

OTMC TRIP REPORTS

2004

Sourced from the 2004 OTMC Bulletins



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Cover Photo: Trampers heading south along the Livingstone Mountains – the Greenstone Valley is on the left, with the West Branch of the Eglinton Valley and Lake Gunn on the right (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

COSY HUT ON MT. PEEL

November 8-9, 2003

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 637, February 2004

It is interesting the information one gets before going on a tramping trip. On checking the DoC website and the L & S map I noted that there was a Tristram Harper Memorial Hut on Little Mount Peel. I rang DoC Geraldine and requested information as to the status of the hut. I was told it was an enclosed shelter but was suitable for spending a night there and could accommodate "about ten people" (please note this number). So, with our group being only eight there would be no problem.

After taking the "soft" option of spending the Friday night in cabins in the Peel Forest camping ground, our intrepid group unwittingly took the hard option of using the upper Allan's Track to gain access to the Deer Spur Track to Little Mount Peel. Besides Allan's Track being very rugged, especially when carrying full packs, we also found that we lost about 100 metres of height gained before it joined Deer Spur. At the junction we parted company with two of our group, who returned to the camping ground as they were feeling the effects of the bad colds they had developed. (There would be heaps of room in the hut now!)



From here on the climb to Little Mount Peel and the Tristram Harper Memorial Hut just below its summit, was unrelenting. (Did the two with the colds know this previously?) However, our sweaty, grunting efforts were rewarded by ever increasing vistas across the Canterbury Plains to the east, Mounts Somers and Hutt to the north, and the Four Peaks Range to the south. All we could see to the west was scrub and tussock about 15cm from our faces at an angle of 75

degrees to the vertical! We now all have an intimate knowledge of the flora on the eastern slopes of Mount Peel. Where there was some respite and the terrain was more horizontal, we needed no prompting to stop, drop our packs and recuperate whilst admiring the views. The only trouble was that at these stops we could see how much further and higher we had to go to reach the hut.

When we did finally reach the hut, we were taken aback as to how small it was. There were two wide benches either side, just long enough for two smallish people to sleep on each. As the table could be folded up to the back wall, two people could sleep, top and tailing, on the floor. If we'd had eight, the floor would have been a very intimate place to sleep; and if we'd had ten, then at least two pairs of consenting adults would have been needed with one of the pair sleeping on top of the other! Is this what our DoC informant was thinking of?

After an extended lunch five of us decided to walk along the ridge towards Mid-Mount Peel, leaving Linda to guard the hut. Linda (Samuelson) is from Sweden and this decision of hers to stay at the hut gave her the unique opportunity to experience an example of Kiwi male culture firsthand - that of the Southern Man, South Canterbury version. Shortly after the others had left, two men arrived at the hut, luckily (for them) just on a day trip. Seeing all the sleeping bags, etc., the older of the two asked Linda if she was staying the night. Linda replied "Yes." "What!" replied the older man, "You mean that you won't be watching the All Blacks play the Springboks in the Rugby World Cup?" (Note: This was the night of the quarter-finals. Do you remember the Rugby World Cup?) "Is there a rugby match on?" asked the innocent Linda. To which the apoplectic older man reacted immediately by covering the younger man's ears. Linda quickly sensed that she had said the wrong thing and apologised by saying, "I'm from Sweden. We don't play rugby there, we play soccer." This again brought on a covering of the ears. Linda, realising she was getting herself deeper into the mire, tried to extricate herself by saying plaintively, "I support the Highlanders." A further covering of the ears, with the older man saying through gritted teeth, "This is Crusader country!" He then turned the younger man around, saying, "Come on boy, we'll eat back down the track. She'll be offering us a Speights next!"

Meanwhile, the rest of us climbed over the summit of Little Mount Peel to the ridge and at last got views westward to the main divide and could even see Aoraki/Mount Cook. We got tantalisingly close to Mid-Mount Peel, but the summit was shrouded in mist, so we decided to return to the hut. This turned out to be a wise decision, as by the time we had returned to Little Mount Peel the mist had closed in and the temperature had dropped, both with that rapidity that happens only in the mountains. We had been in the hut just a few minutes when it also began to rain.

However, as has been mentioned, the hut was small (very!) and cosy, so the six of us settled down to prepare and eat our respective evening meals and then play cards. Before finally settling down to sleep it was a case of "Go out now and relieve thyself, or forever hold thy bladder" as once Tony was settled on the floor, the door could not be opened. (And he slept like a log until 7am.)

Next morning, Tony, necessarily being the first to be able to open the hut door, was greeted by a beautiful view of the Canterbury Plains, bathed in shafts of morning sunlight. When he turned to look back into the hut, he was greeted by the equally beautiful view of five awakening female trampers! (He has photographic illustrations of both types of beauty.)

The trip down off Mount Peel was an example of when a steep descent is often harder than a steep ascent. Maggie gave us frequent demonstrations of the backside technique for rapid descent, and we all had sore quadriceps by the time we staggered into the Peel Forest campsite, where we were greeted by Roy and Meg from the comfort of their camp chairs. After looking at our sweaty bodies, they both agreed that their colds were now much improved!

Tony Timperley for Jill McAliece, Linda Samuelson, Kathryn Jeyes, Maggie Pasek, Meg Pollock, Deidre Pim, and Roy Ward.

SILVER PEAKS TRAMP & TRAIN TRIP

December 13-14, 2003

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 637, February 2004

The last weekend trip of 2003 was designed as a wind-down trip after a busy year. It succeeded and was very enjoyable. Most of us met at the railway station and headed up to the Bullring, while Allan and Dave decided to head in via Powder and Long Ridges. Ten of us (plus David Barnes, who was day-tripping, and the rest of the Pettinger family) headed up the tourist-like Pineapple Track to the Flagstaff summit for that fabulous view of the city. I felt that coming this way would give a real sense of leaving civilisation behind and heading into the hills - at least for the weekend. The weather was clear and sunny, quite warm but with a stiff breeze, which was actually quite refreshing.



**Descending Swampy Ridge, heading towards The Clump & the Silver Peaks, December 13, 2004
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

After a quick drink it was onto the next section, the climb up to Swampy Summit. Dropping out of the wind, we quickly encountered some very hot spots on the uphill section. Another break on Swampy to have a breather and enjoy the view, then we continued along the road, heading for the track to Sleepy Hollow. The track down Swampy Ridge is in good condition with little mud due to the current spell of dry weather.

Approaching the start of the Green Ridge Track, Greg sat down for lunch while the rest of us battled on to the Green Hut site to enjoy lunch in cool overcast conditions. David left us here, heading back to the Bullring and the rest of us (Greg had caught up by now) climbed up through mist and a strong breeze towards Pulpit Rock. By the time we were at Pulpit Rock we were back in glorious sunshine, but with the ever-present breeze to keep the heat down. Shortly afterwards Allan and Dave arrived, cursing the person-high bush on Powder Ridge. The walk along to the top of the Devils Staircase was marred by two groups of trail bikes. Once we started down the Devils Staircase the heat really came on, we just needed to look at Gary's legs to see how much! Cave Stream at the foot of the staircase was magic. We spent a pleasant night in the trees another 100m or so down Cave Stream, after having a few drinks. Greg reckons it rained, but it seems it only rained on him.



Looking up the ridge that leads from the Mt Allan forest to the top of the Silver Peaks (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The next morning great discussion took place about which route we should follow to Mt. Allan (the railway station). The original trip in 2000 went down to Christmas Creek, then up and over Mt. John. Some of us went over Mt. John last time and decided we wanted to do something different. We decided upon the hill opposite Jubilee Hut, so off we headed. Arriving at the hut we had a good look at the hill opposite and decided there should be a way around the bluffs. Just as we were about to leave, a fantastic thunderstorm arrived, with some quite torrential rain. OK, what now? No one fancied going off track through scrub and tussock in this storm. Six of the party decided to follow the original route via Mt. John, while the rest of us opted to climb the staircase and circle around the Painted Forest and out that way. Upon reaching the foot of

the staircase, the rain stopped, and the skies cleared. By the time we reached the top we were dry again.



Poplar Hut, Mt Allan Forest, December 14, 2004 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Now it was just a case of following the various roads around the Painted Forest and into the Wenita forest. I actually enjoyed this route as I hadn't seen Silverpeak and Pulpit Rock from this angle before. A leisurely lunch followed by a road plod saw us arriving at a stifling hot Poplar Hut to find the Mt. John party crashed around the hut. It proved too hot to spend much time at Poplar, so it was a direct climb behind the hut to regain the forestry road. We followed this out to Mt. Allan, where we had two and a half hours wait for the train, and after that it was late! Two trains travelling through beforehand had some people worried that we had missed the train, but sure enough, it turned up, and it stopped! A cruisey trip into town, a nice cool beer, and some great scenery completed this excellent trip.

Antony Pettinger for Greg Powell, Gary Dawe, Pete Stevenson, Allan Perry, Dave Chambers, Jill McAliece, Roy Ward, Deirdre Pim, Meg Pollock and Ken Marsden.

HAAST TO PARINGA CATTLE TRACK...BY BIKE!

Date not recorded

Author: Rob Porteous

Published in Bulletin 638, March 2004

Christmas is a traditional time to do a bit of exploring in the back country where a normal weekend might leave you short. With this in mind I figured it would be an ideal time to shoot away and try something I had read about in a couple of places but never actually seen for myself - the Haast-Paringa cattle track. The Kennett brother's guidebook described it as a bit of a mission. However, reports lately had suggested that DoC had been in there and cleared the track, thus giving someone dense enough to try a chance of actually riding. I dropped a note on the OTMC discussion list looking for more information. Paul van Kampen sent me a copy of an article written in 2000 by someone who described himself as a novice which said that 60% of the track was rideable.



Well that was all the encouragement I needed! I enrolled another couple of intrepid explorers (sic suckers) and we set off soon after Boxing Day with light packs and shiny mountain bikes to do battle with the West Coast sandflies.

It wasn't the greatest of starts when the rain began as we unloaded the car, but undeterred we set off into the bush. The walker we met coming out into the car park looked a bit dubious about our intentions but wished us luck anyhow. In hindsight he may have been right.

The "easy" part of the ride into Blowfly Hut was about 50% rideable (maybe), but fun for all that. After that it was a steady but gradual climb to Māori Saddle Hut.

This consisted largely of a track similar to Government Track but covered in various sized rocks. I enjoyed the technical challenge of riding the bike but most, I think, would feel that this was a long way to push or carry a bike.

Māori Saddle Hut, like all the huts on this track, was of an exceptional standard and would make a lovely place to stay the night after 6 or so hours walking. We had lunch here and then continued on our way to Coppermine hut.

This section of the track was the least looked after and had several large washouts. These would have been a nuisance on foot but when laden with bikes they were downright unpleasant! Likewise, the deadfalls were very difficult to thread bikes through, especially when wearing hard plastic-soled shoes custom made for bike riding. They don't give you much purchase on rain slick wood!

After about five hours on this section of the track we reached a point where the track improved somewhat, and someone had even managed to bring a four-wheeled motorbike up to this point. WELL! If he can ride so can I! I had a great ride the rest of the way (another 45 minutes or so) to Coppermine Hut. This is set on the river flats about 40 minutes from the road end. The hunters who were already in residence had the hut all nice and toasty, which was welcome after a day of alternating sun and thunderstorms. Not to mention 12 hours of bike pushing. Shelley was more than happy to stop since her teeth were aching badly. She had slipped earlier in the day, the contact with the top tube of her bike gashing her chin and bashing her front teeth.

Bruce sorted through our various first aid supplies before eventually taping up the cut in Shelley's chin. Soft food was the go for the next couple of days, methinks.

The last day out was a pleasant jaunt out on the river flats to the main road, followed by about 30 km of tarseal back to the car.

Overall I wouldn't hesitate to recommend this as a weekend or three day walk, even for fairly inexperienced trampers, but think it's best to leave the bikes at home (or perhaps in the bush at the track end to ride back to the car). The Moir's walking times are about the same as the track markers put in by DoC and, if our progress was anything to go by, they are pretty much bang on.

Thanks to Bruce, Robb and Michelle (Shelley) Coleman for saying "yes" to yet another of Rob's Tiki tours.

LIVINGSTONE MOUNTAINS

January 24-25, 2004

Author: Luke (surname not recorded)

Published in Bulletin 638, March 2004

A lot was hinging on this trip – I’m a newcomer to the club, you see. The Thursday meeting prior was short n’ sweet. Gary, the leader safely assured me, “you’ll be right mate”, so I paid up and told him I’d see him the following day.

Not only am I a newcomer to OTMC, but also to the South Island, so I hadn’t interpreted a “bit of a drive toward Te Anau” as meaning an arrival time post-midnight!

The shelter at The Divide (beginning of the Routeburn) was soon quickly scattered with bodies. David set the tone for the weekend (literally that is - b flat), breaking into snore before I was even in my sleeping bag - still not sure how he did that! Poor Gaz had to drop off the five other troopers tackling Giffords Crack and so didn’t crawl into his sack until after 1am.



Lake McKellar and McKellar Saddle from the Livingstone Mountains (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

I’d just nodded off, when there was a squeal. I open my eyes - a fat possum lands on me full weight and Roy is ‘giving it some’ across the shelter, intent on who knows what once he got his hands on that piece of fur. A few sandflies joined us for an early breakky, then we were off, first stop being Key Summit. From here the views were incredible, particularly Mt Christina

poking through the clearing cloud. We then basically trotted along the range, soaking up the scene from every angle. Lake Gunn on our right, and Greenstone Valley on our left didn't leave our sight for most of the day.

The scurry up and down a reasonable slope, late in the day, increased the appreciation for both our camp site and dinner. We had a fantastic spot, perched on a saddle high above the Greenstone Valley. Roy nibbled on his rice crackers, while most boiled their billies. Gary and Heather demonstrated their extensive outdoor experience - cooling a couple of tinnies (each!) in the tarn before gulping them down with cheeky 'you can't have any' grins.

