

# OTMC TRIP REPORTS

## 1999

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Sourced from the 1999 OTMC Bulletins



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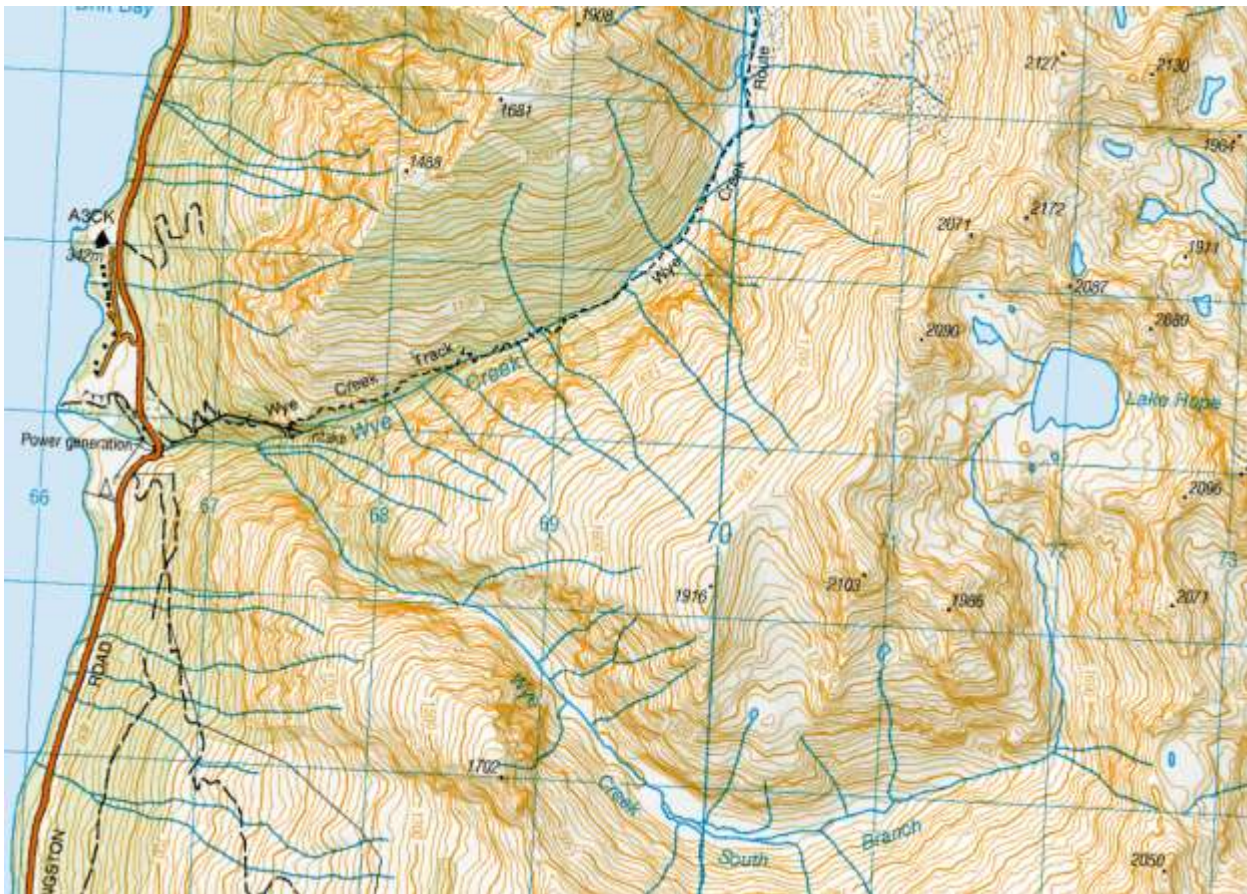
## WYE CREEK

**November 7-8, 1998**

**Author: Rob Porteous**

Published in Bulletin 583, February 1999

Noel and I set out in the usual manner on Friday night to head up to Queenstown for the night. I discovered on Friday afternoon that there was a classic car speed weekend up there, so expecting heavy traffic we set off from home. Fortunately, the expected traffic wasn't there so it was a fairly relaxed ride with a short stop in Alex' for tea. We stopped at a nice little unofficial camp spot by the lake just 5 mins down the road from the start of the track so it was out with the bivvy bag for a pleasant evening under the stars.



Saturday morning it was up at 7 and a quick but filling breakfast before starting a long day of uphill. Following the water pipeline towards the South Wye Gorge we turned off and went straight up the hill at an old landslide. After about one and a half hours of avoiding large scrub-entangled boulders and holes we reached the ridgeline that dropped (with many a bluff) into the South Wye. From here Noel (the one with the local knowledge) led me further up the ridge to where you could sidle through the bluffs and down to the valley floor. We climbed about 200m too high. It turned out we had come out on the ridge at exactly the right spot then moved away from the intended route to a much trickier one. Ain't hindsight wonderful. Anyway, once on the valley floor it was time for a bit of lunch by the babbling brook. From here it was simply follow the valley floor all the way up around the corner to Lake Hope. The hope part being "I hope the water's nice, I could do with a swim". It turned out there was about two feet of snow and ice on the lake surface... swimming was not an option! Rather than stay in the bivvy some distance below the lake we opted to camp beside it right by a perfect sun-bathing

rock. After a quick cuppa and setting up the tent we wandered up to the Northwest past another couple of small frozen lakes to a col overlooking the North Wye. Much heartened by the apparent ease of what we saw we returned to camp for a well-cooked tea finished off by steamed Christmas Pud and cream. That evening Noel spent quite some time with the instruction book for his new camera in the hope of getting a good starlit shot of the lake and surrounds. Alas he had the wrong speed film loaded and his getting up at 4 am to take a photo was all in vain.

Sunday dawned bright and clear promising another ideal day. In keeping with the generally lazy weather, we didn't get away until 9:00 am. From our campsite we wandered around to the east of the lake and over another rock-filled col (wish I had a helmet) into the valley behind. After some rather careful perusal of the very steep and rough terrain and some studied map reading, we decided on a route around the various small lakes, bluffs and rockslides which first went down the hill then back up again to yet another col. We stopped a while to have some morning tea and take some photos of the route we had come down. It looked pretty dodgy from a distance! Then it was over the top into the North Wye. Although from here it was all downhill it still took two and a half hours to wend our way through the rockslides and over the tussock to make the 800m drop to the valley floor. Once there we definitely felt a stop for lunch was in order. Sitting by the creek with our boots off enjoying the sun was very pleasant. From here you simply follow the valley floor until you hit the cairns of the "Wye Valley route" and back to the lake for a swim before heading home.

It was very pleasant to get good weather after being washed out of the Rockburn two weekends before. It was also fun to be able to use all the toys we had packed, not a single superfluous item was taken. An excellent trip all round.



# ONE WET NIGHT ON THE TAIERI

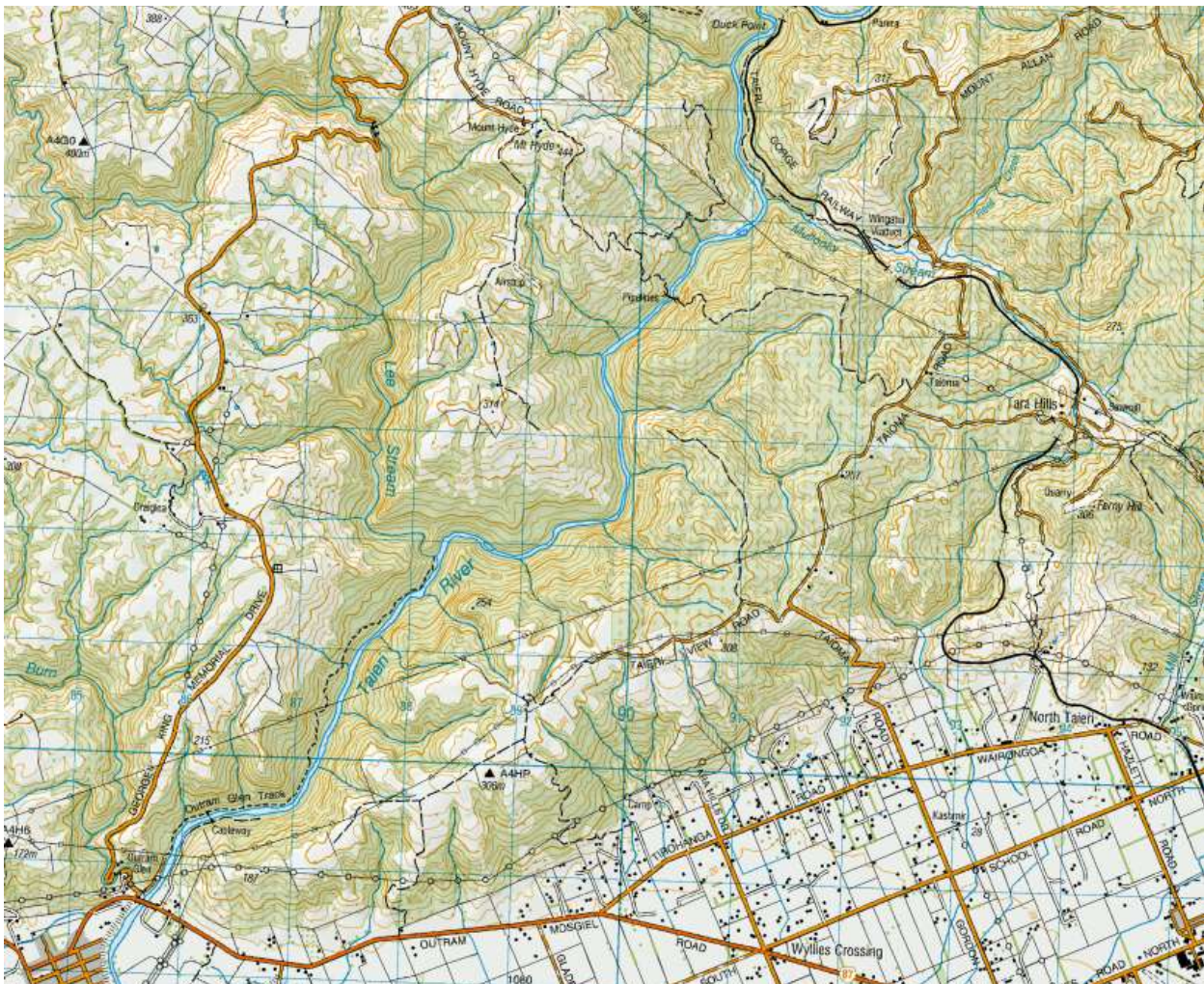
**Date not recorded**

**Author: David Barnes**

Published in Bulletin 583, February 1999

It was billed as the Taieri River Search and Rescue Exercise. The plan was to raft the Taieri, and deal with the occasional “task” encountered en-route. Teams from the Police, Fire Service, Ambulance and Red Cross, plus the odd ring-in like me, met at Mosgiel after work. After sorting out gear and getting a briefing, we travelled to Taioma, before embarking on a fifteen-minute walk to the river - in wetsuits!

A quiet drift brought us to the Pipeline Rapid, and memories of a capsize on an OTMC trip about 15 years ago. But this time my crew was successful, although that can’t be said for all the others. Further downstream we attempted to set up a “wrap” - getting the raft stuck on the upstream side of a large rock and held there by the force of the current - to demonstrate the difficulties of extricating the raft, but we failed miserably by missing the target rock. (Our skipper had selected a spot where we could do it safely).



A bit more drifting and a few wee rapids brought us to the Rock Garden Rapids. This is the place where most kayakers, rafters etc who run into problems in the Taieri come unstuck, and is therefore the first SAR place to look if anyone is overdue. After plenty of fun we arrived at Alan McKay’s barbeque site for our tasks. Task number one involved climbing to the top of a rock, securing a patient in a Stokes basket and lowering him into the river. This was followed

by abseiling down after him. As my team members were all firemen, we used their single-rope gear, with the descender operated by someone at the top of the cliff rather than by the abseiler.

Task number two was, to quote Brian Benn, to “eat a burnt sausage and drink a cup of soup”. This was accomplished without difficulty. By this stage it was completely dark - a situation that was remedied temporarily when we received a visit from the Tranzrail helicopter with it’s aptly named Night Sun. Task three involved assessing a patient and moving her a short distance. We found that life jackets and manuka poles made a passable stretcher.

Task four involved a couple of rather interesting river crossings. Firstly, a person standing on one bank threw a rope to a person standing in chest deep water on the other side. The receiver was then pendulumed to the opposite bank. The return was on a sort of flying fox consisting of a rope strung across the river at a 45- degree angle and a sling attached to a rope with a carabiner. The person using this device was almost totally in the water after the first few metres. Motive power was provided by the current. As I said, interesting!

At around 11 pm we got back in the rafts and headed for Outram Glen. There’s only one rapid of any substance in this section, at a place known as Bum Rock. Here we seemed to be attempting to come as close as possible to flipping the raft without actually succeeding. What we did manage was to fill the raft so full of water that it was floating *below* the surface of the river. From there on it was a quiet drift to the end of the trip.

## **BEN RUDD'S TO ST KILDA BEACH (75<sup>TH</sup> TRAVERSE)**

**December 13, 1998**

**Author: Jenny Lowe**

Published in Bulletin 583, February 1999

Today history was made! The final section of the traverse from coast to coast, marking the Club's 75th Anniversary was to be completed!

Chris, Nigel and I set off from the Bull Ring, the end point of the last tramp which had began at Middlemarch. Although the weather was a little misty, it didn't dampen our spirits. We stomped quickly over Flagstaff on the Pineapple Track and dropped down to Booth Road, where we met the other 24 or so trampers. Almost all had taken the effort to represent a different era and were suitably attired.

From Booth Road we passed through the tranquil and shady Ross Creek. No trip would be compete without the obligatory river (!) crossings. No wet feet, but some were very close to falling in completely! Down through Woodhaugh and up to meet the Town Belt - the only serious "up bit" of the trip. A quick stop at the playpark allowed the kids and the 'kids-at-heart' to have a swing around. Theresa took on a few of the braver men on the see-saw. We won't mention who the winner was!

It was a pleasant stroll through the Town Belt passing some great old villas on the way. Birdlife was aplenty and the trees in full leaf. The whole belt is an asset to the city.

A minor diversion was required at one point to avoid the cars hurtling round the comers at speeds exceeding 100 km/hr. Not the usual Dunedin drivers, today was also a car rally day. We negotiated our way back to the original route without need for map or compass - quite impressive really. The next stage took us past Montecillo Park, with magnificent views over the city and onto the spooky Southern Cemetery. The steep banks saw some of us take the 'Quick Way Down'! Things were relatively straight forward from then on after reaching King Edward Street. No chance of getting lost - except temporarily into the ice-cream shop.

The first glimpse of the Pacific Ocean greeted us shortly. It was all too much for Nigel who was compelled to strip off and run naked into the icy water!

For Chris Wells, Nigel Boydell and Ken Mason it was a very special moment, as they had completed all legs of the traverse. It was a culmination of many hours of hard slog and at times difficult terrain. However, it was also a time to remember all the beautiful places visited and good company shared.

The trip culminated in a celebration at The Esplanade, St Clair. A relaxing way to finish a relaxing day out. Well done to **all** trampers who took part in any part of the traverse.

Jenny Lowe for all of the trampers involved.



## AROUND THE PEAKS

**January 24, 1999**

**Author: Ross Davies**

Published in Bulletin 584, March 1998

Unfortunately, this trip was originally advertised as a bit of a mystery. It was always going where it went, the only mystery was how many would be keen enough to come. It is a classic, done at least twice in the 70s, and I think it deserves to remain a classic. Maybe the problem was that the list of where it was going was a bit long!

Anyway, nobody at Club sounded keen, so it looked like only a couple of us. Then a keen Irishman rang up on the day before, and the more I tried to warn him, the more enthusiastic he got. So truly green Rob Kelly joined the evergreen Dick Brasier and the always green me, heading up the Chalkies at about 8:15 am on a lovely sunny morning. After a brief dance in the Spaniards at the top, we waltzed around Boulder Hill, and down to Big Stream, which was not very big at all. We were grateful for the shelter of the pine trees on the up and over to Poplar Hut, where we said hello to some friendly horses, then headed up towards Mt John.



The tops of the Silver Peaks from Pulpit Rock (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Just before noon, and before we came out of the trees, I put a call through to my sister Wendy Brasier to confirm a time for meeting around Pulpit Rock. The sun burnt down as we sort of burnt down past Mt John Hut. Christmas Creek could be jumped across with dry feet for the first time I have known. We reminisced around the Chook Flyover (the Dave Still track which saves a few precious feet of height) and headed up to Jubilee Hut. We had lunch down by the creek, a glorious spot in the beech trees. We topped up our water at the bottom of the Devils Staircase, knowing that was the last we would see until later in the evening. The day was probably at its warmest going up the Staircase, and I was grateful for my wet t shirt idea. From the top, just after 3:30 pm we spotted Wendy and her sister (and mine) Alaine Kennedy lounging in the sun over by Pulpit Rock. We soon joined them, and they joined us for the rest of the trip, having been dropped off earlier at the Mountain Road. From Pulpit Rock we headed

off down Long Ridge to the top of Powder Ridge, which we reached with a bit of a flounder over mountainous tussocks.



The top of Powder Ridge, with Flagstaff on the skyline (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

I think Powder Ridge is one of the nicest tracks in the Silver Peaks. We spent a really pleasant couple of hours walking down it, with only a few grumbles about Spaniards at the top and flaming hook grass down much of it. You just have to remember to take plenty of water. Wendy and I had a remember session at the spot where 10 of us took a wrong turning on the ridge about 25 years ago and ended up spending the night in the creek (and Dick ended up searching the ridge at 1 am). This time we all reached Silverstream on the right track, for the final meander back to the car at the bottom of the Chalkies Track to complete our "circle". We reached there about 8 pm, and headed back to the Brasiers for refreshments, to end an enjoyable day in good company.

Ross Davies for Dick Brasier, Rob Kelly, Wendy Brasier, and Alaine Kennedy.

29-12-98. Edwin Long & Zoe collected in  
about lunch time.  
24-1-99. Dick Brasier / Robbie Kelly Tullamore Ireland  
Ross Davies - OTMC Day trip - from Chalkies via  
Mt John. 2 pm. Returning to Whareatua  
via Silverpeaks and Powder Ridge.

Snip from the 1999 Jubilee Hut book (OTMC Archives)



## **GOLDEN OLDIES ANNIVERSARY CAMP (NELSON)**

**Early 1999 (Date not recorded)**

**Author: Ann McKellar**

Published in Bulletin 584, March 1998

This is a note / trip report about our holiday in the South Island where we had a great time catching up with lots of O.T.M.C. past and present members. The event was organised by Hank (Alan) Lockhart and gained momentum at the anniversary dinner on a snowy Dunedin night.

