

OTMC TRIP REPORTS

2007

Sourced from the 2007 OTMC Bulletins



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Cover Photo: Greg Powell and Debbie Pettinger heading down the Dart River, towards Dart Hut and Snow Creek

ALL PUBLICATION PHOTOS UNLESS NOTED Antony Pettinger

PIANO FLAT - WAIKAIA

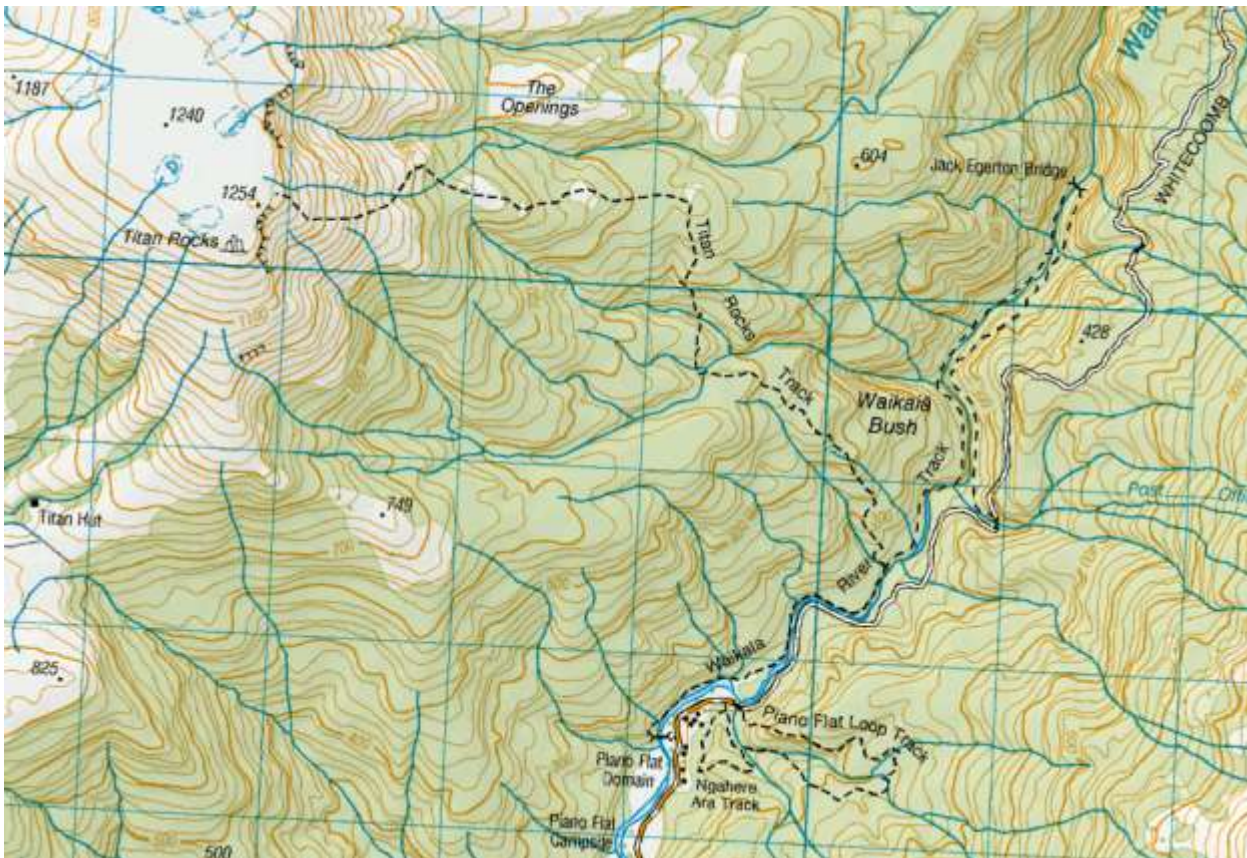
November 4-5, 2006

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 670, February 2007

A devoted group of OTMC trampers gave up a weekend of Guy Fawkes mayhem (much to the relief of the Fire and Police Departments) and instead spent the time grunting up to Titan Rocks from the Waikaia valley floor on the Saturday and sweating along the riverbank in Auckland-like humidity on the Sunday.

On arrival at Piano Flat, our group of ten was greeted by the offended stare of a morepork, which supervised proceedings from its perch in a tree for a few minutes, before becoming bored and flying off across the river to make life more exciting for little furry creatures. Someone remarked that our seeing the morepork meant that it was going to rain. (Why is it that the morepork is supposed to be a harbinger of bad news – or weather?)