Morning was a tad drizzly and a lot cooler than the previous day, so not too much time was wasted packing up. We were soon into the stream. Bill and the boys up front went looking for an easier route, while the rest of us plodded on. Eventually catching up, Moir's trusty guidebook had surfaced, and the search was on for a supposedly marked trail. Not having much luck, we then decided to stop for lunch, after which, while relishing in a moment of well-needed solitude, if you get my drift, my gaze was drawn to a marker! We were away - a well blazed trail dropped steeply through the bush and into the Cascade Creek. There was talk of 'what ifs' among the group, as the grounded helicopter was still missing - for better or worse, we didn't have to worry about that one.

For me, leaving the bush always seems to happen so quickly. Within 20 seconds of reaching the main road and crossing it, three tour busses had roared passed - no mistaking Milford Sound was within a stone's throw. The Gifford's party soon rejoined ours and we were on our way. Ralph shared a similar sentiment as we drove off - "it's amazing how you can be hanging on for your life and within 30 minutes you're in the car and on your way home". What did he mean exactly? When asked how their few days fared, the party of five who headed up to Giffords Crack responded only with nervous giggles and the repeated word "interesting". Ralph was obviously being quite candid.

So that was it, a successful first tramp and enough to draw me back again. Eves-dropping in on a conversation nearing Dunedin, I overheard the question, "So, if someone asks - what exactly have I been doing this weekend?" - maybe they better sign up for another trip, or at least read the back of the trailer a couple of times.

Luke

AHURIRI CROSSOVER

February 21-22, 2004

Author: Allan Perry

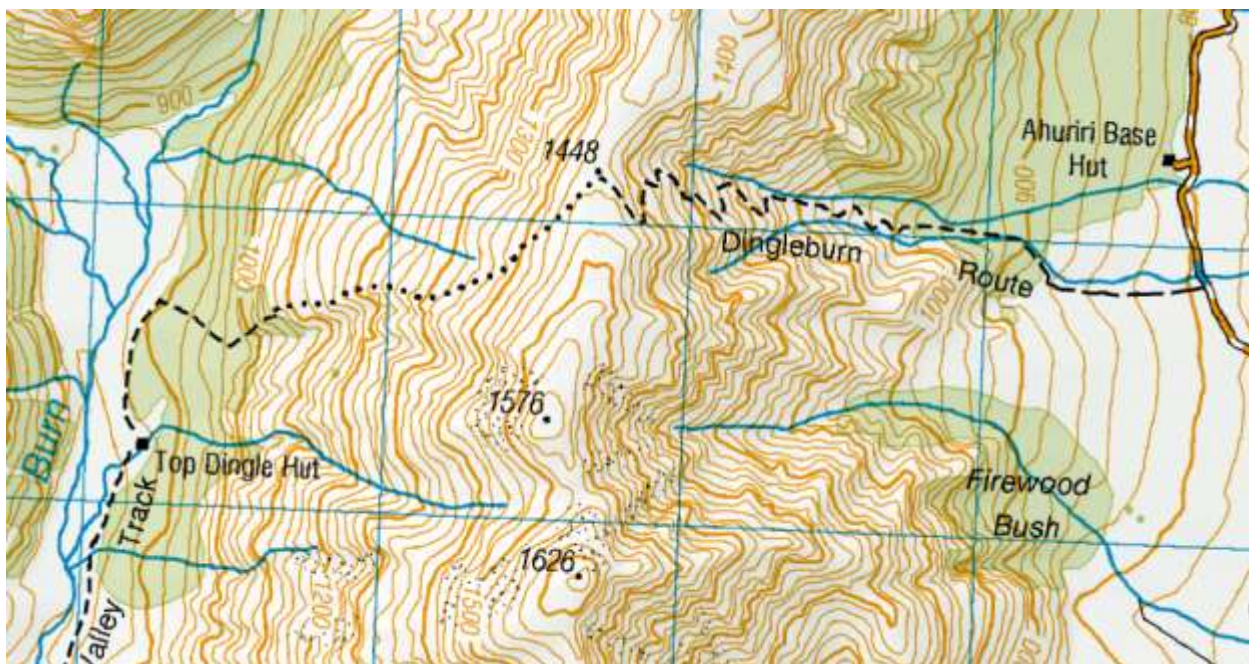
Published in Bulletin 639, April 2004

Plans can change.

Plan 1. Cross from the Ahuriri Valley to the Dingleburn and follow the valley to Lake Hawea. Good plan but on ringing Dingleburn Station I was informed the road from Timaru River was only passable to proper 4-wheel drives, and for some reason this doesn't include HiAce vans.

So come up with Plan 2. Again, cross over to the Dingle but this time tramp up the south arm to the pass and look down into the Hunter. But while trying to sleep on Friday night the weather put these plans on hold for another trip.

So, Saturday morning arrives and it's time to come up with Plan 3. After a group discussion it was decided Grant and his group would stay in the valley and head for the top hut. Dave and I had some unfinished business from a previous trip in Canyon Creek so our group of 5 headed for the hanging valley at the head of the Creek.



Both parties met again mid-afternoon where we had left the van at the entrance to Canyon Creek and headed back to Base Hut where we had set up a base camp. (Who said Hi-ace vans won't go where 4-wheel drives go???)

Sunday morning and yet another plan – let's cross over to the top Dingle Hut and then return. So, with day packs and warm gear, we headed off up the old vehicle track that leads to the low pass between us and the Dingle. On reaching the top the weather changed and the wind coming out of the Dingle was so cold we decided to change plans once again. We split into

different groups and headed off across the top to take in the fantastic views both down the Dingle and Ahuriri.

Everybody was back at Base Hut around 1.30 pm, so all that was left to do was look across at all the side valleys that lead into the Ahuriri and wonder what's in them, and perhaps plan a trip to them. We loaded the van and headed home for an early night.

Allan Perry

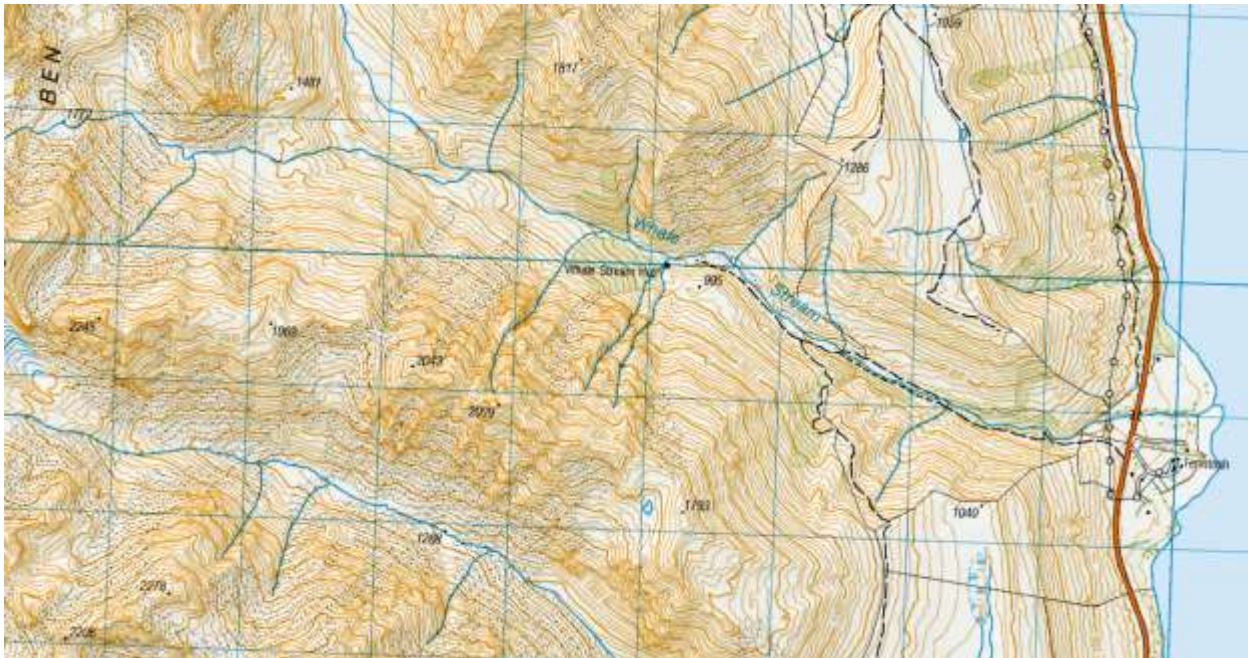
BEN OHAU RANGE (WHALE STREAM)

March 6-7, 2004

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 640, May 2004

"Private Property! No Access! No Queen's Chain! Trespassing! Breaking OSH Regulations! You can imagine how the three of us felt (large party this!) when at 11pm on the Friday night these words jumped out at us as we peered at a notice on the fence opposite Ferintosh Station on the Mount Cook Road. It looked as though our planned trip up Whale Stream and ultimately the 2499m (2500 with a jump) peak of Dun Fiunary was stymied before we started. Nevertheless, we found a good camp for the night at the mouth of Boundary Stream and resolved to see the station owner the next morning.



With our negotiation skills primed, and our fast twitch muscles twitching in case we were confronted by a double-barrelled shotgun, we tentatively approached the house. The door opened and we were met by the kindest looking old lady one could hope to meet! "Yes of course you can go up Whale Stream," she said. "Just watch out for the hunters, but they are due out today so they should be no problem." "What about the 'Private Property' notice?" we asked. "It's just to make sure we know who's up there," she replied. "No problem if you ask permission." (Therein lies the moral of the story!) And not only did she give us permission but let us leave Grant's car in the homestead grounds. As we trudged up the Whale Stream track, we met the hunters coming out. They appeared to have been successful, bagging several chamois and/or tar. One poor guy, however, had had his tent blown away and lost his wallet with it. Unfortunately, we never found the wallet.

After a couple of hours and a long lunch, we found an ideal small terrace above the stream where we could pitch the tents. This done, and before we fell asleep in the warm, late afternoon sun, we decided to go up to the stream fork and follow the north branch by tracking a long ridge terrace, helpfully mentioned by the hunters, which hugged the valley side some fifty metres above the stream. This made for ideal walking and, interrupted only by watching a chamois climb above us, we soon came in sight of the Whale Stream headwaters below the spectacularly craggy peaks of Ferintosh and Glentanner. We returned to camp with the evening sun on our backs, and after our evening meal settled down to the sound and smell of consumed dried onions.

Cruel Grant woke us at 6.30am the next morning to a low mist and the distant call of the kea. As the mist looked as though it would burn off, after breakfast we decided to head up towards Dun Fiunary in the hope that we could "knock the bugger off". To get a quick start we left our tents up and hoped that the kea's calls would remain distant.

As we climbed up from our campsite the mist cleared from the ridge terrace but remained in the valleys. Before we ascended into the Talus Basin below Dun Fiunary we had to drop to a small stream, which was still covered in mist. It was here that we experienced a strange phenomenon. We were above the mist with the sun above and behind us. This caused our shadows to be cast upon the mist below and be completely surrounded by a perfectly circular, beautiful rainbow aura. Tony took this apparition as a divine signal from heaven and, after first blessing his fellow disciples, launched himself across the gap in an attempt to levitate himself into the Talus Basin. Needless to say, God was not on his side and, after ignominiously picking himself up, he had to struggle up the steep tussocky incline like other mortals.

Once in the Talus Basin, we bore left (as recommended by an OTMC member) and took a steep but easily climbable tussock ridge that brought us to the left of the peak of Dun Fiunary. However, before we could gain the final rock ridge, we had to struggle up some hundred metres of scree of the "two steps up, one down" type. We had some relief courtesy of several tar who gave a demonstration of their remarkable ability to run across sheer rock faces. Finally, we gained the ridge, only to find that it was about one metre wide and consisted mainly of loose rock! After a couple of scary attempts to climb along this ridge, we settled on a secure spot ("spot" being the operative word!) and had a late lunch whilst taking in the expansive views that stretched across Lakes Pukaki and Tekapo to the Two Thumb Range, and over the clouds which covered the country towards Timaru.

As it was by now midafternoon, we decided not to seek an alternative route to the summit and so headed back down. The tiring descent was alleviated by two discoveries: the first an exquisite miniature rock and bright green moss garden, complete with bonsai-like trees (but no Hobbits), formed where a spring emerged from surrounding barren rock; and the second a perfectly preserved tar/chamois horn found by James. We arrived back at our tents, relieved to find that the keas had remained distant, and, after cleaning up all our gear, struggled off with full packs back down the valley.

Thirteen hours after being awoken by Grant, three very tired trampers (am I just speaking for myself here? – Tony) arrived back at Ferintosh Station. Just as we were driving out of the gate, we were met by the very kind old lady and her husband. We told them of our adventures and not being able to get to the peak. The old man replied with typical sheep farmer taciturnity, "You went the wrong way. You should have gone further up the basin." Now who was the &#?!?# at the club who told us to "bear left" once we were in the Talus Basin?

Never mind, we had a good hard tramp (11 hours), climbed to over 2000metres, had great weather, great views and what is better than being in amongst the mountains? (Fish and chips afterwards at the Omarama pub?)

Tony Timperley, for Grant Burnard and James Macdonald.

A SOUTHERN MAN GOES VOLCANIC

Date not recorded

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 640, May 2004

If there's a perk in being on the FMC Executive, it's that twice a year, after an all-day meeting, we get to for a wander in a part of the country we may not otherwise get to. Usually these trips are necessarily short, as people have to travel home. But when I found we were meeting in Taranaki, I suggested that there was really only one daytrip there I was interested in. Probably with that in mind, the meeting venue was the historic Camphouse at North Egmont, and I made sure that I had a Monday flight booked.