As a result, we gathered for New Year's Eve and had 2 weeks of continuous sun, heat and fun in the Nelson area. Every day we woke up to clear skies and all the events planned for wet days didn't eventuate. We were staying in a Christian camp near a place called Foxhill, which is where Lord Rutherford, of "split the atom" fame, came from. You would not have found it in any of the camping guides as it is a private one and built in the sixties. It was up Quail Valley Rd, which is between Belgrove and Foxhill.

We had the place to ourselves, and it was a gathering of Dunedin and ex Dunedin friends from tramping club. There was a core of 6 families for the 2 weeks and another 4 or 5 came at different days. It was a very basic place but had good showers, bunkrooms, kitchen, camp spots, river to swim in and plenty of open spaces for children to run wild. Most nights there were 15- 20 children; the biggest meal was for 35, I think. We did lose count. One of the great pleasures was a very steep hill behind - perfect for sliding down on cardboard and plastic. Other banks provided challenges to the bike riding.



**Lake Rotoroa (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

We spent days at the beach, Nelson Lakes, a river with a wonderful pool and rocks to jump from, and some short tramps. We went to the Abel Tasman National Park and walked for an hour or so along the Abel Tasman Track to a beautiful beach, too hot for most of the kids, but some of the adults and small boys continued on.

Russell and Rosemary George, Hank Lockhart and families were there. Others included Sarah Glasson, her husband Gerald Nation and their family; Pont (Tony) Oliver, Shan and kids; the Doigs, Buchannans, Pollocks; Dick and Wendy Brasier, and some other non - O.T.M.C people. Also, there was Neroli Amyes, well known to some O.T.M.C. people.

Various groups did some tramping to Mt Richmond Forest Park towards Gordon's Knob and to Mount Arthur, but other more leisurely pursuits like sitting on the beach and a stroll in the beautiful Abel Tasman as mentioned were most people's preference.

I have to also acknowledge considerable amounts of social activities that are bound to occur when old(?) O.T.M.Cers get together. We even had a bridge four. But after some dubious bidding by Pont on the first night, which had a severe effect on Hanks blood pressure, future games were in doubt. But Pont was horse-whipped into line and the play continued.

Russell once again supplied banjo and calling for dancing which brought back memories of the fundraising dances for the SAVE THE REMARKABLES campaign of the 80's. Some of us still have HANDS OFF THE REMARKABLES tee-shirts tucked away in the drawer. New Year's Eve saw us sedate 40 plus year olds being chastised by the neighbours for too much noise. Hank's fireworks were scaring the horses and the farmer came running over to the camp. The kids thought it a great joke to have their parents being told off! Other extreme sports included the great juggling challenge. Fine till a cry from he-who-shall-be- nameless "It's not fair he's got bigger balls than I have!"

This was certainly a great place to gather. It was even warm enough to swim at Lake Rotoiti. A wonderful way to round off the anniversary year. I hope you all had a good holiday. We really enjoyed the celebrations, especially the Ben Rudd's trip in the snow. So long since I have been in those conditions. The committee did a grand job organising everything and we have enjoyed reading of the other activities in the Bulletin.

Kind regards, Ann McKellar



## BUSHCRAFT – SILVER PEAKS I

**February 20-21, 1999**

**Author: Barbara (surname not noted)**

Published in Bulletin 585, April 1999

Our pace was steady as we battled the elements from Hightop into the Jubilee Hut area and return. We experienced the rain, wind, hail, and the sun that shone down at lunch and snack times. This constantly changing weather gave us a better idea of the appropriate gear to take and wear and tested our own gear. I need thicker polties, Miriam a thicker sleeping bag, and Marjan more of those comfortable socks. On the return our trusty leader pointed out the gale clouds moving in, and after experiencing the wind on our climb up the Devil's Staircase, and in other patches, we will certainly remember them.



Ascending the Devils Staircase (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

It was the practical experience of the tramp that taught me more than a textbook could. The speed to take, so that one started and finished at the same pace; the necessity of planning the time of departure for the following day, (yes, we slept in!); the constant surveying of the area to collect the known points for our position, (so that John could give the sermon from the pulpit!); the organisation of the food and the cooking; sleeping under the fly while the opossums rattled the billy and the dinosaurs and moas called to each other; the need for a handy drink bottle; as well as the need to get our packs set up correctly.

We also learnt to keep in a compact group and to be constantly aware of our following groupie. The Saturday rain and mist showed how easy it was to get mislaid as the weather came and went as it pleased. The emphasis was on safety and John kept feeding us snippets of wisdom, which will make our tramping more enjoyable. He took us to The Ice, then the smoke from the Central Otago fires brought us back to the real world.

It was an enjoyable weekend, challenging in a relaxed way. I learnt more than I thought I would and working within a group was a new experience for me. I thank the planners and John who ensured we returned, and my fellow trampers whose company I enjoyed. All in all, a good experience of a previously unknown Dunedin area where mounds turned into hills, and hills turned into mountains over the two days for me.

Barbara for Miriam, Marjan, and John

## BUSHCRAFT – SILVER PEAKS II

**February 20-21, 1999**

**Author: Linda (surname not noted)**

Published in Bulletin 585, April 1999

The Bushcraft trip to the Silver Peaks headed off on Saturday 27th Feb. My party of 4, led by Peter O'Driscoll, took the route in from Mountain Road via Hightop, Green Ridge, Pulpit Rock, and down the Devil's Staircase return to set up camp near Jubilee Hut.

Well after weeks of no rain, we managed to pick the only day of rain and grotty weather to head off. By the time we got down to the bottom of the Devil's Staircase the weather had begun to clear. So, lunch and a spot of sunbathing was in order. After that, more rain and a short jaunt to Jubilee Hut for a look and talk of rats. We, being the first party to arrive in the valley, claimed the prime campsite. We thought our fly-pitching skills were spot on until a well-timed gust of wind sent everything flying, including our anchor rocks. So bigger rocks were in order.



Top of Green Ridge, just below Pulpit Rock – Mt Cargill through to Mt Charles visible beyond  
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The culinary delights of trampers - packet cheesecakes, what an amazing discovery!

Sunday brought fine weather and the realisation that we had to go back up! The Devil's Staircase looked even steeper from the valley floor, but we were buoyed up by the assurances of our fearless leader that going up was easier than going down! Indeed, he was right.

Well, getting to the top was worth the effort for the view. (There was none on Saturday, only clouds.) I guess all in all this bunch of keen Kiwis enjoyed the trip and will be eager for more.

Linda for Kate, Vicki and Peter.

## BUSHCRAFT – SILVER PEAKS III

**February 20-21, 1999**

**Author: Margaret (surname not noted)**

Published in Bulletin 585, April 1999

Saturday 7am, I am lying in bed on a rainy morning waiting for that call from Peter or Antony that our trip to Silver Peaks is going to be postponed until further notice. I never got the call. So, I showered and met my group at 8:15 in front of the Botanical Gardens. All looked a little doubtful except for the ever-positive Peter. Raring to go! Our group consisted of 3 males and 2 females ranging from ages 17 to 44. Quite a variety, I know, but a great congenial group. Our leader, Antony, always the upbeat one, was enthusiastic about keeping to our original plan to start at Leith Saddle walkway and end Sunday afternoon at Tunnels Track on Mountain Rd. Boy, I am glad we didn't choose the advanced trip! This trip had a little bit of everything. Weather-wise we had rain, sun, clouds, fog and hail all in one day. To compliment this, we went from boardwalk-type stairs to bush, to forest, to wide open spaces (where the wind almost knocked you off your feet), to the infamous Devils Staircase (an experience we all had to have at least once).

We started our climb led by the youngest, Yun, at a brisk pace - that's youth, and a very lightweight pack - to Swampy Spur where Antony told us all the things we could have seen if the clouds were not in the way. Then over to Swampy Summit with dozens of radio, phone, and airplane antennas which looked like it was from a science fiction movie. We had a quick snack behind one of the buildings to keep the wind and rain off us, then followed Bess, whom we nicknamed "mountain goat" for keeping up quite a good pace through some pretty hard to see pathways through the bush. The sun came up and we realised that it is truly beautiful up there as we stopped for lunch at Hightop.

Ron took over leading us past Green Hut site and through some pretty nice forests and Green Ridge all the way to Pulpit Rock, where we took another break to enjoy the incredible view and to catch our breath. After a quick glimpse of the Painted Forest, we took on the Devils Staircase, which is appropriately named! Fortunately, or unfortunately, I was the leader down the Staircase and was a good example of showing everyone how not to go down it! We made it and met the other Bushcraft '99 group in the trees near Jubilee Hut, quite weary but very proud of ourselves. The sun was shining, and we all sat down for a rest and cup of coffee and Milo.

We had a great dinner of Fettuccini Alfredo, vegetables, and smoked chicken all prepared in one billy, followed by a delicious cheesecake. We ate it all down, watched a possum, which seemed quite curious as to why we were there, and then hit the sack. Sleeping right next to the bubbling river with the bright almost full moon seemed to be the end to a great day. No bugs and no visiting possums.

Up around 7 am. Coffee, Milo, muesli, and the ever-present peanut butter that I insisted on bringing (take note, 1/2 kilo is way too much for 5 people, especially if none are children!). We packed up and said our goodbyes, then off to sign the Jubilee Hut book, admire all the improvements, and up the hill we went led by the "mountain goat". We kept climbing, thinking that we had got to the "top", and then there would be another hill! We were all feeling a little better, maybe it was our confidence that we had survived the day before, or it could have been that our packs were slightly lighter or because the day was absolutely gorgeous! Cool, breezy and sunny. No parkas or sweaters for us. Thank you, Peter for not cancelling our trip. We could see many other treks along Mt. John and could see several huts like Christmas Creek and Mt. John hut.





**On Yellow Ridge, Silver Peaks (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

The best is that we could see where we had been and where we were going. We impressed ourselves by how far we had gone since yesterday. We stopped at ABC Cave for a snack and Yun wrote in the book. Lord knows what he must have said about us! But we asked him to put in a good word for Bushcraft '99 as well as his school, Otago Boy's. Then along a quite overgrown pathway for a spectacular view of The Gap. The wind was fierce but there was not a cloud in the sky, and we could see forever. We stopped in the tall grass for lunch and were very comfortable, but it was time to move on and after our look at Yellow Hut we could taste home. Antony promised us a dip in the Waikouaiti River, and we tried to pick up the pace on the way down. It seemed as if we were going down and down and down and no river. I was beginning to question Antony's knowledge of the area. Finally, we saw it and most of us just went straight in boots and all. By this time, we were pretty hot, and the cool river was the perfect remedy. As we were going down Antony warned us that we had the Tunnel Track to climb before arriving at our cars. It seemed like we just kept going uphill forever! I have to say that Antony never steered us wrong. If he said it was 20 minutes, it was 20 minutes; if he said it was steep, it was steep! We realized we were close to civilization when 2 motocross bikes whizzed past us. At the top of the track at 4pm sharp there was Debbie, Antony's wife, and 2 children waiting for us with ice cold beers. Beer has never tasted so good! The 4 of us then realized that this had been a good, good trip with some great individuals. But we were tired and ready to go home. Brief goodbyes and then a nice hot bath at home.

This trip was full of the most variety of plants, trees, bush, and trails that I have ever experienced, especially so close to Dunedin. I recommend it highly to anyone who wants to expand their horizons. I also recommend that one takes the class as an individual and not with his or her partner. One needs to experience this on his or her own. Thank you, Peter and Antony, for a most unforgettable experience.

Margaret for Yun, Antony, Ron, and Bess

## FIVE PASSES

**April 2-5, 1999**

**Author: Rob Porteous**

Published in Bulletin 585, April 1999

We arrived at the Routeburn shelter (beyond Glenorchy) on Thursday night in the rain. Slept the night listening to the downpour on the roof and wondering what Friday would be like. As it turned out it was very, very wet. I had to collect Terry in Glenorchy so we would have a vehicle available when we finished the tramp, so I started the walk over Sugarloaf Pass about half an hour after the rest of my group. I caught them at the top just as they were polishing off the last of the hot water for a cup of tea. By then I had formed a couple of blisters, one on each heel. This was in spite of taping them both up before I started. I added a few layers of tape and then we continued our way across in the wind and the rain. It was a lousy day and by the time we made camp (9 hrs later, just below Park Pass) the tape had come off both heels and my blisters were getting worse. Fortunately, Blue Rob produced a wondrous meal to warm us all and it was into a warm sleeping bag for the night.



Looking over the Rockburn valley towards Park Pass, from Sugarloaf Pass (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The second day dawned dismal and cold but by the time we got up to Park Pass the weather was clearing and the sun had come out. From there on in the weather was spectacular. We had a smoko stop on the pass then dropped down into Hidden Falls valley. What a descent! The track went straight down and was very tricky to follow (we lost it only 10 min in!). There was only one track marker and that was half way down! Anyway once we got to the bottom we had a lunch stop for 1/2 hr and then headed on up to Cow saddle. We stopped about 3:30 pm at the first good campsite we came across on the saddle (looked like it was the only good campsite as it turned out). A reasonable effort of 8 hrs walking. We lazed around and had a HUGE dinner of pasta and endangered instant pudding for dessert. Just as we were finishing the main course the rest of the tramping party turned up. Everyone insisted in crossing the



creek precisely where our instant pudding was setting so by the time they had all filtered in everyone was heartily sick of yelling "Watch the pudding!"



Head of the Rockburn, from near Park Pass (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

*Day three* - once again we were up at 6:30 and away by 7:30. We started the day with a climb over Fiery Col (a fairly high Alpine pass well above Cow saddle). Spectacular views all around making my blisters worthwhile. Unfortunately, my camera batteries were not enjoying the cold much and I was not getting many morning photos. From there we dropped down to the Olivine Ledge for a bite of lunch. It was here I ran out of crackers and scroggin (oops, lousy planning there!). Then it was a further drop to cross a creek, then climb out and battle head-high flowering tussock for a couple of hours until we started the climb up the ridge towards Fohn Lakes. At the top of the ridge we dropped down into the gully and then climbed another ridge to reach the lakes themselves. What a view! We snapped a few photos and then worked our way around to the other side of the lake to arrange for a campsite that would get the best of both the morning AND evening sun. It was a glorious afternoon and yet another evening of fine food with a rice risotto and cheesecake for dessert. We spent the evening watching the stars and spotting shooting stars (three) and satellites (heaps)

*Day four* started pretty cruisy. We got up about 8 am had a long breakfast, then the other guys went off and bagged a peak while I stayed at the tents and nursed my sore heels. Once they returned we packed up our now dry tents, sleeping bags and socks and wandered the short distance to our last pass of the trip (Fohn Saddle). We had a leisurely lunch there, then it was a steep descent into the floor of the Beansburn valley. On the way down I decided to get adventurous and headed down a gully that got progressively steeper and bluffer. I got down in the end, but it was a scramble and the other guys in the party had by then decided that it was time for a swim. Not knowing their plans, I arrived at the valley floor and continued on to the bivvy about an hour down. Then it was about 40 mins of wondering where they got to before they caught up. Since the bivvy was a lot like a fridge in temperature and moisture content, we decided to break out the tents again and spent another night out under the stars.



Fohn Lakes and Fohn (peak, 1777m) (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

*Day five* was an early start since we had a way to go and had to meet the jet boat at the Dart-Beansburn River junction at 2 pm. We were away and walking by 7 am. The weather was still holding up its end of the bargain which was nice since it was a surprisingly rugged 5 hr walk down the valley to get to the appointed meeting place. We arrived just after 12:30 for a spot of lunch and a cup of tea. Some were game enough for a swim, which although refreshing was still liable to expose too much flesh to the sandflies for my taste. The boat arrived to carry us out bang on time. This was fortunate since the weather was just starting to crap out and another couple of hours might have seen us starting to get a bit cold. It was a good trip down the river with a couple of spins thrown in for good measure. The only problem being that with the boat so laden down we all got more than a bit wet - lucky I put my jacket on, eh! It was then off to the Glenorchy Pub for a plate of chips and a beer before heading home

Much thanks to Rob McLaren (Blue Rob, provider of much-needed blister repair tape), Tony Malcolm (Provider of lunch for the last two days) and Paul Van Kampen (Guide to the stars and supplier of lollies). Great trip!

Rob Porteous (Red Rob, scrounger extraordinaire)



## THE MEANING OF THE VERB 'TO TRAMP' (FIVE PASSES)

**April 2-5, 1999**

**Author: Claire Garrett**

Published in Bulletin 586, May 1999

As a bushwalker from across the ditch, it has taken the *Five Passes* Easter trip with the OTMC for me to appreciate the philosophy behind the seemingly innocent NZ term "tramping". I didn't need to be a nuclear physicist to figure out that *tramping* is actually a cunningly disguised sadistic numbers game, although I found a working knowledge of exponential decay and chaos theory was a distinct advantage. I am now in the possession of the hard earned knowledge that the overall game plan for *a tramp* is to begin with as many people as you can possibly squeeze into three vehicles (would you believe 15?), taking care to fill all interstitial spaces with as much unnecessary gear, gourmet food and Easter eggs as possible, set them loose in the Southern Alps, and see how many of the original starters can be eliminated by fair means or foul before they make their designated rendezvous with a Dart jet boat, five days and x kilometres later!



Cow Saddle (the middle Pass) from the descent of Fiery Col (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Some of the measures taken to achieve trumper minimisation were quite remarkable, and those of us more used to the aim of conservation of numbers were often caught by surprise. The experience of this notorious group was clearly demonstrated by the ability to offload four of its speedier members in the first half hour and dispense with the Leader and Co. by day two. Although daily fluctuations of  $\pm 10\%$  in numbers were common, there was a fortunate regression toward the mean achieved by 1400 hours on day five. Even the unsuspecting foreigners quickly learned that survival meant weathering wind and rain on Sugarloaf Pass, closing eyes and mind to waterfalls whilst crossing raging torrents along the Roc kb urn,

swinging from tree to tree down from Park Pass, stealing fuel to cook dinner, dragging exhausted bodies out of armpit deep potholes hidden by 2m high grass on the Olivine Ledges, rotating tents at midnight, skiing down steep snowgrass bluffs off Fohn Saddle, avoiding cracked shins on the lethal mossy rocks and roots hidden under ferns on the Beansburn track, and controlling the adrenalin rush on the wild jetboat ride down the Dart.



Nearing the bushline in the Beans Burn (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Despite all attempts, self inflicted or otherwise, to wipe myself out, nothing could detract from the enjoyment of the country itself. The breathtaking panoramas from the likes of Fiery Col, the sunrise from Sunset Peak, the diamonds dripping from Tolkein forests, the golden mirror tarns above Cow Saddle, the serenity and serendipity of the campsite at Fohn Lakes, the luxurious beds of sphagnum moss in the Beansburn, the braided beauty of the Dart, let alone the camaraderie of my fellow desperados.