However, the omen did not come to pass as we awoke next day to clear skies and were soon crossing the swing bridge over the Waikaia and heading for Titan Rocks, some 900 metres above us. At first glance on the map, the track looks as though it is an unrelenting, steep slog to the rocks; but although there are some long, “grunty” sections, there is some respite given

by small plateaus. We also crossed some clear streams, which gave an excuse for us to pause and replenish our water bottles.

Once we cleared the bushline, we realized that there were no more rest areas and that the final 200 metres would be a slog up steep tussock slopes. This realization, combined with most pleasant surroundings of a babbling brook and shady trees at the bush-edge, persuaded certain members of the group that they had gone far enough. (For a large fee I have promised not to reveal their names; and for an even larger fee I have promised not to reveal the names of those who had an afternoon nap.)

Meanwhile the masochists amongst us sweated and panted to the summit plateau and the twin outcrops and tors that make up Titan Rocks. From the southernmost tor there is a view down the length of the Waikaia Valley and beyond, which made the final slog worthwhile; whilst from the northernmost tor we looked over rolling tussocklands, some of it still snow-covered, towards Blue Lake, where some of us had been in early April.

A strong, cold wind ensured that we did not stay too long on the plateau, so after a snack in the lee of the rocks, we started our return. The steep, slippery tussock slope made for an interesting descent, especially for those with small feet who found it difficult to gain friction. On reaching the bushline the topic of conversation was how many slips onto their backsides each person had taken – it became quite competitive! This was in contrast to one elderly group member who has exceptionally large feet and this asset, coupled with a new pair of boots with virgin tread, enabled him to bound down the slope like an arthritic antelope. After awakening the beauty sleepers, we continued descending more sedately to Piano Flat and a welcome cup of hot tea.

But our exertions were not over yet! A short way up the road was a kids' playground which contained a roundabout and rocking horse which those of us over 50 had not seen since our childhood, as they had long since been banned by OSH. The roundabout can be made to rotate at such a speed so as to fling off its riders (ask Ray, he was flung off backwards into nearby bushes!) and the five-seat rocking horse has a lethal bucking motion for the unfortunate occupant of the rear seat. As you can imagine, an exciting and dangerous time was had by all. How did we survive our childhood? Today's kids don't know what they are missing!

On Sunday we set out for a more dignified and leisurely riverside stroll, although it turned out not to be as leisurely as we had hoped. The true right bank track turned out to be quite rough in parts and have a number of steep "undulations". This, combined with sub-tropical humidity, made for a high perspiration rate (which was good for business at Waikaia pub a couple of hours later!). In such situations it is wise to follow Alan's technique of stopping frequently to see if you can spot any trout, as this gives you a valid excuse without having to admit you are "knackered". (Alan and Tony spotted two trout in twenty stops!)

The return trip down the true left bank was less arduous and had the added interest of a group of kayakers undergoing training on the river. At Piano Flat, after a quick, cooling slosh in the river, we all headed for a welcome cool drink and some hot food at the Waikaia pub. Our timing was perfect, for as we left Piano Flat it started to rain.

Tony Timperley for: Jill and Ray McAliece, Sue and Peter Stevenson, Alan Thomson, Katherine Jeyes, Trevor Mason, Sue Barnaby, Fiona Willement, and Robin Frame.

WEST MATUKITUKI – REES VALLEY CROSSOVER

February 3-6, 2007,

Author: Greg Powell

Published in Bulletin 671, March 2007

This trip started in earnest on Saturday morning after a restless night's sleep in the shelter at Raspberry Flats Park. The day dawned fine and clear, and we set off at a jaunty pace for the two-hour tramp to Aspiring Hut, where we met up with our good friend Rod who had flown down from Christchurch and walked into the hut on Friday.



West Matukituki Valley. Looking towards Raspberry Creek from Cascade Saddle Track, February 3, 2007

From here the hard work started with a steep and grunty climb up through the bush. The track is well marked and easy to follow. We had hoped to have lunch above the bush line, but the climb took longer than we thought, then a nice little clearing appeared just off the track and a few of our fellow OTMCer's invited us to "set a spell". Our hunger got the better of us and we decided to take up the offer and top up the tummies before carrying on.