Despite earlier threats, Sunday dawned clear and still. The summit was there for all to see, so seven of us hit the road – literally. Unfortunately, the commonest route to the summit starts on a 4x4 track, known locally as The Puffer, and it was this that occupied our first hour and 500 vertical metres. We were down to 6 of us after Tahurangi Lodge, a large locked hut (with a small emergency shelter) belonging to Taranaki Alpine Club. The route from here goes up a large gully, and it's steps all the way – initially wooden-framed stone ones, then a wooden

"stairway to heaven". Next it was scree – the usual two up, one back routine. Often there was an underlying hard layer, making traction a bit tricky. Eventually we reached the bottom of The Lizard, a rock ridge that clearly showed its volcanic origins. Once atop The Lizard, a bit of a scramble around the side of one of the low peaks was needed to avoid a snow slope, and then we were in the crater. As four of the group had gone ahead and were nowhere to be seen, I was glad to have had a quick look at a map the night before, and so knew that the knob on our right was slightly higher than the trickier looking one to the left. A last five minutes of scree saw us on top.

For the latter part of the climb, there had been quite a cool breeze, which had initially been refreshing but was now less welcome. The cloud had come in below us as we climbed The Lizard, so unfortunately the view was largely that of the top of a cloud, the only exception being Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe some 120km distant. Lunch & photos were dealt to beside a plaque commemorating Dieffenbach's ascent.

The descent was unremarkable, although took not much less time than the ascent. By the time we reached the scree, it was warm enough to lose a layer. Once below the cloud layer, we were better able to appreciate provincial Taranaki than in the morning, when we had had eyes only for the top.

David Barnes for Lex Smith, John Wilson, Jean Wilson, John Rhodes & Robin McNeill.

TEN TRAMPERS IN A TYPHOON (MT CHARLES)

March 28, 2004

Author: Tracy Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 640, May 2004

Because of the forecast, I was only half expecting anybody to turn up at the clubrooms on Sunday morning (28th March) for Bruce's, nope, Robyn's, nope, my trip to Poatiri/Mt Charles. So, I had a back-up plan of going to the Craft Show and/or the Museum. Then, Alison Johnston rang us at 8am to say their whole family would be there. Then we had to seriously get moving, as it was all on. Organising yourself to go on a day walk is really easy. Organising a family, two of whom said that they would rather stay at home and play on the computer all day and didn't really want to go, is another thing.

We got to the clubrooms at 9am exactly. Phew! Richard ate his muesli in the car on the way down. A cheery few 6 people were there to greet us and away we drove along the Peninsula, in the very windy wind and ominous looking sky.



Papanui Cone and Mount Charles / Poatiri from Victory Beach (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

There was a bit of confusion at the start of the track, as we missed the signpost. How can 10 people miss the big wooden signpost? I don't know. We drove to the end of the Allans Beach Road. I went to see the people of the house there, to make sure we had the right spot. But alas, there was nobody home, just a whole lot of chickens. Richard and I were on a trip up Mount Charles with the club 14 years ago, where we started from this house. I remember it well, as I was quite pregnant and there was no way that I could make it to the top that time.

With nobody around to ask, we hustled up the track as fast as possible, sussed out that there were only big sheep in the paddocks anyway and continued. It was really, really windy at the

bottom of the track, but as we got further up the mountain the wind was, well, more windy. Extremely windy! Richard said we must be in the jetstream by now, but it's just that this is the bit of Otago that sticks out most into the ocean storms.

We hid behind the first bunch of rocks we came to. It was about morning teatime, so Graham produced lots of chocolate for everyone. A storm came through as we finished the chocolate and we had to wait for a lull before dashing out from our rocks to follow the path up the less windy side of the mountain. This was nice. The wind pushed us upwards and not sideways for a while. We admired the pepper trees. Then we were there on the top. Some of us crawled the last few metres because we couldn't stand up straight. All that gin and tonic the night before? No, it was the windy wind. Bloody hell was it strong! After shouting "yippee" "We made it" and all that, we staggered down to the less windy side of the rocks. We admired the views, the insect life (why would an insect choose to live on the top of such a windswept hill?) and did the obligatory summit photo. The kids had a spitting contest, with Vincent winning by sending his spit into the sea past Taiaroa Head.

The next storm was fast approaching. Time to run! Most of us had a great run into the wind on the way down with lots of shouting and leaping in the air to see how far the wind could carry you before you came back down to earth. The smaller people with shorter legs conceded to a nervous tiptoe around the lovely crop of thistles about half way down. But then we were away again yeehaaing into the wind; Alison and Graham sedately walking down hand-in-hand at the back. Very romantic. I think they had a quick snog when no-one was looking, but they're allowed to. They've been married at least 13 years or so.

We had lunch back at the cars and decided not to visit Allans Beach on account of not wanting our faces and legs sand-blasted. We saw the BIG wooden walkway sign as we drove away. Oops! Maybe they should paint it bright orange or something. The trip ended with a visit to Macandrew Bay School Fair. Graham picked up a bag of books. Our family (the children anyway, who do mad things like eating ice cream on cold days) had an ice cream to eat in the car on the way home. And nobody was car sick, thank goodness.

Tracy Pettinger (leader) for Richard, Vincent and Rosa Pettinger, Janet Barclay, James Marshall and Graham, Alison, Christina and Jasmin Johnston.

RIGHT AROUND MT SOMERS

Date not recorded

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 640, May 2004

The addition of the new South Face route on Mt Somers has enhanced the opportunities for weekend trips in the area.

Our group – all with early 80s OTMC associations - hit the track at 11am, heading for Pinnacles Hut and beyond. The initial slog uphill was a bit of a shock for the bodies, with the sweat fair pouring off within minutes. The lookout rock, with its expansive views of the bush-clad gorges, was a welcome excuse for a break. From there, the descent to the stream was a little gentler than I expected. When we got to the main stream crossing, lunch seemed like a good idea. Carrying on, it was onwards and upwards, with a spot where the track passes behind a waterfall a bit of a novelty. One last grunt brought us to the knob at the edge of the Pinnacles basin, where Paul regaled us with cautionary tales about rockclimbing on the nearby crags with someone who's happy a grade or three higher than he is. Carrying on past the hut, we climbed up to the interestingly- named Maiden's Relief, where Paul managed to pollute the best drinking water since lunch by immersing himself in a rock-lined plunge pool just above the track. Then it was just a short sidle to the saddle.



At the saddle between Pinnacles Hut and Woolshed Creek Hut, Mt Somers, (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Classical nor 'wester signs made us feel that our decision not to spend the weekend at Mueller Hut was vindicated, while the strength of the wind put paid to an earlier suggestion of a Guinness at the saddle. As we approached Morgan Stream, the sight of half a dozen trampers emerging from the Hydroslide Stream track and heading over the last ridge to Mt Somers Hut confirmed an earlier plan to avoid the hut and stay in the Water Caves rock biv. It wasn't really

sauna weather, anyway. The Guinness was dealt to, and then the fire – inevitable with Barry in the group – was lit and the serious business of consuming as much as possible of the contents of our packs commenced. Some visitors from the hut informed us that there was no firewood there, so carrying on for a sauna would have been fruitless anyway.



The 'sauna', upriver from Woolshed Creek Hut (now removed / burnt down) (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Sunday dawned quite murky, so there was a brief discussion on options before we decided on sticking with the circumnavigation. The morning's route took us past Hydroslide Stream and the Infamous Fencers' Campsite (does anyone know the origin of this name?), then over a ridge and down to the crossing of Tri Falls Stream. We'd come up a swollen Tri Falls Stream a year previously, but almost didn't recognise it running at a much more manageable level. From there we commenced the slog up to the Bus Stop, still travelling in murk. A short descent brought us to the plateau leading to the Woolshed Creek carpark, and soon we found ourselves at the top of the gully leading down there, two hours from the biv.

This point marks the start of the new route. The initial couple of hours is well marked but not developed much. It appears the track development philosophy (a sensible one, in my view) is that if there's enough markers, a pretty clear track will develop itself with a bit of use. The route is largely in tussock and scrub, with the occasional patch of black beech in the gullies. The line, which tends downwards, is lower on the hillside than we had envisaged, but on looking at the steep gullies above us, we could understand the logic. The murky conditions meant the view across the Canterbury Plains wasn't there, but this did contribute to a sense of

being in a wild and remote landscape. The mist-shrouded volcanic outcrops above us added to that feeling.

After an hour and a half, we reached a larger area of beech. The track here gave the appearance of having been established and used for quite some time. After crossing a couple of dry creeks, Caves Steam seemed like a good spot for lunch. From there, the track climbed steadily for nearly half an hour – a good way to warm up after cooling off at lunchtime – and reached a small saddle, then started to sidle, crossing a couple of gullies. These were marked with signs saying “Avalanche Zone”, which seemed a bit incongruous so far below bushline on a smallish hill. However, Barry, as a trained avalanche tech, said he could see evidence of some activity, and a later view of the whole hillside made it a lot more obvious. Soon we picked up the main track leading to the summit of Mt Somers. A suggestion that the subalpine vegetation in the mist was reminiscent enough of Scotland to suggest a dram was happily able to be acted upon. Then it was onwards and downwards, and an hour and a half saw us back at the carpark, at the conclusion of a really enjoyable trip.



View from the Bus Stop, looking north-west, Mt Somers (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We couldn't see why the DoC pamphlet suggested doing the South Face route in the opposite direction. However, on a club trip where you've got all day on Saturday but don't want to finish too late on Sunday, the circuit would probably be better done clockwise, or else started from Woolshed Creek with a night at Pinnacles.

David Barnes for Paul Olsen, Barry Flamank & Lawrence McKay

LAKE MANAPOURI KAYAKING

November 22-23, 2003

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 641, June 2004

A threatening murk descended into full-on torrential rain as 15 hardy kayakers headed to Te Anau for two days paddling on Lake Manapouri in late November 2003. Trip Leader Mike Brettell tried to look on the bright side as the van's windscreen wipers struggled to keep up with the deluge, but the prospect of two days of heavy precipitation didn't fill anyone with great joy. But.... as so often happens with the unpredictable weather of Fiordland, the next morning dawned sunny and still and the thought of two days on the water was a much more enticing prospect.



Shallow Bay, Lake Manapouri (PHOTO Jade Pettinger)

We met on the shores of Lake Manapouri with Daphne Taylor, one of the co-owners of Fiordland Wilderness Experiences from whom we had hired most of the kayaks. As only a few people were experienced kayakers, we got the full briefing – including Daphne giving a very thorough explanation (and demonstration... on dry land, mind you) of the procedure to follow when one capsizes. This seemed completely superfluous, as we observed the perfect millpond of Lake Manapouri. But what did I say about the unpredictable weather of Fiordland....???

The group eventually departed at about 10.30 am in seven single kayaks and four double kayaks. Despite the fact that I had only been kayaking on one previous occasion, I soon got

into the rhythm of paddling, and the great conditions made the whole experience very pleasurable. We lunched at a largely sandfly-free bay (called Stony Bay), at which time most of the party decided that their wetsuits were getting rather hot, and the cool waters of the lake looked quite inviting. However, I suspect by the reactions of the brave bathers, that the cool waters lived up to their reputation, and (interestingly enough) nobody had a particularly lengthy swim!

Our destination for the day was Moturau Hut in Shallow Bay, and we intended to work our way there following a bit of an explore up the lake to Hope Arm before turning back to our camp site for the night. However, the weather decided that it had been benevolent for long enough, and we started to battle an increasingly strong sou-west wind. Now, having been kayaking only once previously, I had felt reasonably confident that the challenges I had faced in the sea at Stewart Island would surely be worse than anything that could happen on a mere lake. Wrong! The size of the waves and the force of the wind turned the mill-pond Lake Manapouri into a boiling cauldron, and we all had to work hard to paddle to Shallow Bay.

The plans for part of the group to continue paddling further around the bay so that they could camp there rather than stay in the DoC hut came unstuck because of the weather. This created something of a debate with the DoC hut warden, who, in line with DoC's policy, would not permit camping on the site. However, as Mike pointed out, the safety of the group would be compromised if they were forced out again onto the churning waves. Eventually, I think they agreed to disagree, and nothing was said when about six of the team dosed down on the beach.

The wind wasn't much better the next morning, and Mike didn't inspire great confidence within me when he suggested that if we needed to check out our capsizing technique, these were perfect conditions. The first challenge was getting off the beach, and I have to confess to some considerable nervousness at this point. However, all went well, and some determined paddling meant that everyone managed to launch off the beach... no mean feat considering the gale-force wind.

Although fine, the rest of the day was always made challenging by the strong wind. Ironically, the wind was almost non-existent where we stopped for lunch (Supply Bay), but apparently this was entirely due to its sheltered location. Back out into the lake, we spent the afternoon aiming for the shoreline at Manapouri township – a location, which whilst always visible, seemed to take forever to reach. Arrival time back at the shore was about 3.00 pm, and everyone had battled the waves without capsizing...a great achievement, considering! Here's hoping it's a technique that we never have to put into practice....

Thanks to Mike and the OTMC for a great experience.

Jane Robertson

ARTHUR'S PASS – EASTER 2004

April 9-12, 2004

Author: Philip Somerville

Published in Bulletin 641, June 2004

As we all know, the pleasures of tramping extend beyond the challenges, the adventures and the sheer enjoyment of nature's beauty to the intriguing mix of people and personalities, attitudes and ages. Our Arthurs Pass Easter group was unusual in that it included three teenagers, the oldest of whom, Andrew (18) emphatically stated: "If you've reached 30 you're definitely old."

What were Bruce and I, both the "wrong" side of 40 (Bruce not by much), to make of that? The tone was set for a break full of banter and friendly abuse. The lasting memories will not just be of stunning landscapes but also of Bruce's largely futile attempts to give as good as he got.



**View from the Avalanche Peak track, looking down the Bealey River towards the Waimakariri Valley
(PHOTO Antony Pettinger)**

The climb up the steep track behind Arthurs Pass township to the top of Avalanche Peak is highly recommended, although not on the first morning in deep fresh snow with 4-day packs including tents. Panoramic views continued all along the subsequent supposed "half -hour" ridge traverse, which turned into 1 1/2 hours of plugging and slogging. After slipping and stuttering down the long, steep and snow-covered scree slope short of the Crow face of Mt Rolleston, we made near-new and empty Crow Hut just before dark.