Along with a pile of photos and unforgettable memories, I will take home with me the concept of rock biwies, bluffed out, "trip" doctor, and "true" left and right (although it has been kindly pointed out that lack of water in Australian creeks may cause some difficulty there). In exchange, I leave behind the useful concept of a "whip", the definition of a "real" camera, and an open invitation to OTMC members and friends to come tramping in my stamping ground of the Victorian Alps.

Claire Garrett, Bayside Bushwalking Club, Melbourne; and the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs of Victoria.

## CATLINS RECEE

**April 18, 1999**

**Author: Ian Sime**

Published in Bulletin 586, May 1999

It didn't happen. I contacted Rocklands Station ahead of time to check the condition of the Dunstan Track and was told it was fine. When it snowed on the Friday I started to think of possible alternatives. On Sunday morning when I rang Rocklands again, the head shepherd said most of the snow had melted but car access was doubtful. The prospect of heading there but not being able to make it didn't appeal.

In August I am down to lead a day trip to Catlins waterfalls. Some of them I had seen, others I hadn't, and McLean Falls had a new access track built by Kings High students which replaced the disgusting mud baths that used to be the way to get to them. So, some time I needed to do a recce. This seemed to be the opportunity. Neville Peat's book "The Catlins" describes four falls which I hoped to visit.

The people who phoned to check whether the listed trip was still on seemed happy enough with the suggested change, so that's where the four of us went. The woman in the Information Centre, now attached to a dairy in Owaka, explained that logging was being done in the Wilkes Falls area so the track to them was closed. But she described Barrs Road Falls, just a few km out of Owaka, which weren't mentioned by Neville, so we headed for them first.

The sign said 10 minutes one way. We were surprised to reach them in under three, but well worth that time. As we arrived at the Purakaunui Falls carpark, the only other car there, with two Scottish girls, was just leaving. With all the recent snow and rain, the Falls were magnificent, but tinged brown. Back at the carpark there were now seven cars, with 4 Scots, 2 Swiss (German dialect), a Hawkes Bay couple, another from Tauranga, a two car 2 family group, and a guy who told us he was from "overseas". He was smoking a handmade cigarette, and when his woman got in their car she rolled her own too. We ate lunch standing in the sun which appeared briefly, rather than sit at the picnic tables which were shaded by the bush.

The road to the Tahakopa estuary winds a lot and is narrow with overhanging bush, just like a Catlins road ought to be. Then it was down the main road to the turn off into Newcastle Road. At its end, the well-constructed and metalled Kings High walk is mostly beside the Tautuku River for the 20 minutes till you reach the falls. Again, with the rain these were in full flow.

Back north again through Papatowai and MacLennan to the Matai Falls on the southern slopes of Table Hill. After Purakaunui and McLean, these were less spectacular. We should have gone to them first. Through Owaka and down the back road through Otekura and along Kororo Creek to Kaka Point for a look at the sea before crossing the Paretai Plains to Balclutha and home.

Thanks to Denise Justice, Mark Stratford and Jude Wilson for sharing a day of exploration.

Ian Sime



# EYRE MOUNTAINS

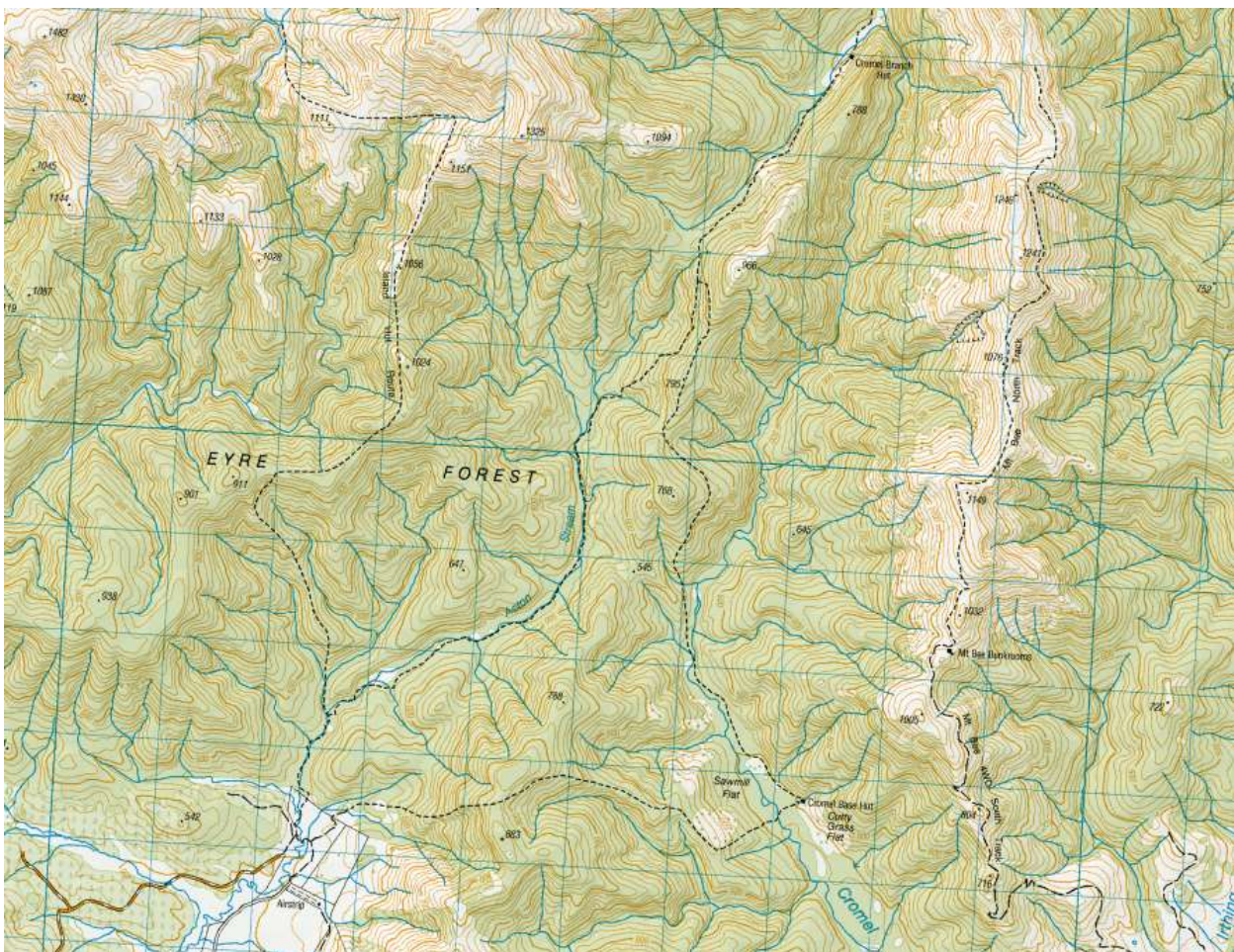
## April 17-18, 1999

**Author: Bess Taylor**

Published in Bulletin 586, May 1999

Situated between Mossburn and Wakatipu, these mountains cover a vast area. As we ventured down the Mossburn-Five Rivers highway, the snow was falling heavily and after meeting up with Nigel (trip leader) and Vanessa we opted to stay at the Mossburn Camping Ground rather than attempt to drive to Acton Hut. They have excellent facilities, including a tanning bed!

We awoke on Saturday morning to a bright and chilly aura. After satisfying a hankering for building a snowman we drove up Acton Forestry Road. We left the van halfway up due to the 12 cm of snow on the road and tramped the remaining 1 1/2 hours to Acton Hut. This was magical - dark green pine trees laden with contrasting pristine white snow.



After lunch 5 of the 13 trampers continued to Cromel Hut (approx. 3 hours). Following the track, they went up over the saddle and down to the Cromel Stream, crossed it and tramped the short distance to the hut. Meanwhile the remaining group took an afternoon walk up the Cromel Branch track. Observations enroute were toppled large beech trees, a result of the weight of snow.

Normally they would have shed their leaves before any significant snowfall in winter, giving less area for the snow to settle on the tree. The leaf weight plus extra snow weight caused significant obstruction and it was a saddening sight, especially on the outer 300 metres of bush where there was no rejuvenation. We sighted the "Derelict Hut", which is less than 1 km from

Acton Hut, but it is hardly derelict because of recent repairs. There was no hut book so names (including OTMC members) and dates had been carved into the outside boards. Glissading techniques were practised enroute back to Acton Hut.

On Sunday those at Acton Hut went for a tramp up a nearby hill. We practised compass skills and viewed the Eyre and Livingstone Mountains. We intended to cross the saddle and descend the Acton-Cromel track but couldn't find it so backtracked down the hill.

The Cromel Hut group had reached the van before us, so we were delighted to see Terry and the van appear after we had walked for only 20 minutes of the 7 or so km back to the trailer. Reunited with the others, we exchanged stories and returned to Dunedin feeling privileged we had been so close to the unseasonable pristine snowfield.

Bess Taylor for Jonette Service, Nigel Boydell, Vanessa Johnson, Olive Neilson, Wilbert Stokman, Liz Clark, Terry Duffield, Brad Wilson, Zena Roderique, Michele Coleman, Grant Burnard, and Robyn Bell.



# GIFFORD CRACK - GERTRUDE SADDLE

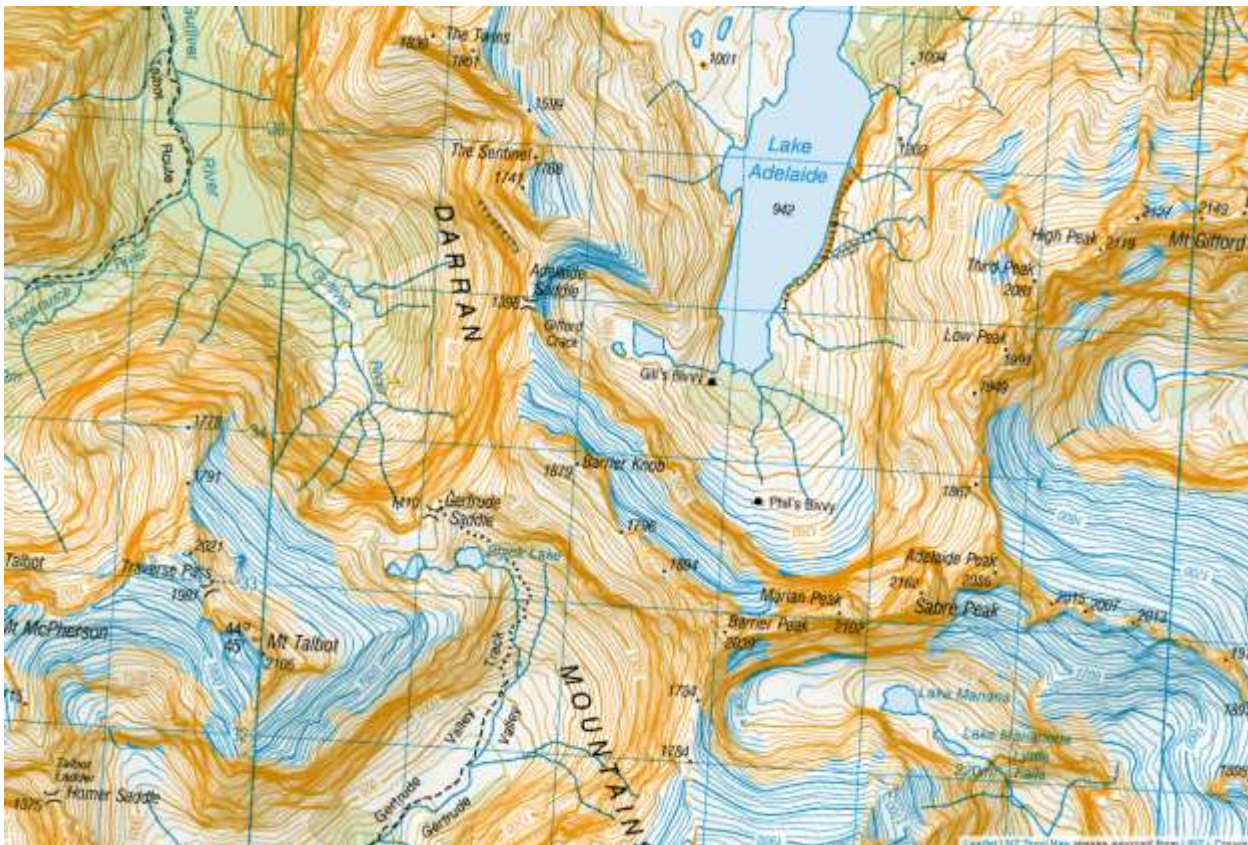
**March 13-14, 1999**

**Author: Jenny Lowe**

Published in Bulletin 586, May 1999

My first trip to the Darran Mountains left me longing to go back - quickly!

As a splinter group of the OTMC Bushcraft Weekend Trip, Chris and I set off on Saturday morning up Moraine Creek. We had just spent Friday night with Wilbert at the road end shelter on the Lower Hollyford Road. A brilliant starry night was only disturbed momentarily by the arrival of 3 cars in the early hours. It turned out that the late (or early?) arrivals were 6 members of the NZ Alpine Club, whom we were about to spend the weekend with!



Saturday was a 9 - 10 hour tramping day, starting with beautiful bush to Camp Flat. Out of the bush and into open tussock and big boulder country, complete with superb views all round. The back of Lake Adelaide was our destination, but this remained hidden for a long time. It didn't appear until we had dropped into a tarn, climbed back up and scrambled over boulders (house sized!). The last hour was a long one, but on reaching Gil's Biv (\*\*\*\*\*) it was well worth it. A cave with a view. Eight bedrooms, fully fitted kitchen (cooking shelf) and air conditioned. The toilet "cave" was even equipped with a wooden seat!

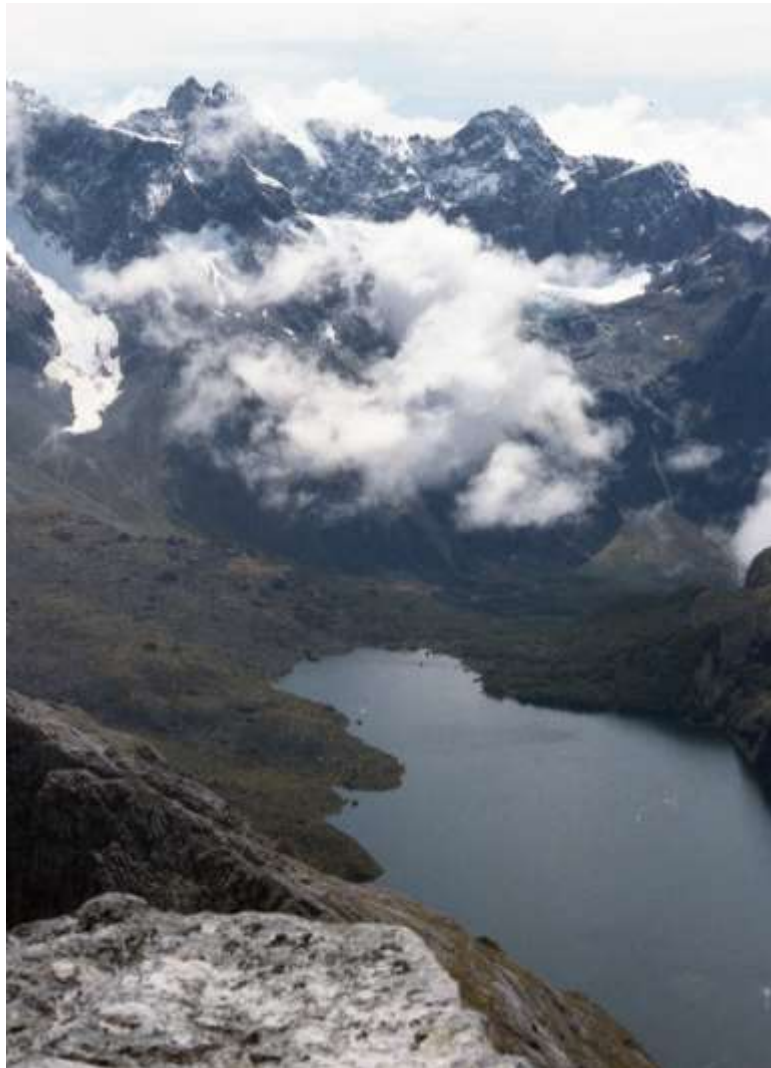
A sociable evening was followed by a long lie in on Sunday. A stroll past Lake South America and some sun soaking on the slabs at the base of Gifford's Crack.

The climb up the Crack was adrenaline pumping and resulted in the most amazing views. Mitre Peak and Milford Sound to one side and Sabre to the other. It was a perfect photo opportunity!

The Alpine Club people went over Barrier Knob, while Chris and I, unprepared for snow and ice, took the alternative Tourist Route. This route - marked by sporadic cairns - was nonetheless exciting. Not a route for those scared of heights and maybe not a good one when wet. It took



us over some great slabs and eventually down onto Gertrude Saddle. Again, superb views, this time of Mt Talbot and Crosscut. Lunch was followed by a relaxed descent to Black Lakes, where Rob (plastic boots) took a brave dip in the icy water. I was happy just to fill my water bottle.



**Lake Adelaide from Barrier Knob (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

The walk out was very beautiful surrounded by typical Fiordland scenery (minus the rain). We met a lot of day-trippers on the way down - a walk well recommended. Homer Huts was reached by 5 pm, and from there 8 of us (plus packs) squeezed into Malcolm's Tardis car. An amazing feat after an amazing weekend!

Thanks to the folks from the NZ Alpine Club for looking after us so admirably.

Jenny Lowe for Chris Wells, Aaron Whitehead, Shelly Graham, Rob Mitchell, Rob "the Boots", Malcolm "Tardis Car", and Daniel "Rice Bubbles".

## VISITING THE VIADUCTS

**Date not recorded**

**Author: David Barnes**

Published in Bulletin 587, June 1999

This was a really impromptu trip, planned at less than 24 hours' notice. Paul's mate John Breen has the contract to do some restoration work on the Port Craig viaducts, so we thought we'd zap in for a visit. We were able to drive to the Track Burn and found that the occupants of the private (ex NZDA) hut were going fishing in an hour, so we cadged a lift to Port Craig. Conditions were ideal – dead flat.

We were walking by 11, and were at Sand Hill viaduct around noon. Breenie was loitering underneath, confirming that the structural work was finished before moving on to the next one. A couple of his workers were hanging off the structure finishing the job of spraying a preservative on the timber. Paul & I were press-ganged to help get a pump and hose up from the creek to the track. In return, our packs were taken to the Percy Burn on a trailer towed by a four-wheel motorbike.



Ten minutes' walk saw us at the campsite there. It looked like a frontier construction village, which I suppose is what it was. In addition to a tramping hut, there were three Portacom buildings, one of which was an ablutions block, a workshop area under a tarpaulin, drums of fuel, assorted materials and LOTS of mud. There was also an enormous amount of food, as there had been a helicopter supply run the day before. There was a team of about twelve, a combination of carpenters, abseilers, and a few of those blokes that can do anything with number eight wire, plus a cook. They are in for about six weeks, and we arrived at the start of their first "day off" – lunchtime Saturday to lunchtime Sunday.