As usual the bush seemed like it would never end. It was therefore with some relief that we hit the lower scrub and finally snow grass country. While the going was still tough, the views of Mt Aspiring with its cloak of clouds and the Matukituki Valley laid out at one's feet was well worth the effort. (I am claiming it was the views that made me stop regularly, not the lack of fitness and / or steepness of the track!) At almost 5 pm. I crossed a small patch of snow and

at last was at the top where a fairly large crowd had gathered. (Obviously they hadn't stopped so often to admire the views.)



OTMC party at the Pylon (L-R: Greg Powell, Hilda Firth, Matt Corbett, Peter Stevenson Barry Atkinson, Rod Dickson, Debbie Pettinger, Ann Burton), February 3, 2007

Both the map and Moir's describe a pylon located at this point. What a crock. The only structure is a steel tripod that looks nothing like a pylon. I am still looking for the power lines that Antony explained come across from Mt Aspiring. Yeah, right! We then made a quick descent to the river flats below the TRIPOD where we set up camp. DoC has very kindly installed a toilet, which is a bit out of place in this magic part of NZ but given the traffic probably a good idea. If anyone from DoC is reading this, the loo is now full....

Because we had four days to complete a three-day trip our group decided to spend our second day in the tops. After all it had been such an effort to get up there, so why rush to get back down into a valley? So, after a very nice sleep in, we explored the head of the valley and then followed the marked route to Cascade Saddle itself where we had a long lunch and took the usual photographs. After lunch we dropped down from the saddle about 20-30 minutes to where we found a great little campsite on a plateau overlooking the Dart Glacier. After pitching our fly, we spent a great afternoon exploring around the glacier and getting some close-up photos. I managed to find what I think are the remains of an old hut used by the Otago University to originally measure the glacier movement.

Day three saw us start at 8 am and begin the descent past the glacier terminal, then follow the Dart River down to Dart Hut, which took us about three hours. It was just before the hut that we caught up with a group of "valley dwellers" and joined them for a quick smoko. We didn't

visit the hut but from the distance it looked to be quite comfortable and seems to be well used, judging by the number of trampers we encountered. Many were walking up to Cascade Saddle as a day trip from the hut. The track up Snowy Creek towards the saddle is relatively easy but starts and finishes with a bit of climb. After a late lunch on a knob above the saddle we commenced an easy descent down to Shelter Rock Hut. Most of the OTMC parties decided to camp on the river flats just above the hut, however we opted to continue on for a further 1-2 km where there is a very nice clearing to camp. The weather was warm and balmy after a very hot day so we decided to sleep out under the beech trees.



Campsite in the Upper Dart Valley, February 4, 2007

Day four was another stunner weather-wise with an easy, but long and boring, tramp down the Rees Valley, past 25 Mile Hut and Kea Basin, to where the vans were waiting for us at the car park. Much of the trip down was spent playing games (like "I Spy") and telling long yarns with weak punch lines.

Special thanks must go to Chris and Cory Burton who drove up especially to move the vans from Raspberry Flat around to the Rees Car Park, and to Ann Burton for organising. Their efforts made the whole trip possible.

Greg Powell for Rod Dickson, Debbie Pettinger and Antony Pettinger

ARAMOANA – HEYWARD POINT

January 21, 2007

Author: Michael Firmin

Published in Bulletin 671, March 2007

Six trampers left the OTMC clubrooms at 9 am and proceeded out to Aramoana. There we were met by Gordon Tocher, tramp leader, who took us to the Aramoana Domain Hall and showed us an aerial photograph of the tramping route, outlined all of the safety aspects of the tramp, gave us time for a toilet and drink refill if needed, then we were off!!



Aramoana from the Heyward Point Track

Starting from the signpost at Heyward Point walkway near the entrance to the Aramoana township, we walked past the remains of a collapsed cave formed from a previous old shoreline, then ascended up the steep hill, approx. 230metres. Gordon pointed out the features and history of the landscape, including the Aramoana shelter belt, the Spit, the Mole, beaches and lots more. We decided not to take the track along the cliff because of the winds, but instead diverted through the farmer's paddock. When the ridge provided us some protection from the wind we returned back to the track, which was now through long grass and regenerating bush, with fantails and nesting seagulls on the cliffs. Leading down to Heyward Point we avoided a large group of shags and a sealion. The weather had improved, and the site offered magnificent views of Kaikai Beach, Murdering Beach, Long Beach, Potato Point, Blueskin Bay and a view of the curved sea horizon. During lunch there Gordon showed us historical and geological photographs of Aramoana.