The next day, in deteriorating crud, we arrived by early afternoon at commodious Carrington Hut in the Waimakariri Valley and decided chilly weather was not for camping. Carrying day gear only allowed for a relatively quick trip, with plenty of boulder hopping, the next day to Barker Hut at the head of the White Valley and back in reasonable conditions. This 6-bunk shelter (owned by the Canterbury Mountaineering Club) sits atop a bluff in an amphitheatre of peaks, glaciers and snowfields. Little wonder it is up there among the most spectacular hut settings anywhere. A night with the wire guy ropes howling and the hut shuddering in high winds must be thrilling. The couple who stayed the previous night said they had seriously thought of belaying each other across the 15m from hut door to toilet. Our visit was much calmer, although breezy and cold.

The final four-hour walk out from Carrington was most pleasant, despite several chilly river crossings. Rugged Arthurs Pass National Park successfully worked its charms on all five of us - the young and the old. And despite what Andrew says, there's still hope for us more mature trampers.

When we finally made it to the top of Avalanche Peak, already there from one of the other groups was grey-bearded, 60-something Bill. He had obviously been waiting some time.

Philip Somerville for Joseph and Andrew Donnelly, Bruce Bernasconi and James Somerville.

REES VALLEY

April 24-25, 2004

Author: Liz Keast

Published in Bulletin 641, June 2004

Most had not set foot, boot, or seat in the Rees Valley; therefore it was with great enthusiasm we set forth in our two 12-seater rentals from our mildly frosty Friday night camp at Lake Sylvan. Under a cloudless blue sky we loaded ourselves camel style and darted up the Rees, enduring bemused stares from river grazing Hereford cattle. While some headed to seek 25 Mile Hut, others carried on to Kea Basin.



Rees Valley, looking towards Hunter Creek and the Forbes Mountains – April 24, 2004 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Spongy uneven underfoot terrain slowed things at times, with a number of “wet” watery crossings to negotiate, along with a couple of pulsing, wide-wired, electric fences to get through. Being a standard stayer myself and not always up with the thoroughbreds, I missed some of the excitement, but telltale signs were there to be read on our catch ups - that of wet “bottoms” and damp “tops”. We soon advised the removal of “warm” clothing to alleviate the tops, with light hearted bantering as to whom would lend a dry pair of shorts to the “bottom”. This also interested the pursuing sandflies.

Now heading through bush following a reasonable track, we climbed for around a couple of hours, passing some cozy rock bivvys, one of which was grass/tussock based, to reach Kea

Basin. With not a kea in sight we set up camp in the shadow of Mt Earnslaw, having heard three avalanches and seeing one on the way up. It was going to be a cold night.

Following an early tea most, along with their body-warming sustenance, gathered for a night of heady high spirits. We learnt that at age four, a male colleague used some pretty grownup terminology to refuse the ballet lessons on offer! Being so cold I had opted for the sleeping bag with my jaw clamped closed, not wishing to be accused of taking over the show by “chattering” all night.



Leaving Kea Basin, looking towards the Forbes Mountains, April 25, 2004 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Morning found us with frozen boots, and still in the shade of the mountain. Some were dunked in the creek to help thaw them. Leaving our camp intact we set out on the, in places steep and difficult, climb towards the snowline. With breathtaking views right down the river valley behind us, we tried our hands as film stars, posing as part of the landscape for the camera. Back at base, now basking in sun, we enjoyed a lunch and packed up, returning via a slightly different route alongside the river to meet up at the vans for the return home.

You will have noticed throughout this article a lack of name dropping. To fix that, 1 from 21, thanks heaps to Dave our leader, our drivers, and all who took part.

P.S. We came close to fame, until we turned right from the Cromwell bridge.....Shrek lives to the left.

Liz Keast

MOUNT HYDE VIA THE AQUADUCT

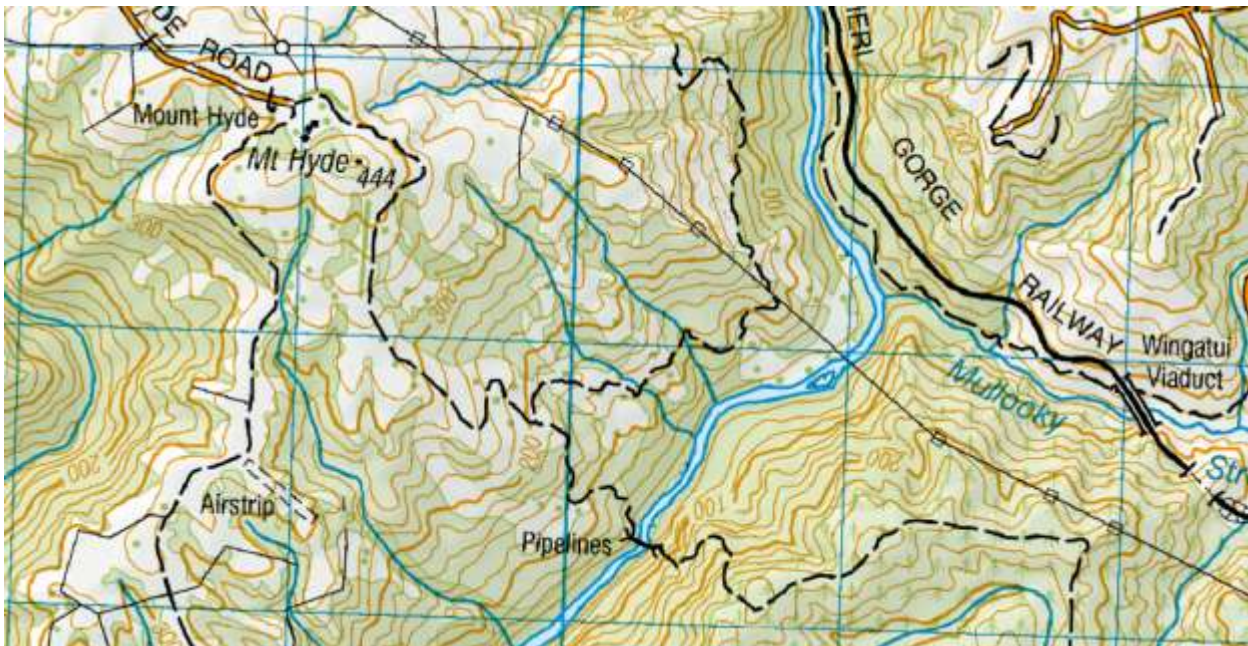
May 30, 2004

Author: Laurel Dunn

Published in Bulletin 642, July 2004

A group of 15 people turned up at the Clubrooms for a Sunday walk in overcast conditions. Whether it was Alan's popularity as a leader or that people were keen to get out walking, I'm not sure, but it was good to chat with most of them.

We parked the cars at the corner of Salisbury and Taioma Roads and headed off through the pine forest. Every track looked the same but after some up hills and down dales we finally came to the road that Alan was looking for. We arrived at a lookout and could see across to Mt Hyde and down to the Taieri River and the Aquaduct below. The road was very steep and petered out halfway down the hill, we then followed yellow markers down a very steep scrubby and rocky bank to the Aquaduct.



This is very high above the river but has a good safe bridge to walk over. We had lunch in the shelter from the breeze at the end of the Aquaduct. After lunch we climbed part way up Mt Hyde – deciding it would be too late to go to the top – then sidled around the hill before dropping back down to the river. Alan convinced us that this was the place to cross, although he did say it was higher than when he was there a few weeks back. He paddled across to the other side to give us an indication as to how wet we were going to get. We decided that we were not going back up that steep hill, so it was river crossing instead. We got into three groups of five and linked up to cross. It was probably about 30 metres wide, so we were well and truly soaked up to our hips (and for those shorter people, waists) by the time we got to the other side.

Somehow on the crossing Ken lost one of his poles so we spent some time waiting for him to find it. Eventually, getting cold, three stayed behind to help Ken while the rest of us left to head back up Mullocky Stream, onto Taioma Rd - passing under the high railway viaduct - and back to the cars. It had started to drizzle by now, so we were thankful to be heading home, wet as we were!

Thanks to Alan for another interesting trip.

Laurel Dunn

CATLINS WATERFALLS

June 27, 2004

Author: Ian Sime

Published in Bulletin 643, August 2004

Three carloads headed south in darkening weather and ran into rain south of Balclutha. Just out of Owaka, on the bush-surrounded road approaching Barrs Falls, we found the tree-trimming machine had been at work keeping the encroaching natives back, and this was also the case on later roads. The rain then stopped, and the weather progressively improved to give us a calm sunny day.



Tautuku Bay from Florence Hill Lookout (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

On the track into Purakaunui Falls, I was at the rear and stopped to talk with two women coming out. As they turned out to be ex-pupils, the talk went on a bit, long enough for a concerned Ray to come back to see if I was OK! We also met an Italian couple.

A narrow, winding old-style Catlins road took us out to Maclellan, then it was on past Papatowai village and up to the lookout on Florence Hill for the great panorama of Tautuku Bay, with the peninsula at the far end and the Youth Adventure Camp immediately below us.

Rewcastle Road into the Tautuku Valley was like a farm track, but the walkway into McLean Falls, built by Kings High boys and DoC, was a complete contrast to the previous gumboot-losing logging track used by fourth formers of an earlier generation. We shared these most spectacular falls, where the whole Tautuku River drops 20m, with a family from Colorado.



Matai Falls, The Catlins (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

On the way back we visited the Matai Falls and walked through NZ's southern-most rail tunnel before detouring to the coast at Kaka Point for an ice cream.

Ian Sime for Ray and Jill McAliece; David, Joseph and James McAuley; Janet Barclay, Lee Ann Kostelnik & Fran Murdoch.

5 SUMMITS IN 5 HOURS

July 25, 2004

Author: Antony Hamel

Published in Bulletin 644, September 2004

Behind Port Chalmers are five named summits that surround the Cedar Creek Reservoir. This trip was not really an "M" trip as there are no tracks up Mt Cutten or Mt Martin and the descent from Mihiwaka is rather horrid. This was not a round trip but rather we would be going up and back to a central base a number of times. Therefore, everybody did not have to go up every summit.

A party of 21 started and at least 15 reached the summit on all five tops. Mts Martin and Cutten are the most difficult to get to as the gorse in the pines planted on the north flank is rapidly becoming impassable. What amazed me was that 21 people followed me into a sea of gorse and afterwards said they loved the trip! It took me three days to extract the last splinter of gorse out of my hands. Some of the party were in running shoes and shorts. Ouch!!!

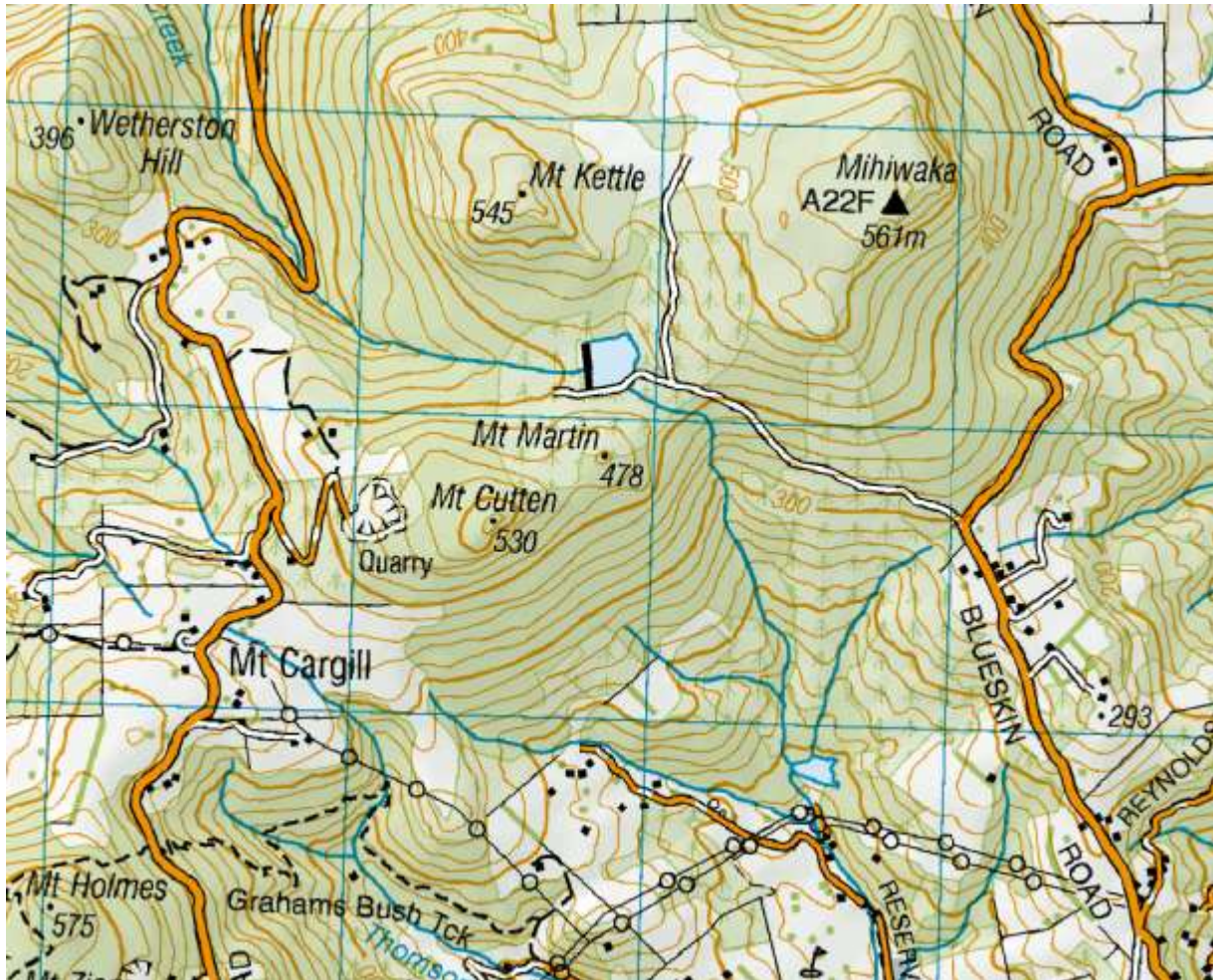
We climbed the summits in order of height.