After lunch, John headed off to take some "before" photos of the Edwin Burn, so we tagged along. Before long, we encountered a few of the crew who didn't understand the meaning of "day off". The tram track is generally suitable for the four-wheelers, except where it crosses gullies that are no longer bridged. These guys were locating suitable poles to bridge the gaps.

The poles were then dragged by four-wheeler to the bridge site, with me as the ballast on front.

We left the bridge builders to their own devices and continued on to the Edwin Burn. The sign says that the bridge is dangerous and shouldn't be used. I suspect that that means DoC would rather you took the greater risk of sliding down the bank than allowing your 80kg to be the straw that breaks the multi-tonne camel's back! But it is in a bad way, with whole sections missing from some of the uprights at ground level, and the main beams being rotten through up to 80% of their thickness in places.

Inspection completed, we returned to the new bridge to participate in some spadework on the approaches, before wandering back to the hut. I can really relate to this idea of an on-site cook – it was a case of sit down, have a couple of drinks and wait for tea to be served.

Sunday dawned wet. Day off or no day off, the generator and the lights went on just after 6:30. Paul and I took a stroll down to my favourite beach. It's one of those places that's really moody on a grotty day but can be quite serene on the right day. Back at the hut, the main subject of discussion was whether they could postpone work any longer in the hope that the weather would really set in. John wanted to retrieve some more gear from Sand Hill viaduct, so we went too, returning in time for lunch.

We hit the track for home at 12:30, by which stage the rain had really set in. The tram track was under water in places, and all the side streams were up. We had hoped to catch the tide right for the beach route, but on arrival at The Whata found we were still too early. I'm beginning to wonder if I'll ever get to go that way again, as it's years since I've succeeded. The bush seemed really gloomy as we wound up and down, and across a few nasty streams. Back on the beach briefly at Breakneck Creek, we found the conditions really bleak, and were glad we only had a few exposed sections to cover. Eventually we commenced the ascent to Flat Stream, and knew we were on the home stretch.

Arriving at the Track Burn at ten past five (we'd been going for it!), we could see the car, but where was the bridge? Gone! And the stream was HUGE. A couple of attempts to cross left us convinced that we couldn't do it there. At that stage the sole occupant of the hut on the other bank happened to come out. He suggested that we try the mouth of the stream, confirming an idea we'd had. So, it was a grovelly bushbash through what seemed to be predominantly supplejack to get to the beach. The stream was wider, but still ugly. As we were below the high tide, the rocks were extremely slippery. All in all, it was one of the more difficult river crossings I've encountered. Five minutes later, we were very glad to be drinking coffee beside the fire in the hut.

The fun continued, as we still had to get the vehicle across the Hump Burn. Local knowledge from our friend in the hut was most useful. Finding the track off the beach in the dark and rain proved to be our last challenge at the end of a great weekend.

David Barnes for Paul Olsen.



# CAFFEINE RECOVERY TRIP

**May 23, 1999**

**Author: Richard Barber**

Published in Bulletin 587, June 1999

Following a most excellent night at the Barndance, and it is noted here that those responsible for organising such a marvellous event deserve great praise, I awoke to a beautiful calm Dunedin morning with one thing on my mind...coffee. Being told previously that Jenny had organised a caffeine and recovery trip for those of us who might have had a rather late night on Saturday, or perhaps a bit too much of that alcohol stuff, I anticipated meeting at the clubrooms at the respectable hour of 10 o'clock to take a short leisurely walk to the nearest café and consume copious amounts of tremor stopping double strength espresso.

Of course, upon asking where we would make our first stop I discovered that the plan was to walk around Caversham for an hour and a half. "But I haven't had breakfast," I cried. Nobody cared. So off we went to park our cars somewhere up a HILL above Caversham just so we could walk back down and up again. All the while I was rationalising that I could handle an hour and a half walk and that would get me my first coffee before midday.

Using the excellent little book, Intriguing Dunedin Street Walks, as a guide, we were to note some of Dunedin's heritage that would usually go unnoticed when driving about the place. Unfortunately, things took a turn for the worst here as when we were about halfway down the steps from the end of Elgin Rd Jenny mentioned the other two routes that she planned to include in today's walk, each one about an hour and a half. At this point I struggled with my first lack of caffeine induced psychotic episode and pictured myself throwing Jenny down the stairs. All I managed was to whine, "I need coffee, there ain't no coffee in Caversham at 10:15 Sunday morning!" Nobody cared. So, I followed along trying to stop the tremor in fingers travelling all the way up my arms.

I must admit it was quite interesting wandering about the streets and gaining an appreciation for the history of our suburbs. One does not often find the time to take such things in. It's well worth getting a copy of this book to go off exploring with. No need to mention the walk back up the HILL to the cars.

As Jenny, Robyn, Paul, Chris and Lynda were pleasantly deciding what route to take next I politely mentioned that this trip was called caffeine and recovery, stressing that the caffeine bit came first and when would we be having our first coffee. Nobody cared. So we got in our cars and headed off for a walk in St Clair.

By now I was in full-blown lack of caffeine induced psychosis and was picturing everyone but me exploding from the inside out.

Well at St Clair we stopped about halfway along Forbury Rd and walked down towards the beach but turned on to Norfolk St to look at some pretty amazing properties, then to the end and up Jacobs Ladder. More HILLS. Now Jacobs's ladder has about 280 steps. And steps can be pretty exhausting but to prove I was no wimp I ran up them. Well, the top half anyway. So did everyone else.

The view from the top is wonderful, looking out over the sea.

We followed the road up and down past some notable properties, with much light conversation along the way. Then back down to Forbury Rd via some steps that lead from Easter Crescent, past Francis Hodgkin's retirement village where Paul exclaimed he could see a dead lady up against a window in one of the top story apartments. We all saw her too and I'm pretty sure she was dead as when we got back to the cars we could see up to the village through a gap in

the trees and she was still there in exactly the same position. I was thinking, yeah, I'll be dead soon too if I don't get some coffee.

Fortunately, at this point everyone had had enough and were feeling hungry and thirsty...yahoo! So off we went to the Esplanade Café. It was very busy so I whined that if we had come here earlier we could have enjoyed the environment in some relative peace and quiet. Lucky for us Geoff and Sarah were there so we were able to join their table.

Rather oddly everyone ordered coffee but me. At least everyone else thought it was odd. I explained that I didn't like coffee with a main meal, that I like it with something sweet. Something sweet other than my wife of course. So after finishing pizza and discovering that they didn't even have a piece of Biscotti in the place I ended up being the only one who didn't have a coffee. But I did have an extra large glass of coke. Thanks for the walk Jenny, it was.....

Richard Barber

# WINTER MOUNTAIN BIKING AT NASEBY

**June 5-7, 1999**

**Author: Paul Van Kampen**

Published in Bulletin 588, July 1999

Saturday: Up at 7am, just in time to see the planet Jupiter slowly disappear as the sun came up over the horizon, changing the early morning sky from inky black to gold. A light frost was underfoot (Dunedin's first for the year) as I packed the car and added the key ingredient, a mountain bike.

I picked up Mark and then met up with Lynda and Richard. We took SH87 to Naseby and stopped at Middlemarch for some refreshments. I couldn't believe it when the lady at the shop told me to handle my licorice with care, the cold had made the licorice snap and shatter into bits when touched! All the cabins at Naseby were booked out for the long Brass Monkey weekend so we had to tent. Many people couldn't believe their eyes when they saw a tent in the camping ground - fortunately in the only area not covered in snow. Later in the day we had offers from other Dunedinites in Naseby, to throw buckets of hot water over us in the morning as a wake up call. Richard's saying of "Hot, damn hot!" at Cromwell while water skiing has now been replaced by "Cold, damn f^\*V0 # COLD!!!".

Lynda and Richard have a lovely huge family tent so the four of us had heaps of room. We managed to get changed and onto the bikes by 2pm and enjoyed a few hours of biking in the sunny snow covered forest, smashing icy puddles around the tailrace and flying down steep forest tracks. Boy did we enjoy a hot shower at the camping ground when we got back! "Ohhhhh, ahhhhh that feels good!" were constant comments, which had Lynda (in the ladies' shower beside us) wondering what exactly us boys were doing!

A hot tea cooked by Lynda and Richard was great, but the beans caused problems later on in the night {Farting in the tent does NOT warm it up, Richard!} I loved the night hours we had in front of the huge open larchwood fire enjoying Mark's wine and some snacks as the frost formed outside. The chimney was interesting from the outside as hot red sparks flew out the top into a clear frosty starry sky.

Sunday: We woke to a hard frost on Sunday morning and I enjoyed an hours walk into the forest before breakfast to take some photos of the snow / frost formations and icy lakes as the sun rose over the Kakanui Mountains. After breakfast we met up with Jenny, Chris and two of their friends and enjoyed a full day of mountain biking split into two halves by lunch. We slowly got muddier as the day went on - it got to the stage where we sought out large ice-covered puddles to ride through rather than avoid them and ride around.

It's best to let Chris ride in front of you rather than full-on up your rear, so to speak Chris's brainwave of not using the brakes to save wear on the tyre rims did not quite work when he couldn't stop in time. Actually, I had a good laugh as Chris landed beside me (without his bike, which was free running down a side gully) on his knees, his hands in a superman stance, and his head then hit a small tree. (I knew there was a reason he wore red longjohns!) Later in the day I managed to fall off twice, hitting some trees and falling in the mud as Chris and Jenny roared past. Richard showed great adventurous initiative, pushing bikes for 15 mins up a steep forested muddy hill with some slippery drops, to get only a 2 min downhill run and end up where we started! We enjoyed a telling off from a farmer (my adventurous leading); the 'Big Dipper'; 45 km/hr forest downhills; and hitting tree roots/rocks with no avoidance possible even if you could see them with watery eyes and getting some 'air'. I have not been as muddy as this in my whole life, and at the same time had so much fun.



Brakes often get clogged by mud and it's sometimes hard to get the stopping power you need. It doesn't help when people stop their bike in the only gap you have to avoid hitting either a tree or a gate! It's amazing how little room you need to slot in two bikes when one is stationary and one still doing 20 km/hr or so.

All of us had tea out on Sunday night and retired to the lovely fire again to enjoy a good laugh watching "Mrs Doubtfire". Jenny provided wine and a laugh (look at the book, get her to say that and you will see what I mean. Seriously though, she has a lovely Scottish accent). Another cool but cosy night in the tent in warm sleeping bags, and another frost. Some of the strange night sounds you hear are amazing, some simply alarming - like shooting in the forest virtually right beside the tent. Fortunately I slept through the gun shots while Richard stood guard in his lovely white tights with a tent pole in his hand. Lucky no one attempted to get into the tent, eh!!

Monday: Monday morning, time for some light tramping to Hoffman Dam without packs to enjoy the remaining snow and ice. Then back home again, travelling in a third day of fine sunny weather, one great thing about frosts.

A big thanks to Richard and Lynda for organising the trip and providing the huge tent, and to everyone else who came along for a much-needed trip away.

Paul Van Kampen for Richard and Lynda Barber, Mark Borrie, Chris Wells and Jenny Lowe.

## RUSTLERS RIDGE AND A BIT MORE

**July 4, 1999**

**Author: Richard Pettinger**

Published in Bulletin 588, July 1999

I was keen to dispel the image that I was only interested in trips called 'Silver Peaks for Masochists'. So I organised a fairly gentle trip for a nice day, and promised no masochism. This led to my searching for a name for the trip on the Thursday night before. "What is the opposite of masochism?" I asked. Andrew said "Sadism". "No, wait a minute, that can't be what I'm looking for." Graeme said "Hedonism" which apparently gets clean away from the negative connotations of pain and suffering. "No, no, that doesn't seem right. Sounds a bit too poncy, and it didn't rhyme, scan, or whatever great titles do. I was thinking more 'Possum for Ponces', 'cos this'll be a doddle." Little did I know it would be more 'Wrestling with Rustlers'. But we took it easy, like ponces (and hedonists) might, so you could have called it 'Silver Peaks for Schoolgirls'. Actually, it was Nanette, our schoolgirl team member, who undoubtedly thought we were all sadists as well as masochists.

Eleven was a good turnout for midwinter. Especially as it had been winter the day before. With the 24 hours of cold now behind us (!?) these trampers were coming out like spring bulbs. Including some who hadn't shown up for many years. Right daffs!

Now, you remember Nanette, she was the one who played a fantastic flute tune for us (with Christina Johnston on miniature violin) at the barndance in May. An extremely youthful tramper, who added to her fame by coating herself in cocoa crumb during the previous Thursday's talk. Much to the delight of the large gathering of chocolate-nuts present. She was among those all keen for the day trip, along with her dad Wilbert. There was some discussion about the adequacy of her clothing, but we all promised to lend her our warm gear if she got cold. I couldn't see any chocolate on her, at least.

We had the pleasure of being accompanied by a guest from Taranaki way, an ex-Waikato TC member named Jean, who was keen enough to phone me in the wee small hours on Sunday morning. She probably had her bootlaces tied by 8 am. So that, when we were the obligatory five minutes late picking her up on our way out of town, she was convinced we had gone on without her. It must have seemed like she'd been waiting for hours for this bunch of unpunctual Southerners. Up at the Gardens corner fire station, we picked up Beverly. It was great to see her out with us again. Other old-timers were Graeme L (bird spotter), Ross F and the eternal Doug F.

We parked at Leith Saddle and, with Ken leading the way, climbed leisurely up a recently recut Rustlers Ridge to Burns Saddle, accompanied by constant loud bird song (mainly thrushes, said Graeme). Ken didn't get breathless enough to fail to provide a running commentary about all of the things of interest (or otherwise) along the way. Sidling from Burns Saddle onto the track between Swampy and Hightop was the lowlight of the day. Nanette couldn't find it in her to express enthusiasm for the gorse. Funny that. But I thought it was no worse than it was twenty years ago. Doug reckons that section could do with a bit of a work party, and he would recommend it as an OTMC project. The Club could do more with respect to track work, and here was a fine place to demonstrate its inclination to put something back into the hills, and not just leave such work to the oldies. I agreed. We haven't seen a track working bee on the trip card for a while.



Multiple ridgelines, looking north from Rustlers Ridge (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

There weren't many rests. Except perhaps for Ken's class up the front who would wait for Nanette to negotiate the boggy bits without getting her school shoes wet. I could see we wouldn't get to Possum Hut and back before night at this rate, so I was pleased that there weren't any diehard masochists among us. In fact, when Nanette, Wilbert and I had passed through Sleepy Hollow, we came across the rest scattered among the tussock saying that they were revolting. Well, we knew that already. They were also piking. They wanted to go home. This must have been music to Nanette's ears. She'd heard about the slog back up from Possum. So we had lunch. Glorious view, weather...what more could one want? Music? Poor Nanette. Undoubtedly filled with inspiration, she had just got her famous flutey thing out, and put it to her lips, and the team stood up, and we were away again. We were off to play in the snow on Swampy. But not before Graeme and Jean disappeared off into the bush and tussock to lay a couple of wilding pines to rest. Good work guys. But they needed the exercise. The tramp was, er, a gentle one. With bird watching - was that really a fernbird in that bush we all encircled? Sometimes you need a nice stroll. But I had been hoping to bum off a cold, and it got worse, if anything. I don't remember getting out of breath except once when Ross and I let the rest get ahead and then we went like stink to catch them up. We had all of about a minute's decent walking at that point.

So, the progress was steady. Up the horrible climb of Swampy. Made more ghastly by the poo and hoofprints of a significant number of cattle in the reserve. There was a good inch of snow, all frozen and hard, up on the top. And by now Nanette's shoes and cotton socks, soaked with swamp water, were offering no protection against the cold. Needless to say, Ken's guided tour of the tarns, peat banks and slip scarp edge got no takers. It would have meant another half hour of flailing through snowy tussock, and nobody really wanted that. Surprisingly, Nanette was willing to go that way, rather than by the road. I believe she was past caring. It was here that it transpired that nobody had any spare socks for her. She pressed on without a grumble. The walk along the road went quickly. It was great to see quite a few others up there, including



youngsters, having a great time in the snow, even though it was getting late, and they'd have a way to go to get home.



**Waitati Valley from the Leith Saddle Walkway (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

At the end of the road, we descended the track with the boardwalks to Leith Saddle. It was amazing that the track was still snowy and wet despite the large volumes of hot air from the man in front. Jacqui picked her way cautiously on the slippery bits, worried that she might do a Jenny L with her knees. We were at the cars comfortably before dark.

Richard Pettinger for Jean Corbett, Beverly McGowan, Doug Forrester, Jacqui Cornelissen, Andrew MacKay, Graeme Loh, Ross Flamank, Nanette

## A TALE OF SHOPPING, KEA AND CAVES

**June 26-27, 1999**

**Author: Andrew McKay**

Published in Bulletin 588, July 1999

Well, another trip is at end and it is time to write the trip report. So, it was on a cold winter's evening five of us headed south in search of fresh air, tall peaks and maybe a little good food. The drive south was uneventful in the rattley red van through to Gore. Where a party member decided that this was a good time to purchase some nice woolly gloves and maybe a pair of overtrou since we were heading up a mountain and it might be just a little chilly.

Fortunately, a department store in the metropolis of Gore was open and an expedition of epic proportions was engaged to purchase the above items. Soon our party, now fully attired in new gloves, trou and the odd pair of new socks, continued on our way to the camping ground at Te Anau, where we spent a comfortable night.



Te Anau, across the lake from Brod Bay (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Bright and early... well it was actually still dark.... we set off for the control gates and the start of the Kepler Track. The track, like any of the "Great Walks", is a tramper's motorway - a full metre wide, evenly graded and wonderful to walk on. While the others enjoyed the pleasant walk, I headed off with the intention of stopping often along the way to take photographs. A few opportunities presented themselves, though it was still a little too dark to give a good exposure. Again I had left my tripod in the vehicle considering it to be too heavy to carry, never again though! At Brod Bay some beautiful scenery opened up and I finally got a chance to take a couple of great images. A friendly tit decided to do a little posing, which required a couple more frames. The party then regrouped and refuelled for the long grunt up to Luxmore Hut. As with most steep climbs, this one consisted of long periods of placing one foot in front of the other, and short spells of enjoying the bush, bird calls and waiting for the heart rate to come down. Mt Luxmore hut, for those who haven't seen it lately, has grown again. A fire during the

1998 tourist season badly damaged the hut, and I would not like to guess how many bunks the place now has. Suffice to say that there was plenty of room for our small party. While we were settling in, four very friendly kea paid the hut a visit. Their antics provided the party with several minutes of amusement, allowing me to capture some classic kea photos and Fee to have a long-involved chat with one of the young chaps.