After lunch we tramped back up the hill then along the track, gathering a few wild mushrooms along the way, to the top of the Port Otago Quarry. From here a container ship was seen leaving the harbour. After John and Gordon rescued a sheep from the bushes, we walked down the grass track to the road and through the Arboretum in front of the shelter belt, and then to the domain, arriving back around 3 pm.



Sea Birds at Heyward Point

It was an informative and interesting tramp with a taste of wildlife adventure. Brilliant!!

Michael Firmin

LAMMERLAW BIODIVERSITY TRIP

February 11, 2007

Author: Fieke Neuman

Published in Bulletin 671, March 2007

They said we wouldn't get tested on this, and the botanically and zoologically oriented people on the trip would probably remember more than me but here goes.

This was a unique trip for the club: a bit like a field-trip version of the talk that Brian gave at the club last year. Brian Patrick is a moth and butterfly expert, formerly with the Otago Museum and now at the new Alexandra Museum. Ian Sime organised him to give us a guided tour of the flora and fauna of the Lammermoor Range, the bulk of which became Te Papanui Conservation Park in 2003. It's a huge expanse of tall tussock grassland, gently folded into Otago, south and west of the Rock and Pillar Range (see 1:50,00 topomap H43).

We got there by following the road toward Middlemarch as far as Clark's Junction Hotel, hanging a left, and then following a 4WD road past Rocklands Station and into the park. The road gets more and more rutted as you progress to the "summit" and if you carry on (like the 20-vehicle strong 4WD club that passed us) it will take you all the way to Lawrence. As two of our vehicles were 2WD this was not an option, but our brave / naive drivers went through several mud wallows before calling it quits several kilometres past Ailsa Craig (1132m). (Imagine squeals and whoops and helpful comments in a variety of accents!)



Typical Lammerlaws Vista

We didn't actually do much walking as Brian had so much information about all the special ecosystems and each step from the car covered several different ones. So we inspected crevices in rocks, peered under tussocks, sank gently into moss-bogs and wandered around tarns. We saw many of the endemic (found only in NZ) insects and plants, many without scientific names yet, and marvelled at the cm-tall shrubs and the complexes of plants that make up cushion plant mats. As the weather was misty with a cold wind there were not many insects but, with the help of butterfly nets and little bottles, made acquaintance with some of the day-flying moths which are Brian's specialty, scorpion flies and tussock butterflies. There are no big walking tracks in the Lammermoors (yet) but it would be a great place to go mountain biking as you could explore all the 4WD tracks and cover more of this fascinating country.

Naturally, once we had turned for home, the weather cleared up and we got great views over Te Papanui and the dramatic southern profile of the Rock and Pillar Range. Some of the crew, pleased at not having lost the diff, stopped off at Clark's Junction Hotel for a not-very-well-earned beer on the way back. Thanks Ian and Brian!

Fieke Neuman for Brian Patrick and his crew, Janet Barclay, Leslie Bellis, Lucy Jones, Gavin MacArthur, Robbie Riddet, Fiona Sanggang, Ian Sime, Angelika Treschl.

MYSTERY END OF YEAR TRIP

December 9-10, 2006

Author: Wolfgang Gerber

Published in Bulletin 672, April 2007

Keeping the destination a “Mystery” was always going to be very difficult as people were trying to find out “Where are we going?” “How many hours is it away from Dunners?” I held out. Just! But alas, we finally left the clubrooms in two vans on time.



On Conical Hill, overlooking Lake Harris, December 9, 2006

Rumours were a plenty for our destination right up to when we left our overlong tea stop at Ranfurly, when most thought that we were going to Naseby. Wrong!!!! I said as we passed the last turnoff, even though our indicators were on to go right. On we drove through the Cromwell Gorge where one of the drivers ?????!! who will remain nameless, had a little setback with a boy in blue. Anyway, we picked up Trish (that’s another story) and Stuart in Cromwell. “Now which way are going to go, towards Queenstown or Wanaka?”, reverberated through the van. “Ha, ha, we’re off to Wanaka!”, I heard. “Wrong!”, I replied. “So it’s Arrowtown, I knew it”. “Wrong!”, I said as I drove past Lake Hayes. “I told you it’s Queenstown”, echoed from the back. “Wrong!”, (this is getting a bit tedious now, eh!). But as I left Queenstown I finally gave in and said “Welcome to Day walks from Glenorchy with the OTMC”. At last we arrived at

Glenorchy and our dodgy cabins, at 11.59 pm on my watch and 12.03 am on Ray's Micky Mouse watch, who had threatened to go home if we didn't get there by 12.00.