1. Mt Martin (478m) is possibly named after the Martin brothers who were with Kettle's survey party and went to settle in the Toko area. We had to declare a particular rock the summit as it was very difficult to find a high point.
2. Mt Cutten (530 m) is named after William Cutten who helped launch the ODT and was the builder of Belmont, a fine house in Sunshine. The easiest way up Cutten is not to follow the Ridge between Martin and Cutten but climb through the older native bush on the north face. Vigorous artistic interpretations were made of the Len Lye sculpture on the southern peak. This may 2. symbolise old fashioned communication that continues through the path of life, creating reflections radiating out in all directions. Life is represented by the round shape of the womb and the angular arms of the adult. Death is represented by the slow decay of the wood while the stainless steel represents ongoing life. Clearly it is not an old telegraph pole with a piece of stainless steel wrapped around it! We had lunch on the clay bank of the Cedar Creek Reservoir and the kids (of all ages? Ed) had a great time playing with the ice that extended over part of the reservoir.
3. Mt Kettle (545 m) was the old name for Flagstaff. Kettle, who was Dunedin's first surveyor, has ended up with this much less visited summit. The best views are from the track which climbs the ridge on the Southeast side.
4. Mt Chalmers (550m) is the knob of rock just to the south of the Mihiwaka trig and is named on a 1922 Lands and Survey map but not on more recent ones. It is a short scramble up a rock face and has great all-round views.
5. Mihiwaka (561m) is a strongly traditional name and there is evidence it was the Māori name for Mt Cargill. It is the highest point but is also a bit of an anticlimax as it's the edge of a flat

plateau which obscures all views to the north. The scramble back down to the road below Mihiwaka was rather steep and slippery but everybody got down without incident.

A most enjoyable day, getting back by 3 pm in time for ice creams in Port Chalmers. Next time we should do them in alphabetical order. The area also has great potential for a decent set of tracks connecting up these summits and linking to the Skyline track.

Antony Hamel for Gavin McArthur; Janet Barclay; Laurel Dunn; Jonette Service; Jill McAliece; Garry Moss; Roy Ward; Ran Turner; Sally Gray; Pam Bardsley; Holly and Naomi Peacock; Tracy, Richard, Vincent and Rosa Pettinger; Andrea Schwander; Ross, Gaye and Laura Davies.



LEANING LODGE

June 19-20, 2004

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 645, October 2004

DoC's Visitor Facilities Review last spring suggested that the Rock & Pillar huts' days might be numbered. It had been many years since I'd last been there, so a promise was made to get back "this summer". A day before the winter solstice, we finally made it.

We chose the most direct route to Leaning Lodge. It's a four-wheel drive track that zigzags up from 500m. An hour and a half took us to the boundary of the DoC land, and another hour saw us in the snow and arriving at the hut.



Rock tor's on the Rock and Pillar Range (PHOTO David Barnes)

A slow-moving slip is the reason for DoC's concerns about the hut's future, although my impression was it hadn't moved noticeably in fifteen or so years.

With only an hour of daylight remaining, and a strong, bitterly cold wind blowing, we decided a visit to the top of the range wasn't really on, so settled in for the evening. The hut is well equipped with windows, so it was quite pleasant admiring the views from within shelter until darkness set in. A couple of drinks may have had something to do with us dozing off during the rugby.

The next morning presented us with a stunning red sky and relatively mild conditions. A ridge to the south-west of the hut provided good access to the tops, enabling us to avoid some treacherous-looking icy gullies. The summit plateau had a patchy covering of thin, frozen snow. It is dotted with schist tors that provide the range's name. The views, particularly

across the Maniototo Plain to the north, were impressive. We spent a pleasant hour meandering around the tops, and visiting the Summit Rock. It's at 1450m, and marks the north-western boundary of Dunedin City – thus allowing the city to claim to be the highest and largest city in New Zealand. Being there on such a great day has to be city living at its best!!

A short decent from the summit brought us to Big Hut. DoC's stated concern about this hut was asbestos used in the building's construction, but they must be impressed with the restoration work the Rock & Pillar Hut Trust has done to date (as we were), as they're now talking to them about a lease to secure its long-term future.

We lingered at the hut a bit long and came out to find that the weather had taken a turn for the worse. A biting, polar wind and driving snow meant that the return to Leaning Lodge to collect our gear was a lot quicker and more direct.

David Barnes for Barry Flamank

LAKE MACKENZIE WEEKEND

July 2-3, 2004

Author: Wolfgang Gerber

Published in Bulletin 645, October 2004

30 trampers, 3 vans, the perfect combo. It's over 390km to the Divide but the time just seemed to fly.

The full moon followed us right up the Divide where it disappeared behind some fog and by the time we arrived at the Key Summit turn off, the fog was so thick that visibility was poor so the romantic romp in the moonlight was placed on hold. We arrived at Lake Howden Hut to find no snow. Bugger! So I raised my arms to the heavens and asked the ultimate question - "Where's the b*!#y snow?"



Mackenzie Hut, Routeburn Track (PHOTO Wolfgang Gerber)

Thanks to some holy intervention, we awoke next morning to find 10cm of the white powder stuff. This simple act of nature raised the spirit immensely of the party and after a hearty breaky we powdered off through the snow [pun intended]. (Groan!!! - Ed)

By the time we arrived at the Earland Falls the sun had peeked through, and at the Orchard, Lake McKerrow came into view, way down the lower Hollyford Valley. There was a brisk southerly blowing, but when we arrived at the hut it was sheltered.

The Fit Lads climbed up to the ridge that leads to Ocean Peak, some walked around Lake MacKenzie (which has a subterranean outlet) and others visited Split Rock. It was just nice soaking up our winter Fiordland.

The Quiz was held after tea and this year's best dressed was won by the Medical Team of; Doctor Love, Doctor Who, Doctor Feelgood, Doctor No and Doctor Phil. All wearing gowns, facemasks, rubber gloves and carrying slimy samples in plastic bags! Yuk!



Emily Pass and Peak from Lake Mackenzie (PHOTO Wolfgang Gerber)

Then afterwards some of us went outside to marvel at our winter wonderland scene with the moonlight reflecting off the snow. There was not a breath of wind and the thermometer outside the warden's hut showed minus 7°C.

Next morning the sunrise was amazing with some great photo opportunities. The trip back to the Divide was a typical Fiordland winter landscape with crystal blue sky and snowy mountaintops. The Earland Falls was dropping more snow than water at times, making them a great spectacle. Lunch was at a snowy Howden Hut and finally up to Key Summit to view Lake Marion, Mt Christina, the Eglinton Valley, the Greenstone Valley, Jean Batton Peak, Emily and Ocean Peaks, Harris Saddle, the Hollyford Valley, the Eastern end of the Darrens and no gondolas.

So, we came out in good time, had tea in Te Anau, and signed out at DoC. Then, for me, into bed at 11.30pm.

I would like to thank the food party leaders, the drivers and, of course, Princess Fiona for being my lovely Quiz Assistant.

Wolfgang Gerber for Murray Johnson, Christine Rells, Liz Clarke, Tim Crocker, Alan Thompson, Jan Piggot, Jacinta Neilson, Russell Auld, Fiona Webster, Richard and Vincent Pettinger, David and Holly Peacock, Philip Somerville, Rob Lawrence, Ralph Harvey, Andrew Kirby, Terry and

Carmel Casey, Stefan Scherbaum, Jill McAliece, Lee-Ann Kostelnik, Kathryn Jeyes, Bruce Bernasconi, Paul Van Kampen, David Palmer, Sandra De Vries, Roy Ward and Christine's niece.

PS. Richard found a dog near Earland Falls which we escorted out of the park and finally dropped off at Te Anau Police Station. As some of you who are on the emailing list will know, a home has been found for the little foxy. It's all a little bit sad that the dog had not been listed as missing, so it had obviously been abandoned in the National Park. An absolute no-no.

SNOWCRAFT INSTRUCTION

August 14-15, 2004

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 645, October 2004

It was not a pretty sight that greeted the sixteen of us when we went to check out our accommodation at the Kawarau Holiday Park Lodge. We were met by three youths who had obviously had too much to drink. One was making full use of his cargo pants with bottles being carried in every pocket, causing the “waist” to hang even lower down his backside than is the current teenage fashion. He seemed the one who was worse for wear.

Anyway, the intoxicated adolescents were not unfriendly, so we chose our shared bunkrooms and settled in – or tried to. Our inebriated friends were going to ensure that things would be going “bump” in the night. However, it seems that this annoyed other young people who were also staying at the lodge and who knew the one with the extremely “lo-rider” cargo pants. They were concerned he would get them thrown out. We heard them give him a couple of warnings, then there were a couple of sickening crunches – then blessed silence.

After a good night’s sleep and a hearty breakfast, we saw how our friend had been silenced: somebody had whacked him in the lip. His track top was covered in blood and, with difficulty, he was trying to smoke a cigarette. He was still friendly towards us, nevertheless, and made a mumbled attempt to say “Good morning.” Still, thick lips were not our concern as Mike Brettell arrived to give us a hurry-up. Although the cloud was quite low, there was little wind and therefore conditions would be reasonable up on the Remarkables ski-field.

The first “snowcraft” lesson for some of us was how to put chains on the drive wheels of a car. To some highly competent people, such as Sandra, this was no problem; but to totally impracticable people, such as Tony, it was just a matter of standing around and trying to look competent. However, us incompetent types got some comfort when, as we drove up to the ski-field carpark, we saw numerous other vehicles stopped by the side of the road and their occupants trying to re-adjust the previously flailing chains.

Once we were parked and kitted out, Mike wasted no time in getting his instruction under way. He found a suitable slope up from the left of the main chairlift. (As the cloud cover was low, we could not move far from the ski-field areas in case we needed to make a quick descent, if the weather deteriorated.) Following his clear instructions, we were all soon expertly hacking steps with our ice-axes up the slope and then sliding down to practice self-arresting. Despite the snow being quite soft, we were able to have a good length of slide before flipping over to self-arrest.

Being the hard taskmaster that he is, Mike then had us climb higher to look for firmer snow in which to use our crampons. This done, we then tried to master the intricacies of tying crampons to boots. As with putting chains on car wheels, some showed much more competency than others! We stomped around for a while, getting the feel of large spikes attached to the soles of our boots and gaining confidence in their grip.

Unfortunately, in the meantime, the weather had started to deteriorate so we made our way back down. Fortunately, however, we were able to use this descent to again have great fun practising sliding and self-arresting – this time having to remember that we were also wearing crampons!



OTMC Snowcraft Instruction (PHOTO Matt Corbett)

Sunday dawned cold and windy, with a sprinkling of snow down to lake level. But by the time we had had breakfast and Mike arrived, the wind had dropped and blue sky appeared. (How does he do it?) This time we were off to Coronet Peak for more of the same. After revising how to put on chains, we soon arrived at the carpark, put on our crampons, and headed once more into the white wilderness. The cloud base was again low, but we were able to find a long slope close to a ski-lift that was not being used. Mike was able to give us further instruction here, and after more practice and then lunch, in clearing weather, we pushed on to look for another slope.

Just when we thought we had found one, the previously still ski-lift began to move and a ski-patroller told us we would have to move elsewhere, as fast-moving persons in the form of snowboarders would soon be descending upon us. We decided to make our own unhurried descent, and in doing so found an ideal steep slope with some hard snow and a safe run-off. This gave the more daring of our group the opportunity to show off their newfound skills. There were some intentional very rapid slides that were expertly self-arrested with deft use of the ice-axe. There were also some unintentional, uncontrolled, very rapid slides! (Dave: 2/10 for “controlled” slide, 10/10 for self-arrest recovery; Roy: 2/10 for “controlled” slide, 3/10 for self-arrest recovery.) Most of us had at least one go on this slope, some had multiple slides. It was a great way to finish the weekend.

Our full appreciation and thanks must go to Mike Brettell, who gave of his time when he is obviously very busy. When Mike was not wielding his ice-axe, he was wielding his cellphone, checking with his assistant that a particular venue was being set up with the right equipment. Thanks again, Mike.

Tony Timperley for Sandra de Vries, Dave Chambers, Roy Ward, Ian Timperley, James Somerville, et al

MT CARGILL FAMILY DAYTRIP I

August 15, 2004

Author: Jade Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 645, October 2004

On Sunday 15 August, we went for a walk-up Mt Cargill. At the beginning there was no snow, and we walked through a big forest of pine trees. Then we came to the bush. We stopped for a rest, and then started walking again.



Otago Harbour and Harbour Cone from Mt Cargill Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Not long after that we came to a bridge that had snow on it. We threw snowballs at each other. There was not much snow in the bush. We followed a scenic viewpoint. There was lots of snow. Everything was covered in snow and was beautiful. We carried on up the hill. The snow got deeper. There was no wind, and it was fun. We stopped at the turn off to the Organ Pipes for a rest. Then we went back down again. It was a fun day.

Jade Pettinger (aged 8)

MT CARGILL FAMILY DAYTRIP II

August 15, 2004

Author: Debbie Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 645, October 2004

The forecast wasn't good and waking to a scattering of snow didn't bode well but the kids were keen to get out into deeper snow, so we headed off to Bethune's Gully. There were only two other hardy souls, Poppa, and Shelly, a non-member. The kids were eager to get up the hill into the snow, so we headed off up through the pine tree plantation, then into the bush.

The mild temperatures and lack of wind made for pleasant walking, and it wasn't long before we came to the first lot of snow at the first bridge. Here we stopped for the first, and by no means last, snow fight amid much laughter.