The group then decided to make the requisite visit to the limestone caves 10 min from the hut, and so with torches in hand we set off. The caves are set into a sheet of limestone, which extends throughout this part of the south and is of the same age as the limestone of the Oamaru and Waitomo districts, around 25 to 30 million years old. Caving is a pastime suited to those of troglutic tendencies and preferably with fresh batteries in their torch. The caves give easy access to the beautiful underworld of stalactites, stalagmites, crystal pools and flow sheets. Sadly, as with all similar caves, human impact is apparent throughout, with brown staining on most of the surfaces where greasy hands have been, and evidence of recently broken stalagmites. It was then time for the advertised purpose of the trip - cooking! This consisted of a fine vegetable chicken soup slowly simmered over the potbelly stove, followed by stir-fried vegetables, mince and a huge helping of rice, with a glass or two of an imported wine, finished by steamed pudding and custard. No one was hungry that night including the two OUTC members who were also spending the night. Eventually people started to head to bed, apart from Wilbert who, noting that there was a full moon and that it was too early to go to sleep, headed out for a moonlight stroll. I believe his comments were that the moon was as large as a dinner plate and that you could see forever. I was sound asleep by that stage so missed the return of our night-time wanderer. The night, whilst peaceful, was interrupted in the early hours of the morning by the desperate scrabble of a small mouse attempting to steal the contents of a packet of double chocolate chip biscuits.



**Mt Luxmore summit (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

Bright and early the next morning ... still very dark, it was up to a hearty breakfast and grab some photos of the sunrise over Lake Te Anau before the party headed in separate directions again. My intentions were to find an important fossil locality on the south side of Low Peak,



while the rest headed up to the top of Mt Luxmore. Well, the best laid plans don't always work and after a hour and a half sliding around in three inches of snow and ice following compass bearings that didn't seem correct, I gave up and decided to climb to the top of Low Peak. A nice little scramble leads to the top where I arrived just as the rest of the party topped out on Mt Luxmore. From there it was back to the hut, boil the billy for the rest and sit down for a leisurely lunch before we all headed back down the hill to the vehicle.

Back in town we changed, signed out, and fuelled up another group of tired but happy trampers headed back to Dunedin. A vote of thanks must be given to Jenny Lowe, who did a sterling job of organizing this trip, only to not be able to come.

NOTES:

- Petzl batteries last for ages, then fail just when you need them the most.
- The low peak of Mt Luxmore is magnetic, not a good place for running compass bearings.
- Always take twice as much film as you think you will need!

Andrew Mac for Fee, Chris, Wilbert and Jonette

## ROUTEburn – MCKENZIE HUT

**July 31 – August 1, 1999**

**Author: Wolfgang Gerber**

Published in Bulletin 589, August 1999

It's been a long time since the Chief Guide ordered two vans for a weekend trip, and so it was refreshing to have 18 people on this trip. Perhaps it was the location, company, or the yummy prizes for the quiz? Whatever. We left the clubrooms just after 6 pm. Dinner was at Gore, where we parted from the other van, who were driving through to The Divide and walking up to Howden Hut. As it turned out, they had a midnight moonlight romp on snowy Key Summit. The rest of us stayed in Te Anau.



Lake Howden (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

It was a really early start (8 am!!!!) on Saturday morning, and we were off through pockets of fog and ice. On the way a hawk was having possum for breakie, but so as not to send him to "Bird of Prey Heaven", we took evasive action. As it cleared, we took some photo opportunities, and in no time were at The Divide, ready to hit the track in perfect conditions. The recent heavy snow in the area made the walk even better. Seven of us made it up the zigzag above the partly frozen Lake Mackenzie, and were rewarded with some magnificent views of the surrounding mountains. Lake McKerrow (on the Hollyford Track) and the Tasman Sea could also be seen. Then it was back down and dinner was lovingly prepared.

The quiz night went really well, with the only controversy being what the letters "S.T.D." stood for in relation to the phone book. Team 2 (Dinah C and Jeff B) ended up narrow winners from second-equal Team 1 (Bridgit D and Eric B) and Team 3 (Laurel D and Geoff B). Team 7 (Chris W and Chris B), the all-male team, came third, while Team 5 (Ann B and Peter S) finished strongly to end up last. All in all it was a fun night.



**Darran Mountains from track to Lake Howden (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

Next morning we awoke to see the lake had frozen over and walked out to The Divide in good time. We decided to pop up to the Homer Tunnel as some of the party had not been up to the top part of the road to Milford in winter before. So off home we went, and it was noted that everyone had had a good time and achieved what they wanted. It was the first OTMC tramp for 5 people, and we trust they enjoyed it as much as we enjoyed their company. Apart from a car that overtook us on a blind comer, a lonely snowman in the middle of the road, and the "L\* Affaire de Gore", it was an uneventful trip back to base.

I would like to thank Geoff Brookes, Chris Wells, Ann Burton and Jenny Lowe for helping me by being party leaders. And finally just a wee reminder to make the Treasurer's job that much easier by paying for your trip before we leave. Cheers.

Wolfgang Gerber for Bridgit Doig, Dinah Cameron, Laurel Dunn, Geoff Brookes, Vivienne Brensell, Peter Sanderson, Brenda McAlpine (quiz assistant), Chris Wells, Paul van Kampen, Brad Wilson, Jeff Brown, Ann and Chris Burton, Karen Paterson, Tony Dick, Jenny Lowe and Eric Bradfield.



## ROUTEBURN – HOWDEN HUT

**July 31 – August 1, 1999**

**Author: Jeff Brown**

Published in Bulletin 589, August 1999

Tramping through a snow covered landscape lit by moonlight and skating on a frozen tarn at 900m at 1.30 am - now that's what I call tramping!

Earlier in the week several intrepid souls decided it would be fun to walk into Howden Hut from the Divide on the Friday night rather than staying at the motor camp in Te Anau. Many back in Dunedin said we were mad as it was the middle of winter with snow on the ground, but little did they (or we) know how much fun it would be! By the time we reached Gore the ranks had swollen to seven. Spirits were high as it was a perfectly clear, still night with a full moon. Beginning at The Divide just after midnight, already in the snow, we quickly reached the Key Summit turn-off. Most of us were all sweating profusely through putting far too many clothes on and there being no wind. With packs (and some clothes) left behind we walked up to Key Summit completely without the use of torches as the moonlight was so bright. The view from Key Summit was surreal - the Darrens, Earl, and Humboldt Mountains all covered with snow to below the bushline and glistening in the moonlight. Photos taken, Brad decided the ice on the frozen tarn was strong enough for skating and the next 20 minutes were spent sliding from one side to the other. Paul had the record for the number of bum-slides, while Brad did some amazing back-spins with a little assistance. Howden Hut was reached just before 2 am and we all dived into our bags.



Misty views from the Routeburn Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Mackenzie Hut came into view just before lunch on Saturday after a relaxed 9 am start and a pleasant walk in perfect conditions. The areas around the hut were covered in snow and the lake was almost totally covered in ice. Not thick enough for skating this time. The mission for

after lunch was to go up the zig-zag onto the Hollyford Face towards the Harris Saddle, then up the ridge as far as was safe towards Ocean Peak. The last section of the zig-zag where it has substantial bluffs immediately below the track edge was interesting as the track (what track?!) was buried under half a metre of snow. On reaching the ridge crest, fantastic views down the Hollyford all the way to the Tasman Sea made for great photos. Most ventured a little further then turned back, but Brad and I continued up the ridge to approx. 1600m where we could just see over Fraser Col beside Emily Peak. Getting down was made much quicker by descending a steep snow gut, then crashing (stumbling and falling) through snow covered scrub to the top of Lake Mackenzie.



Lake McKenzie (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

After dinner, quiz master Wolfgang (complete with beautiful assistant) put on a brilliant quiz night on general knowledge and, of course, a smattering of tramping. Everybody walked out to the Divide by 2pm on Sunday and both vans went through the Milford Tunnel to the Chasm for a look. The power of water is amazing as evident from the huge logs some 10 m above the then current water level. Stopping for photos of huge icicles in the tunnel was a laugh. I hope they turn out for those that took them. A fantastic weekend of winter tramping in ideal conditions was had by all.

Jeff Brown, for Chris Wells, Brad Wilson, Paul van Kampen, Jenny Lowe, Eric Bradford and Geoff Brookes.

## PENINSULA BY BICYCLE

**August 1, 1999**

**Author: Lynda Barber**

Published in Bulletin 589, August 1999

9.00am on Sunday morning, I was still in bed. I had no intentions of going on the day trip - mainly because Tony was leading it! I'd better explain - Tony is a super fit, maniac cyclist and I know that there's no way I could keep up with a hard cycling trip of his! Richard had got up and just popped out for a little bit. Little did I know he was off to the clubrooms to check out the plans. Sarah was only slightly better than I was. She woke up at 8.45am, and also decided to drive down to the club rooms to suss things out. So Richard and Sarah arrived in their cars, only to find our superfit leader Tony and his super travelled bike there all by themselves. No other bikes in sight. Little did I know at this stage, still tucked up in bed, that plans were taking shape for the days activities and that they included me! Anyway, to cut a long story short, Richard arrived home, and I got up and got ready by the time he had fitted our bikes to that stupid bike carrier that we'd bought.



Portobello to Taiaroa Heads from Organ Pipes Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Finishing my breakfast in the car, Sarah, Richard and I drove down to Portobello and met Tony there. I was hoping he'd be a bit tired by this stage (so as to slow him down a bit), but no.

After buying an awful lunch at the Portobello store, we cycled to Taiaroa Heads, taking a break at the gun emplacements on the way (we should have taken a torch and gumboots). We had lunch at Pilots Beach and ended up throwing away that awful lunch to the seagulls (who then of course decided not to leave us alone). "Yuum, Foooocf were the two words in our minds, when Tony reminded us that there was a cafe at the Albatross Centre, so we had a nice break there.



Then off we set back to lower Portobello and cycled over Weir Road to Papanui Inlet (the down bit was easy), and then rode to the Pyramids. The short walk to the top of the small pyramid is worth it for the view. After some chocolate swapping, we then cycled to Hoopers Inlet. Of course, only for the purpose of picking up the car in Portobello, did Richard and I have to leave the others at this stage. Sarah and Tony then had the gruelling task of cycling up (and up) (and up) to Sandymount and then more up again, until we met up with them at the Pukehiki Church.

With the prospect of lots off wippee downhill, Richard joined them at this stage, and I drove the car back. Next on the itinerary was an ice cream at the Shiel Hill dairy. We'd had such a good day - beautiful weather, good exercise, great company, lots of fun.... that we decided to carry it on and have tea together at our place and watch some telly. To give Tony a break, we offered to drop him and his bike home to Abbotsford. But being one for punishment, he wanted to cycle home in order to pick up his car. He'd cycled all the way from Abbotsford to Taiaroa Heads, a few detours, and then all the way back again - so I conclude by saying, "No wonder he's cycling fit"!

Thanks Tony for a great day. Lynda for Richard Barber, Sarah Smellie, and Tony Malcolm.

# WINTER WONDERLAND WANDER WITH WOLFGANG

**July 31 – August 1, 1999**

**Author: Brenda McAlpine**

Published in Bulletin 590, September 1999

A long moonlight drive to Te Anau, a short tipple at the Moose Bar, and then a comfy night at the local camp. The group of 18 had split in two, with the eager ones carrying on in one van to the Divide and walking into Howden Hut in the moonlight, with a side trip to Key Summit. We were up early the next morning and headed for the Divide. It was rather cold with lots of fog and the road was icy in forested places, but as we got closer to our destination the day was looking to be a sunny one.



Paddling on the Dart River (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We shouldered packs and off up the track in quite chilly conditions, but the climb soon had us taking off a layer of clothing. Although it was icy in places the track was in excellent condition, except for a tree across the track and a small slip behind Howden Hut. Some people went up to Key Summit for a look before arriving at Howden, where most people stopped to take photos of the snow around the hut and surrounds. The breeze off the lake was biting cold so it was a quick snack and off on our way again. The track through the forest between Howden and Mackenzie was very picturesque with the snow on it.

We had lunch on a sunny comer with a nice view down the Hollyford Valley and across to the avalanche paths beyond Earland Falls. Refuelled, we soon reached the falls, which were a mere trickle with a couple of heaps of avalanched snow at the bottom. The open slopes further on were thick with snow, which sparkled in the sun. The small creeks were decorated with beautiful icicles of all sizes, some a couple of inches thick and encasing a single tussock strand.

Back into the forest and we had numerous visits from inquisitive riflemen and the odd tomtit. A fat wood pigeon was taking a siesta and there was the occasional bellbird song. On through the Orchard with spectacular views across to the Darrans and down the Hollyford. After a very leisurely and enjoyable 6 hours we reached the haven of Mackenzie Hut. After unloading we

wandered the area, taking photos and filling the billies for later. The lake was frozen and the whole area was liberally blanketed with snow. The earlier group had trekked up the zigzag and through the rock bands and were clearly visible on the ridge top in the afternoon sun while we were in shadow. We yelled and waved to each other and then watched their progress through binoculars as they made their way back down.



Lake Howden from the now removed Howden Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The big strong men had each carried in a small bag of coal and we soon had the fire going to warm up the room. After soups, mains, desserts and a sharing of leftovers we had a quiz session with 8 groups of 2 person teams. Lots of laughs, wines, identifying some photos of various tramping spots and some silly answers all added to a great night's entertainment, with the winning teams treated to chocolate bars.

After a comfortable night's sleep, Sunday dawned fine but overcast with no frost. A hearty breakfast, then we departed on the walk out, which took most people 3-4 hours. We were all out by about 2 pm, so decided to carry on up to the Homer Tunnel and take in the scenery. Inside the tunnel was white with ice, and spectacular icicles hung from the sides. The mountains all around were a grand sight in their winter plumage. A lone kea visited us and was given a lolly for its effort.

We were back at the Divide by 4pm to collect the trailer, then headed back to Te Anau for a welcome ice-cream. On to Gore for tea and a bit of shop window TV viewing for an hour while we waited for the other van to arrive - which, as we found out later, was already in Dunedin!

A long, quiet trip home, arriving around 10.30 pm. Wolfgang said this was only the second trip he had led, and we thank him very much for his great organisational skills and that nothing was a problem to him.

Brenda McAlpine for Wolfgang Gerber, Bridgit Doig, Dinah Cameron, Laurel Dunn, Geoff Brookes, Vivienne Brensell, Peter Sanderson, Chris Wells, Paul van Kampen.



# CATLINS WATERFALLS

**August 22, 1999**

**Author: Ian Sime**

Published in Bulletin 590, September 1999

The forecast was terrible, snow to 200m in Southland and 300m in Otago, mainly coastal. But we'd said we'd go wet or fine, and only two people rang to check. In the circumstances it was almost unbelievable that 16 turned up, just right for 4 cars. And it was a real international bunch: 5 from Japan, 2 originally from the Ukraine, and 2 others originally from England.

We travelled independently through several bleak southerly showers to Owaka, with fresh snow on Maungatua, and on coastal and inland low hills, to levels not far above the highest points of the road. Stocked up with food and drink, we travelled in convoy first to Barrs Falls, the smallest ones but you get right close to them, then on to the best known Purakaunui Falls. With more than the normal flow, they were spectacular.



Matai Falls, near Caberfeidh (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

After lunch, down the winding bush clad Puaho Road to SH 92 at MacLennan, and on to the Papatowai Trading Post (open 7 days) for petrol for Vitaly, just before the sealed road changes to gravel. Great coastal views from the Florence Hill Lookout. Large brown signs have recently been put up so that it is almost impossible to miss Catlins highlights now. For example, the insignificant Rewcastle Rd which leads to Maclean Falls is clearly identified. It is in much better condition than previously, with a large metalled carpark where the new 15 minute track begins. Now that Kings High boys have constructed this easy access to the Falls, they are well worth a visit - more spectacular than the Purakaunui ones, for the whole Tautuku River spills over them.

Matai Falls, just off the highway south of Table Hill, are something of an anti-climax after Maclean Falls. As we got back to the cars after viewing them, there was a heavy hail shower

which stopped us taking a group photo, before each car travelled independently home, through more heavy showers.



**Tautuku Bay from Florence Hill (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

Ian Sime for Kenichi and Rie Fukuda, Yuko Ishimoto, Rie Kitahara, Hiro Sano, Vitaly and Vadim Pyatov, Jane Campbell, Mary McEwan, Jacqui Cornelissen, Andrew and Emma MacKay, Rowan Leek, Duncan Mathieson, Bess Taylor

## ROUTEBURN WANDERINGS

**August 7-8, 1999**

**Author: Andrew McKay**

Published in Bulletin 591, October 1999

With snowcraft cancelled and a weekend free, the question was raised as to what to do. As I had wanted to go on Wolfgang's trip the weekend previous, I felt that a pleasant little trip into the Routeburn from the Glenorchy end would be nice. So after a mass email to all, Fee and I headed off from Dunedin enroute to Cromwell to pick up the final member of our party, Vanessa. The trip up was uneventful until we got to Vanessa's place, where the starter solenoid on my poor old Toyota packed a sad. A little judicious tapping with a geo hammer soon fixed that, and we headed off to Glenorchy and the start of the track.

Just before midnight we geared up, shouldered packs and were on the track by midnight. This was my first time on the track since my first OTMC trip about ten years ago, so walking it by headlamp was an interesting experience. Two hours from the road end to Flats hut wasn't a bad effort considering the multiple chocolate stops and leisurely pace, once there it was a quick hello to the sole resident and hit the sack.



Routeburn Flats and the North Branch from the 1994 'Big Slip' (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

It was a reasonably chilly night and the next morning dawned bright and crisp, no one was keen on getting up that early, so a leisurely lie in until the sun reached the valley floor and warmed things up was the order of the day.

We decided that a trip up the North branch of the Routeburn was the mission for the day and under a bright blue sky we trundled off up the track towards North Col. This area is wonderful, so close to the highway of the Routeburn track, yet the track is little more than a route through the bush and tussock covering the valley floor. Once you get well up into the valley the route is barred by a boulder field, which provides a little maze to traverse. At this time it was around 1



pm and hunger was setting in, and as we were backtracking around another difficult spot we came across a set of pools in the stream that runs through the boulders. Oh, what a perfect place for lunch - cool clear water, a gravel bank to sit, my MSR roaring away and the mountains rising steeply above us. After a pleasant lunch and a little snooze, time was getting on and as the chances of getting to North Col and back to the hut by nightfall were poor, we headed off slowly back down the valley, admiring the creative cairn construction on the way.



**Lake Harris and the entrance to The Valley Of The Trolls in winter (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

I am afraid I'm getting a little too used to the finer things in life - the meal that evening was again a masterpiece of cooking under difficult conditions. A fine wine or two, good food, excellent conversation and a wee dram finished off a wonderful day.

The next morning I was prompted by the girls to get out of my nice warm bag and make them a hot drink in bed. I didn't mind as the dawn light was beautiful and for the first time on a tramping trip I had lugged a tripod for the purpose of shooting images in low light conditions. So, as I potted around snapping shots, the girls got themselves up and organised for the new day.

