandell	475-7924
Chief Guide	Antony Pettinger	467-2401
Day Trips	Greg Furling	455-1900
Editor	Bruce Newton	455-8835
Membership	To be Filled	
Social Secretary	Dea Wood	476-7408
Gear Hire		

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