As we moved higher the snow grew thicker, coating the ferns and turning them into giant umbrellas.



Buttar's Peak from Mt Cargill Track (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Walking in the front proved dangerous for the unsuspecting when those behind shook the trees, creating small snowstorms. We eventually came to the turn off to the Organ Pipes and, after a short debate as to the merits of going on, decided to turn back. The snow was ankle deep and the children were getting tired. I was surprised they had come this far and were still in good spirits. After a short snack break, we headed back down the hill.

It was a bit disappointing to return to Bethune's Gully and no snow but by then the children were tired and weren't interested in playing any more.

It was a lovely day, the lack of wind and mild temperatures made for a pleasant walk and those that turned up enjoyed the outing. Waking to a major snowfall on Monday morning was a wonderful bonus.

Debbie Pettinger for Jade (8), Dylan (5), Poppa (Ken) and Shelley

KIWIBURN

August 14, 2004

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 646, November 2004

We decided to meet at Tony's place. Rob turned up late having been keen to leave early. Still it didn't matter as we scrolled through a heap of maps all over the South Island for a destination which was avalanche free yet with off track exploring opportunities and scenic. In the end we decided for somewhere south of Gore and to settle on a more exact destination as we drove, or we wouldn't get anywhere. Bruce as usual packed everything into the boot of Rob's car rather than into his pack.

We let Bruce look after tea for the entire trip and he had the pizza place in Alex programmed into the cell phone to make orders if we went that way, or the new Thai place in Gore. Thai it was. Bruce was consistent with forgetting something. This time it was his wallet, at least he didn't forget his boots like last time. We enjoyed some nice hot (in both ways) Thai food. They only bought out one bowl of rice but said we could have as many top ups as we wanted, fools. They shut down as we left because they had run out of rice. Rob joined in with the Gore hoons as we did loops around the roundabout. He relived the days when they used to cram up the roundabouts with a group of cars doing circuits and not letting any traffic in

We had a debate which turn off to take to Mavora Lakes. After a look at the map Rob used technical engineer triangle talk about sign and cosign and decided on driving one side of the triangle of roads rather than both. The fresh air outside the car was appreciated more than usual, thanks sorry, no names as I'm sworn to secrecy. Basically, they didn't understand the allocation of wind we allowed per person per weekend. Must be those vege sausages, who makes sausages out of vegetables anyway! We arrived at the swing bridge over the Mavora River and decided to walk into the Kiwi Burn hut rather than set up tents.

We left some time after 11pm on a nice night. I found snow on the other side of the bridge and got Tony's help to chuck snowballs toward the two lights (Rob and Bruce) stalled halfway across the bridge. A yell counted as a score, first one to five won. It was strange in the open beach forest in unknown terrain. We struggled to follow the muddy track, initially ending in a cliff over the river - that can't be right?!! Rob and I were ahead a little, so we decided to stop by a fallen tree blocking the track and hide to give Bruce and Tony a fright. Boy, was it dark when our torches went off - there was no way they would see us in this thicket of young trees. Unfortunately, we were foiled by my new vest with tiny reflective strips which stood out seemingly like a beacon. Bruce and Tony laughed at our unknowingly pathetic effort to hide and give them a fright, still I blew my whistle and Rob yelled anyway.

The Kiwi Burn was high, and we had to cross. Rob threw his pack from the top of an eroded riverbank onto a gravel island and followed with a jump making it without wet feet, impressive. We moped around in the dark to find a under calf deep crossing, planning on momentum and gaiters to keep dry feet. I went in first nearly running, but the water suddenly went over knee

deep and wet boots it was. Bruce and Tony tried the same, with water splashing to head high highlighted by their torch in the darkness and cries of anguish. We reached the 12-bunk hut at 1am and took two bunks in each 6-bay sleeping area, spreading our gear out with glee.



Kiwiburn Hut (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We awoke to rain and some fresh snow below the bush line. The valley looked great with lots of red tussock. Getting to the top of Snowden peak was out. Despite this we were all keen to still try to get in some adventurous off-track tramping, so we carried ice axes. Within 300m we were in water and bog and that was the one constant for the day. Oddly the ground had frozen, and water had pooled on top not being able to drain away. One step would be soft in bog and the next arrested by solid ice, so we walked up the valley like drunks. What a pleasure! At the head of the Kiwi Burn we saw a kaka screeching parrot talk at us, then went down the other side toward an opening marked on the map for lunch in the persistent rain. Tony brought his cooker and billy to make up a brew of tea, great idea. We later found out as we drunk our nice hot tea that Tony had got the water from the stream Rob peed by!! It was so wet my mug of tea filled up quicker than I could drink it. After lunch Rob and Tony headed back, while Bruce and I decided to go further down to the Whitestone River and up valley toward where I had planned to camp.

It was a really nice walk in the lovely bush-fringed red tussock valley. Bruce lost (how unusual, not like Bruce at all!) his wire gaiter strap. We looked all around our lunch spot and decided it was lost, but two steps upon leaving I found it! On the way back the rain got even heavier, thundered more, the mud deeper, the undergrowth wetter along with us. It was quite cold and miserable as the valley continued, but a positive attitude and a hut made it almost pleasant in the end. If only the forecast snow would come we would be drier and warmer than this near freezing rain. Nearing dark the hut was spotted with smoke out of the chimney - our master

plan had worked, they had the hut heated up for our arrival. But Rob and Tony were smiling a little too much, something is wrong. My eyes led to a pile of chairs and broom braces by the door. They had shut us out!! After a long 10 minutes of barter we got in. They had spent the last two hours in the lounge chairs by the fire sniggering to each other like school brats about what they had set up for our arrival.

Bruce got to use his new cooker and had perfected lighting it even if he said so himself. We allocated time for each course - noodle soup, Thai chili chicken, more hot drinks. Rob made an improvised oven with a shovel and frying pan from the hut to bake his apricot pie on top of the potbelly stove. We had a great night and hardly stopped laughing to eat. I mentioned I was good at making omelettes, unbelievably Tony came across 4 eggs in the hut!! They were 2 weeks past expiry date but didn't float in the water test so didn't seem to be off. Damn. I tried to get out of it as I would need a flat pan and oil, but both of these items were found in the hut!! Fortunately, Rob was too full from the Thai meal in Gore not to mention all we ate during Saturday. We had two cookers going off and on plus heating water on the potbelly stove, if it could burn, we burnt it and the hut became a sauna. Everything had something hanging on it to dry, it was a Chinese laundry as they say. Bruce had left his camera in an unzipped jacket pocket and it was dripping wet, when he tried to take photos it made a loud popping noise.

We awoke to 10cm of fresh powder snow outside and still snowing. With no time or appropriate weather to get to the ridge tops for adventure and views and only a 2 hour walk out we went back to sleep. At 9am I heard a yell from the bunkroom on the other side of the hut. "Paul! Where is my omelette, kitchen b#*~^~h!" It was Rob demanding his breakfast. That got us all roaring with laughter. I went in and started to pull him defenseless in his sleeping bag off the top bunk but took pity on him as he started to cry (not). In the end we ate what we carried in to make our packs lighter and I got out of making the omelette. The sky turned blue and the sun came out. We spent a few hours cleaning the hut floor; mopping out the water and putting back three-fold the amount of wood there was. Once packed I decided to instigate a snow fight. It all turned around on me and I ended up stuck on the balcony of the hut dodging snowballs from everyone at once. The whole frontage of the hut looked like a war zone, I and it had taken a pounding.

The snow was beautiful, especially in the sun, and everything except areas of water had delicate powdery snow on it, awesome. The trees had icicles hanging off them too. There was impressive rapids and rocks under the swing bridge which we hadn't seen on Friday night tramping in. We changed at the car (2pm) into clean clothes as another outbreak of snow started. We got out through some small snowdrifts and decided to go on a detour to Te Anau for more food and some beer. Tony and Rob grabbed a 2-person leather couch by a fire, again beating Bruce and I to it, we had to settle for chairs. Outside the snow set in from across the lake and it looked pretty and bleak as the snow settled. We didn't want to go home and sat in a trance watching the fire or the snow falling, each as memorizing as the other. About 4pm we left.

Unfortunately, Rob got caught speeding just over the limit by an oncoming police car. There was snow in smaller amounts all the way by the roadside home and I noticed a sheen on the

roadside so warned Rob of ice. The stars behind us were gone as a band of snow moved. I watched a satellite and a weak aurora, which with the snow was quite a night. We reached Tony's place at 7:30pm and found our cars frozen solid. I drove carefully home and was in bed by 10pm.

We awoke to 10cm of snow to sea-level on Monday at home. A few days later in the paper it was suggested a monorail be built up the Kiwi Burn! What is wrong with these people - they should be putting in wind farms as well all over the Southern Alps and cell phone towers so we have coverage everywhere just in case an unwary visitor trips over a pebble and has a nasty accident.

Paul Van Kampen for Rob Lawrence, Bruce Bernasconi and Tony Malcolm.

WILLS VALLEY

September 11-12, 2004

Author: Greg Powell

Published in Bulletin 646, November 2004

My New Year's resolution to undertake one tramp per month this year seems to have been overtaken by other events and in fact I admit that I haven't been tramping since the club's Rees Valley trip some months back. So last month I decided to shake of my lethargy and get tramping again. The Wills Valley trip caught my eye as I haven't been there before, and this was an opportunity to explore another part of Godzone



Heading into the Wills Valley, September 11, 2004 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

The trip date caught up with me fairly quickly and with about three days to go I started checking the weather forecasts. RAIN, RAIN and more RAIN. By Friday the forecast was still RAIN, RAIN, RAIN and I was showing the first signs of a cold. With my wife Shona already suffering from a bad bout of the dreaded "Flu" I was starting to get a bit nervous.

Friday evening rolled around, and I was still a bit "stuffed up" but really looking forward to going bush for the weekend. The usual start at the clubrooms and we set off in one van and two cars. Fine weather all the way, UNTIL we reached Hawea, when the first rain drops started to splatter against the car windscreen. Discretion being the better part of valor we

decided to spend the Friday night in cabins at the Makarora camping ground. A good thing too as it rained cats and dogs for most of the night.



Wills Hut, September 11, 2004 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Unfortunately, I wasn't the only one with a touch of the "flu". Terry D woke up the next morning in quite a bad way and decided to spend the day in bed in recovery mode, so we started Saturday with one short. We reached the Gates of Haast shortly after 9-30 and stepped out of the car in a light but steady rain. With raincoats and packs donned we set off as one group. This can be particularly annoying if you are at the back, as you tend to get a stop / start effect. However, the groups soon split up into parties and we were on our way.

Apparently, the initial part of the track was formed for horse and cart transport to carry goods from Haast to Central Otago and there are short stretches at the beginning where this is quite evident by the width of the track. However, you would not get a horse and cart into the Wills Valley today and I can see why DOC had erected a WARNING - TRACK DAMAGE sign at the road entrance. The track soon turns to a marked route and is straightforward to follow.

However, the terrain is difficult with slips, tree falls, mud and slippery rocks making it a trampers paradise. Care does need to be taken, as there are spots where a slip could be tragic. At the edge of one of the slips DOC have installed a ladder in order to scale a small rock face. While not natural, it is an interesting feature, and everyone seemed to think a photo was appropriate. With the continued concentration of having to carefully place one's feet, the 4-5 hours taken to negotiate the initial gorge section, time slips (excuse the pun) by quickly.

Once through the gorge one emerges from the bush into the wide-open spaces of the Wills Valley. Being protected by the gorge one could imagine finding a surviving species of Moa or a lost tribe. But not this trip, although there was plenty of sign of deer about. However, man's hand is soon evident in the form of an airstrip (marked on the map) and a comfortable 4-bunk hut (with potbelly stove).



Campsite in the Wills, Sept 11-12, 2004 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Crossing the Wills River was a concern but even after a night or two's rain we managed to find a spot where it was safe to cross. Although reasonably swift it was never deeper than just over my knees. Anyway, it was a good chance to practice our river crossing skills. Once across we located a spot on a terrace just below the bush-line to erect our tent flies. This was preferable to sharing the small hut with seven others. By this time, I wasn't feeling the best so thought it wisest to dry off and climb into my Bivvy Bag while the remainder of my group wandered on up the valley to visit the hut dwellers. A couple of panadol and 20 minutes kip did wonders, and I was feeling much better once the others returned. We cooked in the fly, and after a cup of hot soup and a good nosh, I had a smile back on my dial once more.

On Sunday morning Gary Moss and I went back up to the hut for a look-see but found it had been vacated. We had missed the other parties who had headed back down stream on the flats. We carried on a little further up to a small bluff and encountered the three occupants of the two tents left standing near the hut. They had been out for a morning constitutional. Back to our campsite to collect our packs and then a repeat of Saturday, only going the opposite way. Two jets whooshed overhead and we thought either Terry is out looking for us or the Aussies have invaded. Perhaps we still have an air force?

Although we didn't get the sunny weather, the rain was reasonably light with intermittent breaks and nothing to really worry about. Despite the weather (and the "flu") it was a great weekend, and the tramping was superb with all seeming to enjoy the experience.



Back to the road-end, Gates of Haast Bridge, September 12, 2004 (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Greg Powell for Antony Pettinger, Pete Stevenson, Barry Atkinson and Ann Burton

ROUTE BURN

August 28-29, 2004

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 646, November 2004

Once upon a time, three Jolly Intrepid Trampers named Jill, Ian and Tony (get it?) went on a Journey (of) Incredible Tenacity (still get it?). They were fortunate enough to be able to leave Dunedin at 2.30pm on the Friday afternoon, in the middle of a hailstorm, with headlights full on and crawling along a southern motorway that was covered several centimetres deep in hailstones. Having faith in the weekend weather forecast, which was fine for inland Otago, our trio headed westward, skirting ominous black clouds to Alexandra, which then gave way to clear blue skies all the way to Queenstown.