Fee decided she wanted to have a quiet day at the hut, while Vanessa and I headed up the hill to Harris Saddle. The track from Flats to Falls has always had bad memories for me, as I could remember struggling up it on that trip ten years ago. Things have changed since then, I think it's probably more my fitness than anything else, and a mountains in the winter, the subtle shades of green, deep blue skies and the contrast between the dark rock and snow is a sight to behold.

The track to Lake Harris was good and we reached there by noon, where a lunch break was called. No sooner had we sat down, the weather closed in and it started snowing gently. What a way to have lunch, MSR roaring, snow falling and beautiful scenery. The snow made us decide to flag the hour return to the saddle and heading back to Falls Hut bought on great imaginings of locations for Lord of the Rings. It is amazing just how much of a book you can

remember if you read it when you are supposed to be studying for exams! The conversation most of the way back to Flats Hut was full of Hobbits, Ores and Wizards - what a way to kill time while walking back along a track.



**Routeburn Flats (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

Back at Flats, the hardest part of the trip was upon us, getting all that stuff back into your pack and heading out of such a beautiful area and back to the workday grind. Oh well, it was a great weekend and time well spent in beautiful places with good friends needs to be cherished.

Andrew Mac for Vanessa and Fee

# KEPLER TRACK

August 28-29, 1999

Author: Ross Davies

Published in Bulletin 591, October 1999

**Bulletin:** What led you to go on this trip?

Ross: My son Michael was keen to experience some snow somewhere, and Greg Panting's Winter Kepler trip sounded like a good chance. So we signed up, and set to dividing up the family tramping gear, a bit meagre these days. We joined the six others at the Clubrooms on Friday night, and headed off in two car loads.

**Bulletin:** I gather you had a bit of bother in Gore?

Ross: Yeah, well we did the KFC thing, and then went to find the way out of town, but it's all changed these days. It used to be parking in the middle, but now there are traffic islands everywhere, and the old Chariot needs a bit of advance warning for turning. That guy was just downright rude really, no need for all that tooting.

**Bulletin:** So where did you spend Friday night?

Ross: Friday nights are certainly a bit more comfy these days. Once we got the chap on the phone, we had a couple of nifty little cabins in the Te Anau Motor Camp, with heaters and microwaves.

**Bulletin:** I hear you left your cars there?

Ross: With all the worries about vandalism, we did the ferrying-the-packs thing to the Control Gates, and walked from Te Anau, checking out the keas and kakas on the way. Then we shouldered our packs and wandered around to Brod Bay. This is a lovely bit of track, level and lakeside. Then we tackled the next bit to Luxmore Hut, more hillside and zig-zags.

**Bulletin:** You were saying the hut was a bit of a mess?

Ross: Indeed, we arrived at various stages at Luxmore Hut, some favouring the lunch-can-wait-till-we-get-there theory, others giving in to the hunger pangs. But when we got there a bloke and his family from down south somewhere were cleaning the place up - some stupid slob had made a disgusting mess of the common-room, burning bits of furniture in the fire, and letting the keas inside.

**Bulletin:** Was there much snow about?

Ross: It had snowed the weekend before but was disappearing rapidly. The snow was down below bushline, but fairly thin. The weather was OK, so we all headed off up the track, and climbed Mt Luxmore later in the afternoon. A steep bit of snow on top gave Paul a chance to demonstrate his "telemark" glissade technique, although only Greg was keen enough to try it. A couple of bum-slides made the trip down a bit quicker, and we were soon busy cooking tea. The only trouble was, we had more than we could eat, so some had to be carried back home.

**Bulletin:** There was some bother with keas?

Ross: Well, not bother exactly, and it was lovely to see the little blighters, but 6am on a mid-winter Sunday morning was just a bit much. Sliding down the roof, and "keeaaaing" around the place. The younger party members were captivated with them. It was a beautiful morning, with a fantastic sunrise and view.

**Bulletin:** I gather there was a lengthy snow fight?



Ross: Lengthy? Maybe we should contact the Guinness Book people! This was a huge battle. It started as a skirmish near the door and became a major battle which raged right round the hut, several times, with thrust and counter-attacks, positions over-run, and brave last stands. It was oldies on to youngies, experience against daring, with no prisoners taken. As I recall we oldies gave up in the end, otherwise we'd have been at it all day. I did learn the first rule of warfare though, which is that supply is everything. A sneak attack from a high position is all very well, but if you ain't got a good supply of snowballs, you're going to wear a few.

**Bulletin:** Then you did the caving thing?

Ross: Indeed, I thought this caving meant a short walk into some large hole. But the hole soon got narrow, and we had to slither through bits on our stomachs, and my head was often too close to the roof. But Paul and Greg showed us lots of interesting bits, and we only took one wrong turn. We turned back after 3/4 of an hour, and I was pleased to see the sunshine. Quite an adventure.

**Bulletin:** Sounds like quite a morning?

Ross: Yes, it was. We all then packed up, cleaned up, and headed off down. We regrouped at Brod Bay, where we lunched, before heading back to the Control Gates. Greg and I carried on back towards Te Anau and the cars, and I managed to hitch a lift for the last half, so we were all soon in the Te Anau ice-cream shop. Then it was off to the Gore KFC, which does a good trade on a Sunday night. Except a 20-minute wait for chicken in a KFC sounds like bad management to me. Never mind, we were back in Dunedin by 9pm, after an excellent weekend, with good company, nice location, passable weather, and more food than we could eat.

**Bulletin:** Who all went on this trip?

Ross: Well there was Greg Panting, Paul van Kampen, Vadim Pyatov, Yuko Ishimoto, Mary McEwan, Ron Minnema, Michael Davies and Ross Davies.

## MACETOWN

**October 9-10, 1999**

**Author: Paul Van Kampen**

Published in Bulletin 592, November 1999

We were away slightly late but enjoyed a lovely mild, almost summer night. With darkness at 8.30pm and the arrival at Arrowtown about 9.30pm we had some eventful moments putting up the tents – of course, you don't read instructions. It's learn from your mistakes by putting things where you think they should go and when they don't fit refer to the instructions. I must say I'm a hands-on person myself.

We had a stroll down the main street of Arrowtown and made for the closest pub for a cool beer and a late-night chat. It was such a lovely night it seemed a shame to go to sleep, but sleep nonetheless we did, between the tossing and turning.

Morning soon arrived, just as we managed to actually go to sleep it seemed, still I was looking forward to seeing a new area. While I had some cornflakes, milk powder and raisins, Terry was enjoying some food from the bakery!! Of course, Terry didn't tell me this until I commented on the fact that I had discovered the bakery after eating my breakfast. I hate that!



The sidling track to Big Hill; from the Arrowtown side (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Our party had the task of taking on Big Hill while the other two parties of five travelled in via the 4WD track with 20 river crossings or so. There is a very interesting Chinese village at the start of the track and then... well a very steep hill, surprise, surprise! As we gained height there were great views into the Kawarau Valley and Wakatipu area. Some of the track follows one of many tailraces around the barren hills, then into some beech forest and up the saddle beside Big Hell (sorry, Hill). Many of the trees were snapped by either snow or high winds, maybe a combination of both. Thus, Terry's lovely "forest stroll" turned into an obstacle course. We made a competition of trying to find the quickest way through, over, under, around, with

everyone going a different way, then meet on the other side for the next obstacle. By the way, DON'T wear a cap - branches at head height are often hidden, until suddenly, you guessed it... OUCH! Maybe a helmet with a brim would be better.



Advance Peak from near Vanguard Peak (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

A group of fluffy black caterpillars, some wild goats, a welcome rain shower with a rainbow, trick photos of our group on the terrain, and we met the other parties for lunch down at the Arrow River within minutes of each other. Just short of Macetown we found a lovely campsite beside a sheltered bend in the river with a fire and one shady green willow tree. I had a brief swim by myself, as no one else was game, then relaxed in the warm sunshine. Well blow me down, Terry still wants to climb Advance Peak at 3:30 pm, fully confident we will make it to the top and back before dark. I had my doubts, but I was committed. (*Or is that "should be committed"? Ed*)

The peak looked a very, very long way from our campsite and was sitting at the end of a long steep ridge topped with snow. Terry, Wilbert, Mary, Jacob and myself started off aiming high.

Pace walking through the main street of Macetown, splashing across a stream and straight into the climb. Jacob turned back to leave four. Up and up and up into the hot sunshine with little time for rests, Chris's water line from the 1.5 litre bottle on the side of my pack was proving itself. With brief map checks, we found the quickest lines along the long steep ridge as the ground dropped away to either side. Unfortunately, as time went on Advance Peak seemed to get higher and further away.

We dropped our packs just above the snow line with around 400m in height to go - unfortunately we didn't seem to move or feel much livelier without packs. We had reached our predetermined comfortable turnaround time of 6 pm, but the peak was beckoning, it was ours and it had to be climbed. We all agreed the very latest turnaround time would be 6:30 pm. Mary and Wilbert decided to wait for Terry and I around 250 vertical metres short and enjoy the views while catching their breath. Terry and I carried on, of course the wind picked up, while not cold it sure made breathing difficult while pushing steeper and steeper slopes faster



and faster. Fortunately, we could see the last and steepest 50m of the climb was around the leeward side of the summit and would break the wind for us. Terry and I made the top at around 6:20 pm leaving a few minutes for photos and a quick bite. We had lovely views out over the top of the now small (I mean) Big Hill, to Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkables, the back of Coronet Peak, pointy Ben Lomond and to the north Mt Aspiring. We could also see the small bend in the river where our camp was situated far, far away.

Well, now for the descent, after all, we were only halfway. Sliding on snow was quicker - less pounding on tired legs and, well, simply fun! We met Mary and Wilbert, then picked up the packs and found it easier to pick quick routes when coming down from height. Unfortunately, the fallen tussock leaves matted on the steep ground made slipping over the norm. Well, I decided, why not just stay down on the ground and slide down? Once again it was quicker, easier on the legs and we had a ball. In fact, we sought out steeper slopes and tried gaining a little speed to skip over and between the tussock plants. We made it to the lower slopes as the sun turned the sky and surrounding hills gold, orange then light red. We were now on the flat Macetown road and had torches handy but made it back to camp just on full darkness.

Thanks to Fiona and Jacob who had soup and tea ready for Terry and I as we sat around a flickering orange open fire on a warm starry night, while the river gently flowed from and into the darkness.

The others at camp had used binoculars to watch us move up the ridge to the top. It's a great feeling to know you have safely pushed yourself to near your limits whilst achieving a goal and a lovely view. Of course we had the right party members, equipment and weather. While the peak is not at all hard to climb, pushing for time after an already long day tramping with heavy packs over Big Hill proved a challenge.

Unfortunately, I still find it hard to remember the sound of the river is not actually heavy rain, and even after a completely exhausting day it's still hard to get a lot of sleep whilst camping. On Sunday we enjoyed a more sedate day, leaving our packs by the restored bakery shop (I made sure this one wasn't open before eating my breakfast). We then walked up the Rich Bum to look at Anderson and Homeward Bound Batteries. It's almost impossible to imagine the noise and a lunar landscape broken by a stream filled with miners. The miners must have endured terrible extremes of cold and heat while the pub and grocery owners made the money.



**Homeward Bound stamping battery (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

We walked out via the Arrow River gorge, crossing the river many times, and enjoyed a shower under a water jet out of the pipeline as the weather was still hot. It is a very barren landscape but much more interesting and fantastic than I had imagined. There were many amazingly shaped rocks in a variety of different colours, always sparkling with mica, and if you were lucky, gold. Bright splashes of colour like blossom trees, freshly sprouted willow trees and daffodils. Blue skies, golden tussock and aqua swimming holes.

We were out around 4:30 pm and had to stop into another Arrowtown pub to sample another even better tasting beer. Then came the trip home, which took hours rather than the weeks it would have taken the miners. We didn't even get wet crossing over the Clutha River - it's amazing how they managed.

Our party was Fiona Webster, Terry Duffield, Jacob Yackov and myself. Thanks to Bruce and all the people who came, making the trip possible and much more interesting than it otherwise would have been.

Paul Van Kampen



## MCNALLY'S TRACK

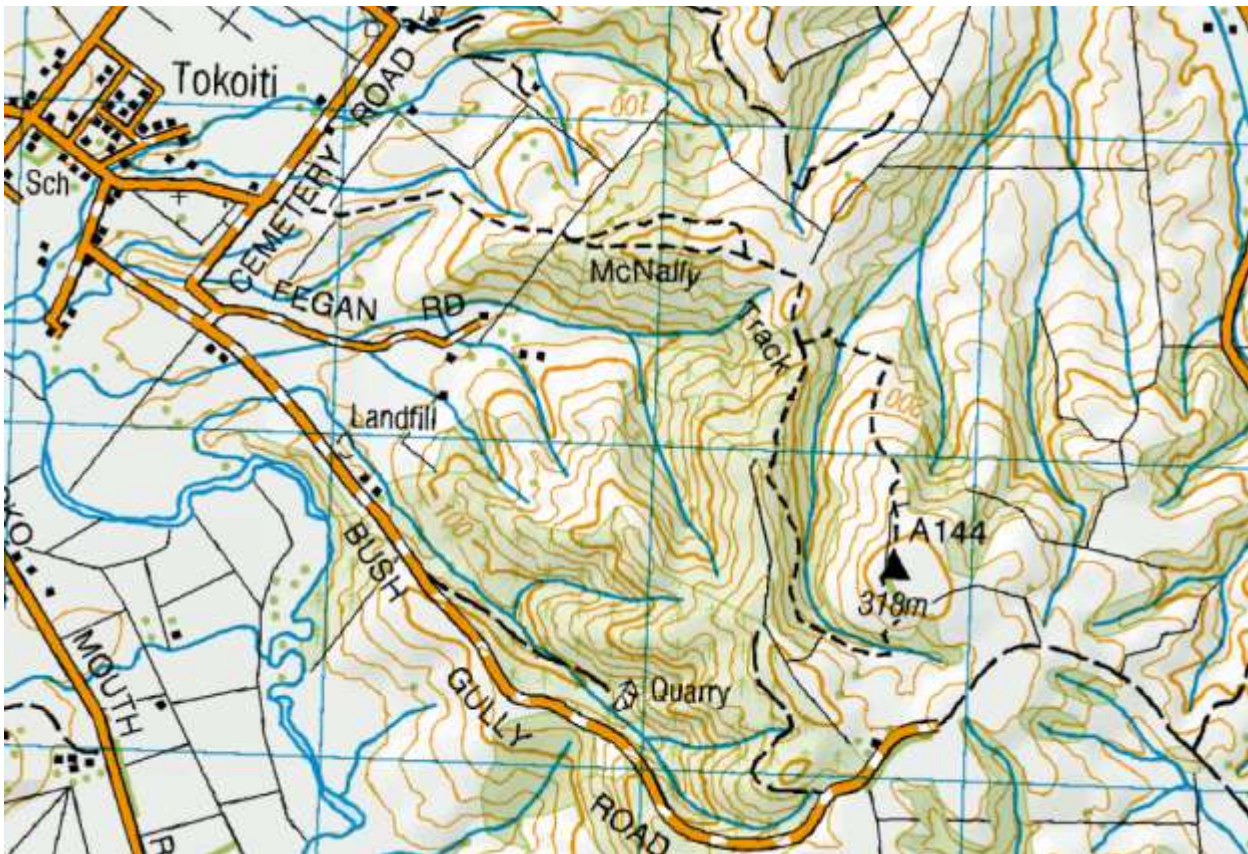
**October 31, 1999**

**Author: Greg Powell**

Published in Bulletin 592, October 1999

After massaging my hamstring to a pulp on Friday, the physio said "I think it's right, so go tramping this weekend and test it out". Thus on Sunday I arose well before my normal time and headed on down to the clubrooms. Jacqui, our trip leader, was there waiting with trip list in hand, and by 9.05 am we set off in three cars (plenty of room for 6 people) to the metropolis of Milton. I am still amazed by how many people are up and about at that ungodly hour on a Sunday morning.

The track starts just past the Milton cemetery and we all arrived at the starting point at roughly the same time, donned our boots and other accoutrements and set off. It starts off with a slow climb (which seems to get steeper) across farmland and is well marked. There were a couple of places where you could take alternative routes, but being keen trampers we naturally took the steeper option (actually Jacqui didn't tell us about the easier routes).



As you start to climb it pays to stop and look back as the view of Milton and the surrounding plains is revealed. The Milburn quarry can be seen to the right and Andrew (with his extensive knowledge of geology) tells me that this is one of the few places where they excavate natural phosphate (ie:- not birdshit!). Further up the track you enter the bush for a short period of time. Before this Jacqui was keen to avoid a couple of well matured sheep carcasses and didn't seem keen to grab a chop or two for lunch.

There was also a little bit of swearing in the bush when she almost stood on a dead possum!

After leaving the bush there is quite a steep hill to climb before you reach the top part of the track, but it is not far, and you arrive before you know it. The view at the top is very good and



worth the effort of getting there. Much to Alan's disgust we ate an early lunch. He had been trying to pace himself all morning so we wouldn't arrive at the top too early. There is a wooden seat at the top (well-shaped for bottoms, according to Robyn) and a brass plaque that points to various features and mountain ranges that can be seen from this vantage point. It was here that Eric mentioned he worked for Cadbury's, but despite my drooling and panting he produced none of their free chocolate samples.

The route home was mostly downhill and I walked with Alan and Robyn. The conversation was mainly about sheep droppings, thistles and various bodily aches and pains. It must have been an enthralling discussion as we seemed to arrive back at the cars in no time at all. Brownie points to those who then took part in the warm down stretches.

Overall, a most enjoyable day with great weather complimented by great company. I would recommend it to anyone looking for a short walk within easy travelling distance from Dunedin. Compliments to the Milton Rotary who built and continue to maintain the track, it is a credit to the town of Milton.

Greg Powell for Jacqui Cornelissen, Alan and Robyn Thomson, Andrew MacKay and Eric Powell

## ASPRING HUT IS 50

**October 23-25, 1999**

**Author: Ian Sime**

Published in Bulletin 592, November 1999

Celebrations organised by the Otago Section of the NZ Alpine Club to mark this milestone were open to us, but only five finally went. Mary and Grant travelled with Terry, but Bridget and I needed transport. Peter Strang told us Rob Mitchell had spare seats, and it turned out he was going up on the Friday night and returning on Monday afternoon. This suited us fine.



West Matukituki Valley (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

It was mild and cloudy from Dunedin, but started to spit around Tarras, and by Wanaka the rain was steady with little wind. Rob had planned to walk in from the road end that night (the moon was full) but the rain put paid to that. I had a fly, but the thought of putting it up in the carpark at Big Creek under these conditions did not appeal. We decided to try the hayshed at Cameron Flat, a few km before the road end. In the event it was great. There was plenty of spare space in the front of the shed to drive the car right in; the back of the shed was filled with round bales on their ends right to the roof, and in front were a couple of bales on the ground so that we had a great bed about 1.5m high. I've never slept more comfortably on a tramp, and the smell of the hay was delicious.

A surprise when I woke was a van outside the shed and a scattering of sleeping bags on the shed floor. I'd not heard a thing when they'd arrived at 1.30 am. Our group breakfasted, travelled the last few km, then set off walking in light rain. The track was easier than the one I remembered from previous trips in the West Matukituki. We rested at Wilson's Camp at the foot of the zig zag, passed Cascade Hut without calling in, and sloshed through surface water to reach the haven of Aspiring in a bit over 2 hours.

Terry's group had expressed a preference for going up the East Branch (which has no hut) but with the weather so wet, it was no surprise when they arrived at Aspiring. They had spent the night in an implement shed.

Aspiring Hut had been upgraded yet again since my last visit, with a stone washroom and stainless-steel loos out the back, banks of gas cookers, and a wood burner stove in front of the closed-in open fire. Three sets of high bunks in the remaining bunkroom (the second bunkroom was converted to warden's quarters long ago) seemed new too.



**Aspiring Hut and the West Matukituki (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

The postponement of the main celebrations until the following day was no surprise. It was enlightening to spend the rest of the day talking with people who had been involved in the building and early life of the hut: Les Brough now in Queenstown, Alex Gourlay from Christchurch, Chas McMurray from Motueka, Brian and Maureen Cleugh from Bannockburn, Hec Ombler from Sawyers Bay whose three delightful daughters Jennifer, Eugenie and Heidi had come from all over. They had great tales to tell of the old days.

By late afternoon the cloud was lifting and the surrounding impressive snow topped mountains were showing through. The forecast was for two fine days. There was firewood which had been cut and split to bring down 50m to the woodshed. It took three loads on the ute. Before going to an early bed, I invited Hec whose bag was next to mine, to nudge me when I snored. I was aware of him doing that twice.

Since the official programme was to start at midday, Bridget and I decided to walk up-valley on Sunday morning, and Jan who hadn't been there either, joined us. In the bush section before Shovel Flat we met Rob Orchiston, current warden in the new French Ridge Hut, coming down for supplies and the celebrations. At Pearl Flat we crossed the Liverpool Bridge and turned at the foot of the track to Liverpool Biv. Coming back up Shovel Flat we intended to detour to Geoff Wayatt's climbing base camp, but missed the lightly marked track to it.



Half a dozen 4WD vehicles which had brought in more celebrities, and gear like a generator and a carton of the official booklets, were lined up below the hut when we arrived back.

Hot and cold drinks and nibbles had been served, and speeches were just starting on the slope behind the hut where everyone was sitting or lounging in the sun. It was calm and without a cloud in the sky. Rob Mitchell, an OTMC member, and also current chair of the Otago Section of the NZAC, introduced the speeches; and Pete Strang, also one of our folk, and as well organiser of the weekend, saw that the programme went more or less as intended. Angus Black, who had chosen the site, drawn up the plans, and insisted that the hut's window wall should face the view of Aspiring, unveiled a plaque inside, and proposed the toast to the Club.

We lunched mainly on soup, sandwiches and saveloys. The significance of saveloys was that they had been a mainstay of the meal when the hut was opened 50 years before. When Pete heard the number ordered, he demanded that it be doubled. (In consequence there were saveloys for the evening meal and even a few still for Monday's breakfast!) Three sets of photographs were taken in the afternoon; of people involved 50 years before, of other folk from the early days, and of everyone present. The two smaller groups were each taken in two positions, with the hut and the mountain in the background.

Folk who weren't staying the night then headed back to Wanaka, either by vehicle or on foot. Terry's group got the best of both worlds by making off for the East Branch. In the evening the generator was cranked up so that one electric bulb and the slide projector could be used. Pete showed slides, and several folk reminisced. It was a great night.

In the morning I woke to see a grey head on the next mattress. It was later that morning I found it belonged to Betsy Anderson, the first woman climbing guide in NZ, about to be 90 in a few weeks. Because I'd gone to bed before her, she'd not known to nudge me when I snored, and told me gallantly that I'd not kept her awake too much.

On another perfect day, Bridget, Jan, Rob and I headed down valley, stopping to inspect Cascade Hut and talk with the folk who'd spent the night there. The Alpine Club is now keeping it locked, but keys are available from DOC in Wanaka or the Aspiring Hut Warden. After half an hour we carried on to lunch by the bridge over the river to the Rob Roy Valley. In just under 2 hours we reached the 4-panel display in the impressive top basin. We joined two parties, one a group of four Japanese actors with a day off from filming Vertical Limits, photographing a pair of local keas who wanted us, against a strict warning on one panel, to feed them. They were loath to fly and display their colours, preferring to walk and hop.



Rob Roy glacier (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We were back at the bridge in 1 hr 20, and at the cars in another 30 minutes. On the way to Wanaka we stopped to admire a group of rock climbers on a face right beside the road. At Alexandra where our tongues were hanging out for a drink at 6pm, only one milk bar was open, and its milk shake machine was out of order! Rob gave us a different experience by coming back through the Manuherikia Valley, Kyeburn, Kokonga and Middlemarch. Although it was 7.45 pm when we arrived there, Alistair Baird was still at the Railhead Store, and provided us with all the food and drink we needed. We were home before nine.

This was a great opportunity to spend a weekend in the Matukituki, to meet some of the folk who worked and overcame massive difficulties to erect this most useful of base camps for us all, and to hear some of their stories. *"ASPIRING HUT, 50 Years of Climbing and Adventure"*, the 28-page illustrated booklet published for the occasion, gives a taste of the history.

Ian Sime for Grant Burnard, Bridget Doig, Terry Duffield, Mary McEwan, and Rob Mitchell



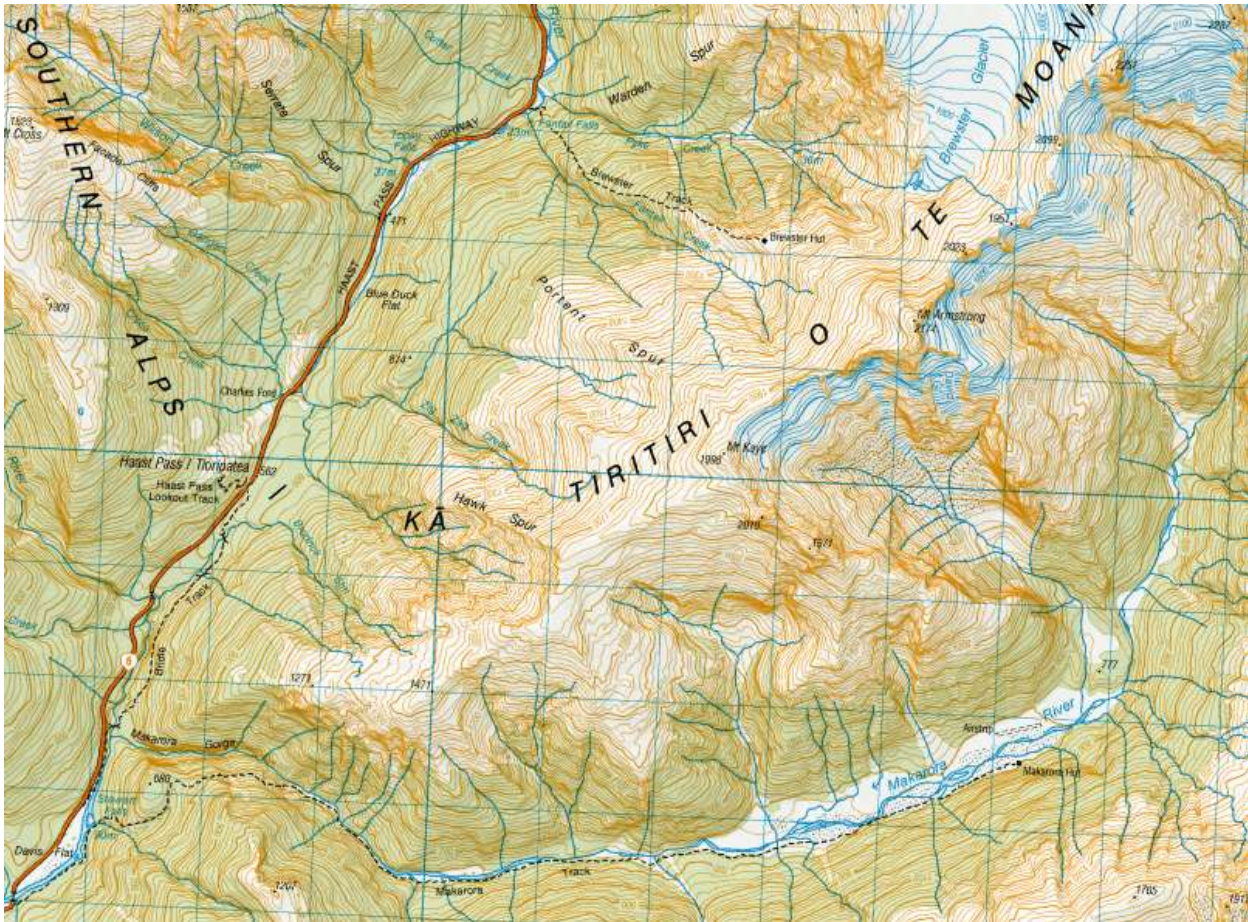
# MAKARORA

**October 23-25, 1999**

**Author: Tony Malcolm**

Published in Bulletin 593, December 1999

Shelley and Justin picked me up at 5.15 pm sharp, and we headed off to Makarora in relatively fine weather. First stop was in Alex for Chinese takeaways. By the time we arrived in Makarora, it was POURING down. As we headed for our camp spot at Cameron Flat, we seriously thought about turning around to stay in a cabin for the night but decided to press on and brave the elements.



It was a little hard to get motivated on Saturday morning with absolutely no change in the weather. Once packed up we drove about 12 km up the road to hide my bike. (Also known as "Town Bike", no one would be bothered to steal it.) The track to Makarora Hut was challenging as we had to cross Stewart's Creek (no longer just a creek!), scramble over fallen trees and branches, avoid washed out areas, and being wet all day we just had to keep moving. The amount and noise of water roaring down the gorge was amazing! Once out from the beech forest, the valley opens out and in the distance was Makarora Hut. A delightful 4 bunk hut and it was great - no one else was there!!!

Justin put his handy kitchen skills to work. Out of his pack came whole potatoes and a variety of veges to make his curry. I fully understood why he was so keen to cook that night, knowing that the next day we would have to climb up to 1900 metres. The weather cleared up and Shelley and I were sipping wine, watching Justin cooking, and thinking "I hope we don't have to go back the way we came in!" A cosy fire allowed our gear to dry while we ate our comprehensive meal.



Sunday. Beautiful blue skies, though a rather late 9.30 am start due to Justin and myself mucking around fitting crampons. We were searching on the floor for nuts we had dropped, and Shelley probably wondered whether we were going to make it out the door, let alone climb over Mt. Kaye (1900 m) to Brewster Biv!!! Climbing the rocky terrain and scrambling over boulders (which was quite fun), it wasn't until midday that we hit the porridge-like snow. It was hard yakka, but the reward at the top was just spectacular. Virtually 360° views of the Alps as far as the eye could see. It was just magical. Descending to Brewster Biv, three keas decided to play little games, following us and running after small snow balls they had just knocked. Good thing it was a perfect evening as Brewster Biv was full. After the usual three hours eating and finishing off another bottle of wine, we watched an amazing sunset with Mt. Brewster at about 2500 m as a backdrop.

During the day, Justin said he is afraid of heights. He also said, "If I start singing, you know I'm really scared." Thankfully he didn't!!! Looking up towards the ridge of Mt. Kaye was impressive as we could see some of our foot marks in the snow. The camp spot reminded me of the Fohn Lakes we tramped at Easter this year.

Monday and another splendid day. We slept in and relaxed while the sun dried our tents, before descending a couple of hours down to the road. As I removed the ferns hiding my bike, a bus full of European tourists stared in amazement as if I had a drug plantation in the bushes. *(So that's how he goes so fast! Ed.)* They were probably even more bewildered when out came a bike and off I rode to collect Shelley's car!

Tony Malcolm for Shelley Coleman and Justin Barker

## SILVER PEAKS FOR MASOCHISTS III

**November 7, 1999**

**Author: Jacob Fennstra**

Published in Bulletin 593, December 1999

That Sunday morning at 10 a.m. saw the four of us - Arthur, Jonette, Richard and me - cheerfully chattering along Green Ridge, happy to have left behind the fog down below in Waitati. Shortly before Green Hut site we took a suspicious turn off to the left to the top of a ridge that made a 90-degree angle with Green Ridge.

Initially the going was quite good, but gradually the 'path' deteriorated and then vanished, together with our chattering. Now we found ourselves in a concentrated struggle with, in descending order of their nasty nature - bush lawyer; gorse; dead manuka and broadleaf etc. That is, until I grabbed what was supposed to be a reliable hold, and the tree collapsed just like that, dead. Then # 3 climbed at once to first place! Our masochistic attitude was fantastic. At one stage Jonette and Richard had bleeding knees, Arthur a deep lawyer cut across his forehead (he is not a lawyer at all!), and I had several incisions in my hands and arms. By 1 p.m. we had reached our lunch spot right beside a creek. Here we licked our wounds and washed them in the crystal clear water. It was warm and while enjoying our lunch in the shade we planned our next painful stage.



Tributary of the Silver Stream, below Raingauge Spur (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

At 1.45 p.m. we ventured up a slope that seemed to be the best option to bring us to where we wanted to go (Swampy Summit). Go??? Here the going was harder, the scrub being much lower to the ground in places, making us crawl on all fours. Finally after two hours or so we made it to the top of the ridge and found ourselves face to face with a sign saying "Raingauge Spur". I couldn't help but let go a sigh of relief! Through open country with flax, hebe, cottonwood and through matagouri (no, no, we by-passed that one, it's a native you know) we walked to the Swampy Summit track via Rollinson's Track. The rest of the trip was sadistic as

we hit the path as hard as we could, and at 6 p.m. we were back where we started, battered, but a wilderness experience richarder, eh richer.

Jacob Feenstra for Arthur Blondell, Jonette Service and Richard Pettinger



## **SPIERS ROAD – BEN RUDD’S PICNIC – DAVIES TRACK**

**November 14, 1999**

**Author: Richard Pettinger**

Published in Bulletin 593, December 1999

This trip was a doddle. While it scored lots of 'firsts' it was a mere womble. A picnic. Unlike the previous weekend's day trip (see Jacob's article), where we arrived torn to shreds, hot and thirsty at the large Swampy Lagoon and saw its inviting cool waters beckoning us for a swim. A swim which, as we were good masochists, we naturally denied ourselves the pleasure of.

No, by contrast, on this veritable wanderathon, we allowed ourselves several pleasures, including a gambol through a flowery dell. It was the first time in brand new boots for the women. And the first ever OTMC trip for three of us. We joined the first ever picnic by the Ben Rudd's Trust. It was also the first time in decades (or ever?) that the Club has had an official trip on any of these two tracks onto Flagstaff. And we used the first road that ever left the tiny settlement of Dunedin.



Stone walling alongside the Spiers Road track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We set off up that historic Spiers Road which, after the gravel road ceases, starts off as a line cut through gorse. The line of white pegs higher up seemed a bit excessive in the fine weather, but they are important if it is foggy (as it often is) because walkers must keep to the line of the road formation, which is not always obvious. I was intrigued by the many violets growing everywhere in the herb layer. We noted the stone walls that were at various stages of construction by Ben Rudd before something sent him over the hill, and he abandoned his project.

We also noted the farmer's many cars and trucks parked at strategic locations, all over his land, just going rusty. (How could anyone miss them?) It was decided that he must have discovered an iron deficiency in the soil and was attempting to remedy it. We climbed up into the reserve and met the Walkway, which we followed to check the Club's plane table and the summit views. Then a pine-pulling session followed through the tussock to the skid site where we met up with picnickers coming along the firebreak.



**Flowering Rhododendrons amongst the native bush, Ben Rudd's property (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

The picnic was sunny and convivial. Trust members listened to Marie McDonald's letter about how the shelter and fire should be managed. Several people joined up with the Friends of Ben Rudd's. Trust members and Friends checked some recent damage to the shelter, and options were discussed. Meanwhile the kids had a great time running about.

There followed a 45-minute excursion from the shelter to see the rhodos in Bruce's dell. He would love to have seen them now. This trip was punctuated by a Darwin's barberry seedling pulling session on Jim Freeman's track. The rhodos were almost finished, but some white, red and pink ones were still in bloom. The clematis was the most striking flowery thing (as it had been on the masochists' trip the week before.) If it wasn't for that clematis, the dell would have had an almost Himalayan feel. The self-sown wilding rhodos are making their presence known in the understorey. Back at the picnic, Ian Sime decided to join us for the rest of the trip. When we managed to wake him up from his sleep in the sun, that is!

It is not easy to see the start of the Davies Track, but it leaves the Walkway just north of the north summit of Flagstaff. A little paint on some wood and rocks by the path marks the point of take-off. The fact that it isn't obvious is good for the track, as it keeps it more of a secret. It has nice views and great bush, with even some regenerating mountain cedars among the tussock. What was so great about the track did not occur to me until we were half-way down, and this was the complete absence of litter. Also, the track is not an obvious thoroughfare yet, requiring some route-finding. Only some ancient axe blazes remain, and they haven't been replaced by in-your-face track markers. Great! Long may it continue like that. Vincent, who is



only 9, did an enthusiastic and efficient job of keeping us on track all the way down. Good going - taking after his cousin!



**Flagstaff Summit and OTMC Plane Table (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

Ian's car was there at Booth Road, and it and Penny's van took us back to Spiers Road. I trust these tracks will get a lot of OTMC use. They make a terrific round trip of only a few hours, through nice bush, with a bit of history and lots of different views over the city. The tracks are very handy and will prove a great asset to Dunedin. Great venues for getting/keeping fit! (And breaking in new boots.)

Richard Pettinger for Penny Anderson, Margareta Wilding, Vincent Pettinger, Greg Powell and Eric Callaghan. Thanks to Greg and Penny for transport.



## **STOAT ERADICATION WEEKEND**

**November 13-14, 1999**

**Author: Debbie Milne**

Published in Bulletin 593, December 1999

As I waited nervously at the club rooms, with my new boots, I wondered what my first trip with the OTMC would be like and what I had really let myself in for. As soon as our guide, Graeme, had arrived we got on the road at 6.30 p.m. with a stop at Milton for fish and chips, arriving in the Catlins after dark.

We parked Alan's van in a woolshed and loaded D.O.C.'s van up with all our gear for a 10-minute drive over the farmer's land. Jonette and John were hanging off the back, holding on for dear life, as we crossed three fords. Then a five-minute walk to our camp site beside Phisbe Stream, where we pitched our tents via torch light, and turned in for the night.