By some miracle we (I will now write in the first person in an attempt to make this story more “personal”) found a parking space right outside a café and after an excellent repast, we drove into the quickly gathering dusk towards the head of Wakatipu. The lake was still, and it was not long before an almost full moon was perfectly reflected in its waters. A great weekend beckoned.

The deserted streets of Glenorchy were pulsating as, good little JITs that we are, we signed the Intentions Form at the DoC centre. Our road illuminated by the moon, we arrived at the start of the track by 8.30pm. But what was this? The track sign said, “Flats Hut – 3 hours.” How could this be? A source of impeccable reputation (Ian Sime, no less) had told us that it would take us only 1 1/2 to 2 hours to reach this hut! So, trusting Ian more than we trusted DoC, and feeling Jaunty, Invincible (and) Tough (not again!), we donned our headlamps and packs and headed along the track, lit in turn by the moonlight and our beams. For the IT duo of our trio, night tramping was a new experience and was fully enjoyed, especially when our lamps picked out the glinting icicles dangling at the side of the track.

Ian Sime was correct (did we ever doubt him?) and we arrived at an empty and cold Flats Hut in 1 3/4 hours. After a warm cuppa, we snuggled into sleeping bags and dreamt of clear blue skies and lots of snow.

Next morning at 9.30, as we headed up towards Falls Hut, there were some clouds but they were parting – it was looking good. Little did we know that our problems would come not from above, but at our feet! Think of “the Routeburn” – one of the “Great Walks”- a two lane highway. And here we were on a steep, uphill section and faced with a track of solid ice! At first we felt a little JITtery. However, it was not for nothing that the IT duo had done the Snowcraft course two weeks’ earlier, and we soon negotiated this and similar obstacles.

We reached the Falls Hut after an hour, and after a quick look around at the comparative luxury, we headed above the falls and into the real snow. We saw that a group from Falls Hut must be ahead of us, and as the snow was relatively soft in parts, we were able to avoid those holes where they had sunk up to their thighs. Some of the holes were so deep that we felt obliged to check that nobody was stuck at the bottom of them. (It doesn’t always pay to be

first!) Sometimes snow poles were visible to mark the track, only the top couple of centimetres in some cases, sometimes they were not and we had to pick our own route with true JIT determination, across the vastness of the snowy wastes.

Just as we were nearing Lake Harris, we saw four figures approaching. One had a large icicle impaled in the top of his head. As they greeted us we realised by their accents that they were British and that this would explain the stiff-upper-lip demeanour of the one with the icicle in his head. They said that they had been to the Harris Saddle, and that there were no problems getting there. However, the one imitating a unicorn warned us of falling icicles under the bluff by Lake Harris.



Lake Harris in winter (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

They continued their return to Falls Hut and we dropped down to a frozen Lake Harris, where, after some vigorous testing by I, we decided it was safe to walk on. We were puzzled why we could not see any of the preceding Brits' footprints on the lake. Then we looked to the near side and saw by their tracks that they had done tar and chamois proud in negotiating the steep bluffs some of which were covered in large hanging icicles. It seemed as though they had gone to dangerous lengths to avoid putting even a toe on the lake, which had us wondering if we were doing the right thing – until a large icicle came crashing down. No, we didn't want to join the unicorn club!

Just past the bluff we climbed a steep, wide, snow-filled gully which gave out to the broad Harris Saddle. By veering to the right we soon came upon the twin shelters which were almost completely covered in snow. The view was magnificent, with the Hollyford Valley below us, the

Darrans directly opposite, dominated by Mount Gifford. The sky was blue, the snow was white, and, despite the cold wind, we were a Joyful, Indomitable, Trio. (No, I haven't finished yet!)

After a quick snack washed down by hot tea, we dropped down back into the warmth of the Harris Basin and began to retrace our tracks to Falls Hut. Just above the falls we met various other OTMC members who were pottering around in the snow. We tried not to sound too smug and superior when we answered the "How far did you get?" question. We had a late full lunch at Falls Hut (which appeared to be filling rapidly) before heading back to Flats Hut. We were glad to see that the icy patches, which could have caused problems in descent, had melted, making our return much easier.



Heading back to Routeburn Falls Hut, with the Routeburn Flats beyond (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

We arrived back at the hut at 4.30, having been out seven hours almost to the minute, feeling Jubilant, Indefatigable (and) Triumphant! (No more!)

Tony Timperley for the JITs team: Jill McAliece, Ian Timperley, Tony Timperley.

P.S. The guy with the icicle in his head? Nah – just a figment of our imagination. The rest of the report is true though (mostly).

UNEXPLORED SILVER PEAKS

October 17, 2004

Author: Richard Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 646, November 2004

“Ten ten oh four: The Silver Peaks to explore”

I couldn't believe it. I was ready for a trip, sure, - I needed the exercise, but it was raining. 8.30 AM: I had chucked together some gear but went to the clubrooms thinking no way would anyone show up. Or if anyone did, it'd be all over by 10 AM when some fool and I would drag ourselves out of the sodden bush and go home. I wished I'd bothered to put some lunch together, when, on arriving at the clubrooms, there were ten expectant trampers - all keen as mustard and laughing at the rain like a bunch of deranged masochists. I tried to say “this is NOT ‘Silver Peaks for Masochists’. That is SO 90's. This is a different thing, a new theme, ‘Unexplored Silver Peaks’ where we might follow tracks none of us had been on before. With some kind of gentlemanliness, that is, no sodden discomfort.” But they laughed at me, instead.

So, we set to and found somewhere that fit the bill. On the previous Thursday night, our esteemed honorary solicitor Antony Hamel had told us about the “Peppertree Track”, which he'd found and followed. So, since he wasn't there, we took off towards it before he could turn up and force us to find somewhere else to go. There was, as it happens, a distinct feeling that we shouldn't venture too far from cars and home...



Lowest and largest waterfall in Nicols Creek (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Peppertrees were everywhere alongside the upper Pineapple. But the Peppertree Track? This not famous track apparently goes down into Nicols Creek catchment off the Pineapple, near the steep bit. It goes in a big sweeping contour, from a very obscure start point. We couldn't find it. Kathryn and I did a search up the scrub edge from where Antony said we should start looking, to where he said we could stop. Phil went further on up. But, although we were entirely in the scrub for about 60 metres, we found no markers, just some animal tracks and (admittedly) easy going. Which we ignored because Ross had found a good track on the spur where any self-respecting track would be. So we followed him. At ten on the tenth of the tenth. It was a lovely track, but although there were untold peppertrees, it was called, as it turned out, the Nicols Creek loop. However, none of us had been on it before, so it was kosher for this trip. It's a nice track with gooseberry bushes, campable clearings and nice creeks. You could overnight on one of these clearings and still be at work on time. You could live the life of a part-time hermit!

At a signposted junction, we went down the Moon Track. We weren't the first! Someone had been there before us, and built a fence. We went to check out one of the Nicols Creek waterfalls, before climbing back out to enjoy lunch, with Ross's MSR providing a cuppa, under some Moon Track macrocarpas. This was near where we saw Mr and Mrs Shrek disappear into the bush to continue growing their several seasons of fleece and long sheeptails (Actually, I was astounded to see flocks of sheep wandering in the water reserve. Bad enough all these trampers, wandering in flagellant, flatulent –sorry, Phil-, floundering flocks...) And we were delighted to see the pile of huge boulders that would work well in a Lord of the Rings type movie.

Upwards and onwards on the Moon Track, we topped out on the Swampy Ridge track. Then, because it wasn't raining at the time, we had a vote about going straight home, or going down into the Silverstream catchment. Voting was actually a big topic of discussion as it happens, as the city that day, 10/10/04, was still waiting for the results of the mayoral and other elections. Ross was a candidate, for the Chalmers Community Board, and he was checking his cellphone all day for text messages from Gaye. Still no results, so on we went, down to the Possum Hunter's track.

Kathy led the way, an old hand, but the rest of us were exploring. A shower passed by, but it lasted about 70 seconds. We didn't see Lake Whare, despite a detour and sending Phil off as a scout. Basically, we kept taking left turns, confident that we'd hit the Jim Freeman Track. I was upset by the amount of elderberry trees and Darwin's Barberry, not to mention the Himalayan honeysuckle, on the Possum Hunter's track. But, once we hit Freeman's track, we saw no more barberry (strange that?). Just the rhododendrons in spectacular flower (white, almost scented ones) and a few honeysuckle by the Douglas seat, which Ross and I began to pull out...

Then off up to the shelter, a sit on Linda M's seat, and then it was onto the main ridge, over a bit of the Walkway, followed by branching off down the Davies track, where Ross and Michael had some ancestral connection moments. Back at the cars we realised we'd been on the go for eight hours (not counting our short lunch stop) and we hadn't been slacking around either. Phil

thought it significant that, out of the ten of us, half were 18 years or under. Bloody keen types, not one of us wishing we'd stayed in bed.

It was a neat trip (as always), with only two of the forecast "showers". Thanks, Mr Hamel, for being absent and letting us do this particular exploration!!! This trip was lawyer-free except for a few sections of the bush variety.

Thanks for coming, everyone: Phil, Megan and James Somerville, Ross and Michael Davies, Kathryn Jeyes, Joe Donnelly, Brad Abarneth, Frances Gallagher and Richard Pettinger.

POWDER RIDGE – SILVERSTREAM SOUTHERN TRAVERSE

October 10, 2004

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 647, December 2004

The basic premise was simple - the Southern Traverse had been through the Silver Peaks and used a route that I didn't know. It was just asking to be tried out. Despite my graphic descriptions of what I expected the trip to be like, and a grotty forecast, there were 13 starters. The crossing of Silverstream at the bottom weir confirmed that the overnight rain hadn't affected the levels much - a key consideration for our afternoon plans. The bottom of Powder Ridge is always a bit of a shock to the system. It's steep and muddy, but I prefer to go up it than down. When the grade started to ease we were in the drizzle zone, so most of us opted for parkas. As the bush thinned, the drizzle eased and it became apparent that the predicted snow had arrived overnight, as the top of Maungatua had a good coating, while Silver Peak itself had a wee bit right on top. By the time we broke out of the scrub at the top of the ridge, the weather was good enough for a lunch break in the tussocks. Then the 'fun' began. Fun in this case was two hours of fairly solid, often steep bash bashing and grovelling down a narrow stream. I was pleased to hear frequent laughter from above me as we slithered our way downwards. Obviously, others shared my idea of fun.



Crossing Powder Creek (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

All this eventually brought us to a junction with a more substantial stream. We obviously weren't the first there, as we found a bicycle there. Someone's keen or silly!! The travel changed from this point, as we could walk in the stream or stream bed most of the way. Twenty-five minutes more and another junction, and now we could say we were definitely in the Silverstream, as the Pulpit Rock and Hightop branches had now merged. Of course, this meant the stream was deeper. Occasional rocky bits meant a scramble, but the travel was mostly good and the overhanging bush filtering the sun made it a very pleasant place to be. Finally, a log jam led us onto a terrace, and, surprise surprise, a few track markers. These led us over a short gorge and dropped us at the weir at the top of Raceman's Track at about quarter to five. A quick blast down the track saw us at the cars at 6:30 pm. Everyone said they had a great day out. What more can a trip leader want?



Wading down the Silver Stream, above the Top Weir (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

David Barnes for Matt Corbett, Roy Ward, Jonette Service, Wilbert Stokman, Lois Bishop, Pam Thompson, Irene Duff, Alan Scurr, Guy Jackson, Katherine Jeyes, Chris Barnes and Peter Barnes.

PURAKANUI & MAPOUTAHI

October 31, 2004

Author: Gavin McArthur

Published in Bulletin 647, December 2004

Eight intrepid trampers ably led by Jacqui Cornelissen explored the Purakanui area. We braved the giddy heights of the Mapoutahi Pa site and were afforded some magnificent sea vistas. The tide was out so we proceeded along the beach through the cliff caves and onward to Doctors Point beach. Upon our return to Purakanui we went to the inlet for a closer view of this quant hamlet, then returned to our cars via the mudflats. We adjourned to the Purakanui picnic area for a hearty and well-deserved lunch. The views from the reserve were breathtaking on such a splendid day. Following our nosh we explored a track skirting around the inlet which was used by early residents to gain access to their cribs from the railway station.



Looking towards Doctors Point from Mapoutahi (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

Overall, a very enjoyable day that was topped off by an ice cream at Port. Chalmers on the way home.

Gavin MacArthur

ROCK AND PILLARS

November 6-7, 2004

Author: Alan Thomson

Published in Bulletin 647, December 2004

A cruisy weekend - except for the uphill bits. We left Dunedin Saturday morning and stopped in Middlemarch to regroup and also to point out the weekend's destination - Big Hut. Then along the road to the DoC carpark and to start climbing the 52 zigzags to Leaning Lodge. Everyone had arrived at Leaning Lodge by 1.30pm and lunch was had sitting outside in the glorious sunshine that Fiona had arranged for us.



Rock and Pillar Range, above Leaning Lodge (PHOTO Antony Pettinger)

After lunch, and a close inspection of Leaning Lodge, parties left in dribs and drabs with Doug and I deciding to find the origin of the stream that passes close to the Hut, so it was straight up the hill for us. We found that the stream comes from a strongly flowing spring, almost on the ridgeline. How does the water get there, as there didn't seem to be enough catchment to produce that amount of water? After wandering along to the summit rocks and enjoying the panoramic view of mountains from the Garvies to Mt Domett and including Earnslaw and Mt Aspiring, we finally arrived at Big Hut at about 5.30pm. This gave me time to see what had been done in the time since my last visit with a work party in January 2001. I must say that I'm impressed with the amount of work that has been done on this Hut in the short time that the Rock and Pillar Trust have owned it, which bodes well for the hut's future.

Sunday was spent wandering further along the ridge to visit Stonehenge and other Rock formations and enjoying the view we had of the Southern Alps and to Saddle Hill. Back to the hut for lunch, and then downhill to the vehicles and the compulsory ice-cream in Middlemarch before heading off home. Thanks to Fiona for organising a lovely weekend.

Alan Thomson for Doug, Dave, Sandra, Laurie, Ann, Jill Dodd, Susan, Jill McAliece, Maggie, Catherine, Roy, and Martin

OTMC COMMITTEE (2004-05)

President – Antony Pettinger

Vice President – Greg Powell

Secretary – Jenni Wright

Treasurer Ann Burton

Chief Guide / Transport – Antony Pettinger

Bulletin Editor – Robyn Bell

Membership Secretary – Ian Sime

Social Convenor – Fiona Webster

Day Trip Convener – Cathy McKersey

Library – Wolfgang Gerber

Publicity – Wolfgang Gerber

Funding – Greg Powell

Gear Hire – Greg Powell

SAR – Teresa Wasilewska

Website – Antony Pettinger

Clubrooms – Alan Thomson

Committee – Sandra de Vries

Committee – Peter Mason

Bushcraft 2005 – Antony Pettinger

Immediate Past President – Terry Casey

Hon. Solicitor – Antony Hamel

OTMC TRIP PROGRAMME 2004

Month	Date(s)	Specific Trip	Leader
January	18	Millennium Track	Cathy McKersey
January	24-25	Livingstone Range or Giffords Crack	Gary Dawe
January	25	Silver Peaks Marathon Route Finding	Wolfgang Gerber
February	1	Taieri River (Outram Glen to Lee Stream)	Terry Casey
February	6-8	Routeburn / Rockburn or Lake Unknown from the Rockburn	Trevor Deaker
February	14	OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon	Committee
February	15	Ben Rudd Trust / OTMC Combined Picnic (at Ben Rudd's)	Committee
February	21-22	Dingleburn / Ahuriri Crossover	Allan Perry
February	22	Long Beach (Rock Climbing Options)	Matt Corbett
February	24	Bushcraft 2004 (Introductory Evening)	Antony Pettinger
February	28-29	Bushcraft 2004 (Tirohanga Weekend)	Antony Pettinger
February	29	Skyline Track	Dave Chambers
March	6-7	Ben Ohau Range	Grant Burnard
March	7	Archery	Deb Carr
March	13-14	Bushcraft 2004 (Silver Peaks Weekend)	Antony Pettinger
March	14	Mt Cargill - Organ Pipes	Jan Piggott
March	21	Bushcraft 2004 (River Safety Day)	Antony Pettinger
March	27-28	Timaru River (Combined Bushcraft / OTMC Trip)	Greg Powell
March	28	Mt Charles	Bruce Newton
March	30	Bushcraft 2004 (Concluding Evening)	Antony Pettinger
April	4	Rustlers Ridge II	Greg Powell
April	9-12	Arthur's Pass National Park	Mike Brettell
April	18	Silver Peaks South	Doug Forrester
April	24-25	Rees Valley (Kea Basin or 25 Mile Creek)	Dave Chambers
April	25	Peninsula	Judy Wilson
May	2	Short City Walks (Fraser's Gully / Nichols Creek / Signal Hill)	Cathy McKersey
May	8-9	Routeburn Track (Crossover)	Deb Carr
May	9	Possum Ridge	Joseph Donnelly
May	16	All Day On The Otago Peninsula	David Barnes
May	22-23	Mt Somers	Antony Pettinger
May	23	Inland Waikouaiti Area	Tony Timperley
May	30	Mt Hyde via Taioma	Alan Thomson
June	5-7	Waitutu - Port Craig	Antony Pettinger
June	13	Rongomai - Honeycomb Track	Jonette Service
June	19-20	Mt Domett - Danseys Pass	Alan Thomson
June	20	OTMC Hosts SAR Training Day	Teresa Blondell
June	27	Catlins Waterfalls	Ian Sime
July	3-4	Wolfgang's Winter Routeburn (Falls)	Wolfgang Gerber

July	4	Silverstream Area	Grant Burnard
July	11	Heyward Point	Ken Powell
July	18	Beaumont Millennium Track	Gavin McArthur
July	24-25	Lake Monowai - Green Lake	Peter Stevenson
July	25	Mt Pleasant Scenic Reserve - Mt Cutten - Mt Martin - Mt Kettle	Antony Hamel
July	31	Visit Of Ancient Establishments of Central Otago	Wolfgang Gerber
August	8	Otago Peninsula (Cycling Trip)	Bruce Newton
August	14-15	Snowcraft Instruction Weekend	Mike Brettell
August	15	Mt Cargill (Family Day Trip)	Debbie Pettinger
August	22	Skyline Track	Roy Ward
August	28-29	Routeburn Climbing Weekend (Tramp Options Available)	Trevor Deaker
August	29	Sandfly Bay	Sandra de Vries
September	5	Taieri River (Outram Glen to Lee Stream)	Terry Casey
September	11-12	Makarora Region (Wills)	Ann Burton
September	12	Port Chalmers - Careys Bay On Foot	Graeme Donaldson
September	19	Government Track	Greg Powell
September	25-26	Caples - Kay Creek - Scott Creek	Rob Lawrence
September	26	Hermit's Cave	Doug Forrester
October	3	Taieri River Track	Olive Neilson
October	9-10	West Matukituki (Based at Aspiring Hut)	Bruce Bernasconi
October	10	Powder Ridge - Silverstream Southern Traverse	David Barnes
October	17	Unexplored Silver Peaks	Richard Pettinger
October	23-25	Historical Macetown	Wolfgang Gerber
October	31	Purakanui - Mapoutahi Beachwalk	Jacqui Cornelissen
November	6-7	Rock and Pillar Range (Leaning Lodge)	Fiona Webster
November	7	Trotters Gorge	Ken Powell
November	14	Rosella Ridge (back via Hunters Track)	Bill Wilson
November	20-21	Maitland / Freehold Creek Crossover	Peter Stevenson
November	21	Spiers Road - Davies Track	Richard Pettinger
November	27	Moonlight Silver Peaks	Alan Thomson
November	28	Pulpit Rock From The West (if Moonlight trip on 27/11/04 cancelled)	Alan Thomson
December	5	Rustlers Ridge	Greg Powell
December	11-12	Moeraki Christmas Camp (Social Weekend)	Antony Pettinger
December	12	Silver Peaks Pre-Christmas Cobweb Blowout	David Barnes
December	19	Lammermoors - Te Papanui Conservation Park	Grant Burnard

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (FEBRUARY TO MAY)

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 637, February 2004

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)
P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

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

President's Piece

I trust that you have all had a happy and relaxing Christmas break, and had time to relax and be with your families so that you are all now ready to make 2004 a successful year. We only have a little over a month to prepare the 2004 Bushcraft Course, please encourage family members, friends and work colleagues to attend.

The guest speakers Fiona has arranged for the first few Thursday evening talks of the year look to provide a wide range of topics and promise to be entertaining.

I'm sure everyone has made a new years resolution to participate in more weekend trips this year. The first one of the New Year is into the Fiordland region and will be led by Gary Shaw. With a great destination and leader of Gary's calibre, it should see the trip programme off to a positive start for 2004.

Wishing you safe and enjoyable tramping.
Terry Casey, President.

Committee Members 2003-2004

President	Terry Casey	434 4392
Vice President/Chairman	Sandra de Vries	473 7224
Treasurer	Joan Wright	434 3061
Treasurer	Ann Burton	436 2360
Imps, Part Pres./Publicity	Alan Thomson	435 7878
Chief Guide	Anthony Peltenger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Jan Sime	432 6385
Care Hire	Mike Smith	435 1315
Daytrip Convener	Cathy McManus	435 0994
Funding	Greg Powell	434 4828
Library	Joanette Service	434 2123
UAR Contact	Teresa Whelan	437 4987
Social Convener	Fiona Whitton	467 8576
Property Maintenance	Peter Mason	435 7074
Bulletin Editor	Robyn Ball	476 7411
Conservation	David Barnes	434 4492

Visit us on the Internet at:
www.otmc.co.nz

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 638, March 2004

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)
P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

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President's Piece

I have received some great feedback on recent weekend trips. Trevor Drake's trip over Waitangi Weekend provided some major challenges to a few of the participants, with the weather throwing just about everything imaginable at them. We are fortunate to have the depth of experience within the club membership to provide leaders to cover all levels of ability.

Tuesday 24th February is the opening evening for the Bushcraft 2004 Programme, which has involved 13 registrations to date with a few more to confirm. The course director, Anthony Peltenger has been quietly working behind the scenes and he has the makings of another successful Bushcraft underway. Thank you to Anthony and everyone who has volunteered their time to ensure the course's success.

Wishing you safe and enjoyable tramping.
Terry Casey, President.

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OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 639, April 2004

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)
P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

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President's Piece

The Bushcraft 2004 Programme began in earnest with a full session to the opening evening. Questions from the floor could all be answered adequately with the exception of one, 'I'm a Y-front guy - what would you recommend?' A wedding present delivered to her made someone who was equally thrown off balance. We would welcome the sharing of an experience around the bushcraft programme, based on the principle of 'experience is essential'.

The first weekend of Bushcraft was a huge success with some participants showing their appreciation and enjoyment. A great debt of gratitude is owed to all those club members who made the weekend a success, which we are very much grateful to.

On Thursday 25th March, OTMC Life Members will be presented with a certificate to celebrate their efforts supporting our club.

Looking through the winter there are some marvellous weekend destinations on the agenda, including one well across the border to Arthur's Pass. It's time to get the winter weather out and get going!

Wishing you safe and enjoyable tramping.
Terry Casey, President.

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OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 640, May 2004

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P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

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President's Piece

The special evening to acknowledge our Life Members on the 25th March 2004 was an outstanding success. I have received some very positive feedback from current Life Members acknowledging the gesture.

I would like to extend my thanks to Anthony Peltenger and all of those who contributed their time and expertise throughout the Bushcraft 2004 programme. It has been a great success, with new memberships already flowing through from the intake. Membership numbers increased by four during that month.

If anyone is intending to tramp over private land please seek prior approval from the landowner.

I wish everyone took time out to relax over the Easter period.

Wishing you safe and enjoyable tramping.
Terry Casey, President.

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OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (JUNE TO SEPTEMBER)

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 641, June 2004

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)
P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

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

President's Piece

I recently read two articles in the ODT (13 & 14 May) about an Israeli woman who had been badly injured during a fall on the Millfield track. She had survived the almost impossible, having spent two nights and five days in the open before help arrived.

Initially I really felt for this woman, however after reading the articles in more detail I found that she was tramping solo, stuff from DoC warned her that she was under-prepare, and she decided to ignore their advice as she had tramped in South America.

This almost cost her life, as snow closed in immediately after the rescue. One of the ODT articles finished, "Just weeks before her Millfield Track ordeal, Mrs Patten lost a car to the surf at Oreti Beach, near Invercargill". She has lost the taxpayer \$17,000 for the rescue, plus medical costs, not to mention the rental car lost to the surf.

One of the great benefits of belonging to the OTMC is that we all learn to respect the elements, we tramp in and to not make the above mistakes.

Wishing you safe and enjoyable tramping.
Terry Casey, President

Committee Members 2003-2004

President	Terry Casey	404 4092
Vice President/Cuberoom	Sandra de Vries	473 7224
Secretary	Jared Wright	404 5060
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Inter. Pub. Pres./Publicity	Alan Thomson	403 7878
Chief Guide	Anthony Peltinger	473 7624
Membership Secretary	Ian Spive	403 6185
Care Help	Mike Beattie	403 1011
Daytrip Committee	Cathy McKeown	403 0994
Funding	Greg Powell	404 4828
Library	Jonatha Service	404 2323
IAK Contact	Tanya Willewicz	477 4987
Social Convener	Fiona Webster	487 8176
Property Maintenance	Peter Mason	403 7074
Bulletin Editor	Robyn Bell	488 2420
Conservation	David Barnes	404 4402

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OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 642, July 2004

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)
P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

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

President's Piece

Attendance at the Thursday evening meetings of late has been at a full house, with eight "fire zones" attending on one occasion. The new data projector has enabled our guest presenters to deliver their experiences with us in a more involved manner. It's almost like being at the event!

We have a new stock of T-shirts and caps ordered with the club's logo. They are available in all sizes and several colours. Please be correctly taking orders for these. (See page 4)

At the time of writing this piece I have just finished packing the gear for a trip to Mt Ruapehu this weekend, we start at about eight o'clock. The forecast is for light snow tonight and clearing two days for the snowstop. I have also finished the Wiggings's winterisation Roadhouse and look forward to settling in with some of you who are doing Glaciers.

It is the intention making you safe and enjoyable tramping.

Terry Casey, President

Committee Members 2003-2004

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OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 643, August 2004

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.)
P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

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

President's Piece

There have been some great trips recently. Carol and I have participated in two within the last couple of months, namely 36 Great and Wiggings's mid-winter Roadhouse. The Roadhouse from the Divide side offered the best scenery I have experienced while tramping, fresh snow, crystal clear blue skies, amazing sunset views etc. It makes me wonder why we don't do more enjoying the assets we have in our stunning scenic area.

On a recent trip we had an incident that proved a serious safety issue for the Club. The Committee will not tolerate the type of behaviour displayed by one of the participants (a non member) and have advised the individual concerned that they are not welcome on any future trips organised by the OTMC. Safety of all is an absolute pre-requisite for the Club.

On a more cheerful note, wishing everyone safe and happy tramping.

Terry Casey, President

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Bulletin Editor	Robyn Bell	488 2420
Conservation	David Barnes	404 4402

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OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 644, September 2004

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P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.

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

President's Piece

As I write this month's news, 16 of our members are participating on the Snow Craft Course in Queenstown. Judging by the weather forecast for tonight they may not have had to leave Dunedin for the snow.

This will be my last President's Piece, as I will not be standing for the position again. I would like to take this opportunity to wish the new Club President every success in the coming year.

Wishing you all safe and happy tramping.

Terry Casey, President

Committee Members 2003-2004

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OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