After some rain in the night, we woke to a fine day. A muesli bar and bread roll breakfast was followed by a crash course, delivered by our trip leader Graeme, in setting humane traps. Two traps are set far enough apart for two eggs to be placed as bait between them. This trap site is then covered with a metal box and weighed down with a log of wood to stop other larger animals triggering the traps.

It was soon obvious that the dangers in mis-setting traps could be very costly and painful, but fortunately my t-shirt front was the only casualty! The three girls in the party set off into the bush to start laying traps approx. 50m apart.

We got about halfway to find a huge wind-fallen tree, which we had to get across. After doing a balancing act along the windfall, we eventually picked up the track again and continued to lay the rest of the traps. After setting some 30 of them, along with 2 eggs at each as bait, we headed back along the track to our camp site (being VERY careful to circumnavigate the traps, eggs and boxes previously set!)

After a Pak'n'Save quiche lunch the trap setting exercise was continued for the remainder of the day. On returning to camp, inspection of our temporary accommodation revealed an unwelcome guest. I assured Olive that our new tent mate would not eat much, but she insisted on its immediate eviction. Graeme volunteered to be "Sir Galahad" and gently removed the offending spider! By this time tea was ready and we all enjoyed trying the unusual delicacy of swan meat, along with veges and red wine. After our meal Graeme displayed more of his versatility by giving us a talk on the stars.

Sunday dawned bright and clear, and we packed up while Alan and Olive set the remaining traps. At the same time Judy and Jonette changed "ink traps". These were previously set by D.O.C. and consist of inkpads and cardboard placed under baited boxes to assess, by their footprints, the prevalence of the small animal population in the bush (eg:- mice, rats, ferrets and leprechauns). Once packed, we picked up Alan's van and drove to the start of the Catlins River track. After lunch we crossed the river and proceeded to cut and blaze a new track.

About 4.30 p.m. we returned to the trucks and in doing so had to cross the river again - this time it was a little less fortuitous and I can assure you the water was cold! Once the whole party was reunited, we headed for home, with a stop at Owaka for ice-creams, arriving about 10 p.m. after a most enjoyable weekend.

P.S. The gin traps were visited some ten days later, and the bush is now less three stoats and one ferret.

Debbie Milne for Graeme Loh, Alan Thomson, Jonette Service, Judy, John Cox and family, and Olive Neilson.

## **OTMC COMMITTEE (1999-2000)**

**President** – Alan Thomson

**Vice President** – Bruce Newton

**Secretary** – Olive Nielson

**Treasurer** – Ann Burton

**Chief Guide / Transport** – Antony Pettinger

**Bulletin Editor** – Robyn Bell

**Membership Secretary** – Ian Sime

**Social Convenor** – Robyn Bell

**Day Trip Convener** – Paul Van Kampen

**Gear Hire** – Mike Brettell

**SAR** – Greg Panting

**Website** – Antony Pettinger

**Weektime Trips** – Ian Sime

**Committee** – Fiona Baker

**Library** – Fiona Baker

**Library** – Greg Panting

**Property & Maintenance** – Alan Thomson

**Bushcraft 2000** – Antony Pettinger

**Hon. Solicitor** – Antony Hamel

## OTMC TRIP PROGRAMME 1999

Month	Date(s)	Specific Trip	Leader
January	24	Around The Peaks	Ross Davies
January	30-31	Jubilee Hut Maintenance	Alan Thomson
February	6	OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon	Committee
February	7	OTMC Picnic (Long Beach)	Committee
February	13-14	Bushcraft 1999 (Tirohanga Weekend)	Peter O'Driscoll
February	20-21	Earnslaw Burn	Marc Doesburg
February	27-28	Bushcraft 1999 (Silver Peaks Weekend)	Peter O'Driscoll
March	7	Bushcraft 1999 (Rivercrossing - Outram Glen)	Peter O'Driscoll
March	7	The Crater - Taieri Ridge	Robyn Bridges
March	13-14	Bushcraft 1999 (Fiordland Optional Trip)	
March	14	Yellow Ridge	Vanessa Johnson
March	20-22	Rockburn - Routeburn	Wolfgang Gerber
March	28	Powder Ridge - Chalkies	Jonette Service
April	2-5	Five Passes (Easter)	Chris Wells
April	11	Government Track	Jacqui Cornelissen
April	17-18	Eyre Mountains	Nigel Boydell
April	18	Yellow Hut	Fiona Baker
April	25	South Coast	Nigel Boydell
May	2	Pulpit Rock via Mountain Bike	Jeff Brown
May	9	Swampy Summit	Jonette Service
May	16	Orbells Cave	Doug Forrester
May	22	Winter Barn Dance - Hoopers Inlet Hall	Robyn MacKay
May	23	Caffeine & Recovery Trip	Jenny Lowe
May	30	Sandfly Bay & Boulder Beach	Yvonne Greer and Olive Neilson
June	5-7	Greenstone - Steele Creek	Ian Sime
June	13	Yellow - Rocky - Green Ridges	Tony Malcolm
June	20	Great Dinosaur Hunt	Andrew MacKay
June	26-27	Kepler - Luxmore (Cooking Competition)	Jenny Lowe
June	27	To Be Advised	Sharon St Clair-Newman
July	4	Rustlers Ridge - Possum (and return)	Richard Pettinger
July	11	To Be Advised	Teresa Blondell (Wasilewska)
July	17-18	Makarora - Brewster Area	Greg Panting
July	18	Lee Stream - Weka Falls	Ian Sime
July	25	Rongomai - Honeycomb Track	Robyn MacKay
July	31-1	Routeburn From Divide - Quiz Night (McKenzie)	Wolfgang Gerber
August	1	Peninsula by Bicycle	Bruce Newton
August	7-8	Snowcraft One	Trevor Deaker
August	8	Post Office Creek	Alan Thomson
August	15	To Be Advised	Jim Driscoll
August	22	Catlins Waterfalls	Ian Sime



August	28-29	Winter Kepler	Greg Panting
August	29	All Day On The Peninsula I	David Barnes
September	5	Rosella Ridge	Wolfgang Gerber
September	11-12	Snowcraft Two	Trevor Deaker
September	12	Yellow Hut - The Gap	Terry Duffield
September	19	All Day On The Peninsula II	David Barnes
September	25-26	The Branches (Tramping - Skiing)	John Sime
September	26	Maungatua Traverse	Greg Panting
October	3	Cycling Trip	Paul Van Kampen
October	9-10	Macetown	Antony Pettinger
October	10	Green Hut (site)	Ron Minnema
October	17	ABC Cave	Robyn Bridges
October	23-25	Aspiring Hut - 50th Birthday Party	Stuart Mathieson
October	31	Taieri River - Lee Stream	Jacqui Cornelissen
November	7	Silver Peaks For Masochists III	Richard Pettinger
November	14	Spier's Road - Ben Rudd's Picnic - Davies Track	Richard Pettinger
November	13-14	Stoat Eradication Weekend - Catlins	Antony Pettinger
November	20-21	Mavora Lakes (Tramping and / or Mountain Biking)	Tony Malcolm and Antony Pettinger
November	21	Ben Rudd's / Flagstaff Area (Joint OTMC-MSD Promotion)	Alan Thomson
November	27	OTMC Annual Dinner	Robyn MacKay
December	4-5	Branches Area / Upper Shotover	John Sime
December	5	Gabriels Gully - Lawrence	Jeff Brown
December	5	SAREX (Search & Rescue Exercise)	Greg Panting
December	12	Cycle Day Trip	Tony Malcolm
December	19	Somewhere In The Silver Peaks	Jonette Service

## OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (FEBRUARY TO MAY)

# OTMC Bulletin

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)

The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

## President's Prattle

Welcome to the 76<sup>th</sup> year of the OTMC!

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year break and maybe got to do some tramping or climbing or kayaking that we can look forward to reading about in the Bulletin.

The first month has seen a number of happenings in the area of maintenance. Early in the month one of our life members was doing some home maintenance and managed to fall off a ladder and pestered Dunedin Public Hospital with one of the worst broken ankles they have ever seen! We hope to see you in the hills sometime later this year, Trevor Pollard.

In the middle of the month a team of four went into the Jubilee Hut to carry out some maintenance. Three of us drove into Silver Peak Station with a load consisting of six mattresses (thanks to Doug Forrester), a 10 litre pail of paint, a sheet of aluminium, some timber and nails, etc. Thanks to the help of the very obliging owner of Silver Peak, Mike Cowie, who

*(Continued on page 2)*

Committee Members 1998-99		
President/Property & Maint	Alan Thomson	403 7678
Vice President	Stuart Matheson	477 5821
Secretary	Olivia Matheson	664 0060
Treasurer/Income Tax Pres.	Robyn Bridges	472 7333
Club Guide	Greg Perling	488 2283
Membership Secretary	Ian Sims	473 6385
Club News	Greg Perling	488 2283
Social Convener/Editor	Tanya Marshall	488 2648
Committee Member/SAB	Tanya Marshall	477 4067
Committee Member	Peter Baker	479 2043

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<http://www.otmc.org.nz/~Napeth/index.html>

# OTMC Bulletin

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)

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## Editor's Blurb

Welcome to the March edition, with some varied content! There are no trip reports this time - there have been few trips recently due to flu/bronchitis and so many other happenings in Dunedin at this time of the year. But there are several exciting tramps coming up, including the Rockburn/Burnburn and Five Fingers trips, so the next Bulletin should be brimming full with trip reports and recent happenings.

And there are plans for a "Midwinter" hareskior in May featuring our own OTMC husband and wife - a great social event for all the family. The new trip list will be out soon, ranging from serious trips for the fit, experienced trapper to easier day-trips for new members or people who have less time but still want to get out into the hills.

Anthony frequently updates the club website - check it out, it's looking really good. Well done, Anthony! And my apologies to Rob Forrester and David Barnes for not acknowledging their articles in the last issue, being Wai Creek and SAR trip reports, respectively.

And a big THANKYOU to the Wilderness Shop for their recent evening 20% sale exclusive to OTMC members. Much appreciated, guys!

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## President's Prattle

It's hard to believe that it's April already and that Easter's been and gone. March saw the completion of another successful Bushcraft course thanks to Peter O'Driscoll and his team. The Club also had a float in the Dunedin festival parade, thanks to Brian Beaton for the use of his truck, Peter Mason for helping with the walking tent figure. Stuart Matheson for the sign-writing and Vincent, Richard, Ian, Chris, Jenny, and Wolfgang for taking part - it was a lot of fun.

There are lots of good trips on the trip card due out in April as well as some fun social activities planned. One of these is the Barndance scheduled for the 22nd of May with a square dance caller, a live OTMC bush band, and maybe even a talent quest! I look forward to seeing you there.

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# OTMC Bulletin

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The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

## Editor's Blurb

This month's newsletter is full of goings-on, both within the club and with associated bodies. The editor's letterbox was overflowing (keep them coming, guys!); there's a tribute to a past member, Bill Robertson; lots of notices of tramping excursions, the FMC AGM, and Snowcraft; day and weekend trips and the social programme; and some exciting reading in the trip reports.

What a happening place! So don't let the cold winter weather (we're still waiting!) keep you on the couch - get out there and enjoy it all, starting with the Barndance this Saturday.

The festivities start with decorating the hall - the more hands the better, and it's always great fun - move on to breakfast the next morning for those who stay overnight, and finish with a "Caffeine and Recovery" daywalk on Sunday. In between we have our own OTMC Band, called Graham Johnson, and lots of fun for all the family.

See you there!

Robyn.

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## OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (JUNE TO SEPTEMBER)

**OTMC Bulletin**  
Bulletin Number 587, June 1999

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)

The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

**The (Temporary) Editor Speaks**

Hi, it's me, back again while Robyn is enjoying herself overseas.

I have not heard too much from the Committee about what has been happening in the club, but I have heard that the barn-dance at Bishop's Point was a great and well attended night (and morning!) May I put on the club's appreciation to everyone who made this night possible.

Something I can tell you about is the trip information archive, which has been a long time coming. Some time ago, we decided to make this information on areas we have been tramping in recently available to members. Whilst only in the formative stages, these are available for perusal now, and become available for addition to these files. They are located at the rear of the clubhouse on the back of the projector stand. In time, these files will also be available in electronic format. Information of a more general nature may also be added to our website as well. (I receive heaps of emails from people requesting basic tramping information in NZ).

Finally, thanks to the contributors to this month's Bulletin. I hope everyone enjoys reading this edition.

Till the next time, Antony Pettigrew.

**Committee Members 1998-99**

President/Property & Maintenance	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Vice President	Shane Matheson	477 1821
Secretary	Oliver Nathan	464 0090
Treasurer/Financial Aid Pres.	Robyn Bridges	472 7330
Chief Guide/Gear Hire	Greg Penning	488 2383
Membership Secretary	Jan Sims	453 6182
Social Committee/Editor	Robyn Bell	476 7411
Search And Rescue	Tanya Whitcombe	477 4967
Daytrip Committee (Temp)	Flora Baker	479 2432

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**OTMC Bulletin**  
Bulletin Number 588, July 1999

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)

The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

**Editor's Blurbs**

Welcome to the July edition, and thanks to Antony for editing last month's one while I was away. (And yes, I have booked myself into the social programme - that's the downside of also being Social Convenor!)

We've got "The Great OTMC-OUTC Debate" coming up soon, and the lines have been drawn and names are assembling! So if you're a keen debater, let it be known you'll be a starter for our teams and let's get some strategies brewed up!

And while enthusiasm is running high, we've got the AGM the following week, with an opportunity for you to join the committee and do your bit to help run our club. (A nomination form is enclosed for your friends to fill in.) It's fun and it's free! (Not much you can say that about these days!)

See you there, Robyn.

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**OTMC Bulletin**  
Bulletin Number 589, August 1999

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)

The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

**A VERY IMPORTANT CLUB EVENT**

Otago Tramping Club  
Annual General Meeting

26/8/99  
Starting at 8 pm sharp

OTMC Clubrooms  
3 Young Street

A joint effort to keep our club running smoothly, and get us out tramping in those hills! (and other fun social events.)

**SEE YOU THERE!**

**Committee Members 1998-99**

President/Property & Maint.	Alan Thomson	455 7878
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Secretary	Oliver Nathan	464 0090
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**OTMC Bulletin**  
Bulletin Number 590, September 1999

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)

The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

Welcome to the September edition, with a wealth of articles and information - thanks to all those who contributed. After our recent AGM we have a new committee and have already had our first meeting, with lots of fresh ideas to keep our club humming along. If you have any contributions, questions or comments, talk to someone on the list below. (Note the changes to some positions!)

And from our "new" VP - Hi, my name is Bruce Thomson, I'm Vice President for the year and I have the honour to prove it! Robyn has asked me to write a piece for the Bulletin on "anything I like", so I hope you won't be bored by my musings. This is my tenth year in the club, having completed Bushcraft in 1989. So I thought I'd write about the highlights of my spell with OTMC.

Bushcraft: It was a great course, with about 40 people taking part. If memory serves me right, Antony Pettigrew ran the course and Mike Foster was the President. The weather was very hot for the Silver Peak weekend, but I didn't get to see much rain. By 2 pm on the Saturday afternoon our group of 3 was hopelessly (and almost seriously!) lost in dense bush below Powder Ridge on the wrong side of Silverstream. By struggling through swamps, bush lawns, several bluffs and numerous false trails we made it back to the Whare (I'm writing prior to the next day) it couldn't get any worse than this, I thought. So I decided to go on the optional Chas weekend.

It was a full on lead day, a hell of a Chas and a slippery night due to snow on the rocks and mud on the Chas road. It just got any worse than this, I thought. Our party consisted of 4 - Sharon St Clair-Newman, Darcy (the secret) Ding (Fremont) (Darcy), and me. Boy, did Ding put us through our paces! It was

*(Continued on page 4)*

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Vice President	Bruce Thomson	410 8833
Secretary	Oliver Nathan	464 0090
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2300
Financial Aid Pres.	Robyn Bridges	472 7330
Chief Guide	Robyn Bridges	472 7330
Membership Secretary	Jan Sims	453 6182
Gear Hire	Mike Foster	450 1215
Search And Rescue	Flora Baker	479 2432
Daytrip Committee	Greg Penning	488 2383
Search And Rescue	Paul van Kampen	476 7401
Committee	Robyn Bell	476 7411
	Andrew Mackay	476 5048

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## OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

**OTMC Bulletin**  
Bulletin Number 591, October 1999

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)

The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

### President's Prattle

The committee has met twice since the AGM, and I continue to be impressed and thankful that there is such a depth of talent and ability amongst committee members, along with the willingness to "make it happen". It makes my job so much easier! Thankyou to the volunteers who are mending the climbing ropes, and also thanks to all those who volunteer to lead trips.

Once again the trip card has some enticing trips on it, and there are also some other events to look forward to - the Decadent Dinner, and next year the barn dance as well as a photo competition around Mayhew.

Mountain Safety Council and OTMC are planning a combined promotion event to take place on Friday the 19th of November. MSC will be promoting "Safety in the Outdoors", while OTMC will take the opportunity to promote our Bushcraft course as well as club activities. We intend to use the Illusion Lecture Theatre from 1pm to 5pm on Friday evening, and invite people to visit Flagstaff Bush Fields on Sunday. Anyone who wishes to help on either of these two days, or wishes to have some input to the event are more than welcome to contact me.

See you in the hills, Alan Thomson.

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Immediate Past Pres.	Robyn Bridges	472 7330
Chief Guide	Anthony Pettegrew	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Ian Jones	453 6185
Gear Hire	Mike Brettell	455 1515
GAZ/Library	Greg Perring	488 2281
Daytrip Co-ordinator	Paul van Kampen	471 0033
Bulletin Ed./Sec. Com.	Robyn Bull	476 7411
Committee	Andrew MacKay	476 1648
Chocolate Biscuit Com.	Flora Baker	479 2433

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**OTMC Bulletin**  
Bulletin Number 592, November 1999

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)

The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.

### Treasurer's Tattle

Firstly I would like to thank Robyn Bridges for her dedication to the Treasurer position. Prior to my election, Robyn did a marvellous job setting the finances up on a computer, thus making an easy-to-follow programme for me.

My beginnings with the tramping club started when I participated in the 1998 Bushcraft weekend. Since then I have been hooked on tramping!

I was elected Treasurer in August, which I am enjoying immensely, and taking over from someone like Robyn has made the transition easy. It has been a few years since I have been involved in a club, but I have had previous experience as a Treasurer for other organisations in the past. I work at WestpacTrust, and find that my job is helpful to being Treasurer.

I can say that, as a club, we passed the last Audit with flying colours, and the challenge for me is to keep up the good standard previously set. I am enjoying all aspects of the club, so far, and look forward to the future.

Ann Burton

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**OTMC Bulletin**  
Bulletin Number 593, December 1999

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### MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW MILLENNIUM!

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