OTMC end-of-year celebration Christmas Celebration, Conical Hill (L-R: Wolfgang Gerber, Matt Corbett, Dave Chambers, Ann Burton, Barry Atkinson) December 9, 2006

On Saturday 11 of us made it to Conical Hill for lunch and I must admit we had a great time celebrating Ann's wedding anniversary, but where was Chris? We managed to get great views of the Darrens, Lake McKerrow and the Tasman Sea. Then it was back to base for a meal at the local. The Double Barrel and Lake Sylvan Tracks, the Invincible Mine, the wilderness area at Glenorchy and Mt Alfred were visited by most people throughout Saturday and Sunday.

I believe everyone enjoyed themselves and I would like to thank all the people that came along for the fun, especially as it was a mystery location.

Wolfgang for Antony Pettinger, Jill and Ray McAliece, Barry Atkinson, Dave Chambers, Christine Rells, Roy Ward, Mat Corbett, Alan Scurr, Kerryn Doherty, Monika Fry, Wilbert Stockman, Trish Saunders, Stuart Laird, Ann Burton, Ralph Harvey, Tomas Sobek, Kathryn Jeyes, and Nicola and Kerryn Woods.

LITTLE KNOWN TRACKS IN THE NICOLS CREEK BASIN OF FLAGSTAFF

January 27, 2008

Author: Bronwen Strang

Published in Bulletin 672, April 2007

There were some distinctly odd things about this trip – first, that it was a Saturday, and surprise, people came; second was that most of the time I seemed to be the only one with any clarity on where we were going and perhaps also on where we had been!

Well, where were we going and where had we been? What track were we on? Was it Pineapple or the Moon Track? Actually, it was three times on each with six times off both. It takes a lot to get Roy Ward to admit he's learnt of four new tracks in a day (he had partial experience of the other two). The group of eight were magnificent – they would just get used to a graded track and suddenly they would be heading into the bush again. For some time now I have wanted to introduce others to the plethora of tracks in one small basin; this group rose to the occasion.



Nicols Creek side of Flagstaff, looking towards Mt Cargill

We began on a new, very gentle and well-constructed bike track on the northeast side of Nicols Creek, planned eventually to link up with the Flagstaff – Swampy track. As this is only in the very early stages it soon ran out and we bush bashed up to a fence line; then grunted up

paddocks (with permission) parallel to Moon Track. This latter we joined at the first clear spur of that track – a place I dream of camping on a clear evening and looking out over the north end of Dunedin. Up to the T junction where a right turn takes you up to the Swampy track. We turned left, down for five minutes, then off the Moon Track and back to a trail. I am told that the correct name for this is Pepper Tree Track, but for me it has always been Bandid Track because about 10 years ago after finding and exploring the track on my own I attached a bandaid to a tree near the entrance so I would find it again – one bandaid in the Nicolls Falls Basin surely should be obvious enough! Well, returning to Dunedin last year I then carried out a further heinous act and attached a bandaid at the other end too! So, along Pepper Tree / Bandid Track we went. This track is not obvious in all places, but a little investigation ensures one is not lost. It follows around a fairly high contour in the basin and about 45 minutes later we scrambled out onto Pineapple Track. After sustenance, we only travelled on this highway for about 20 metres taking off left down the ridge – a very pleasant section - to meet Moon Track again by the big trees in the gully. Turn right down Moon Track for 15 minutes to where a small chiselled track joins in, follow this up to rejoin the Pineapple, emerging at the prominent elbow in a clear section of the latter.

Each time we came out of the bush I was surprised at the unpleasant wind, but I knew we would not be exposed to it for very long – never staying on a broad track long enough! My companions seemed to join me in the slight craziness of it all and so as not to disappoint them, after lunch we headed up the “highway” for 10 minutes and then dived into the bush again onto the Old Pineapple Track which heads back down the gully on the true right of the “new” 40-year-old version. Possibly for quite a few of us in the club, myself definitely, this was the track we grew up knowing and using as there was no “new” one! Ten minutes later after a bit of slipping and sliding we came out at the water buildings on the Pineapple track. Then it was back up the track just to where the first view northeast is gained. Over the fence and down through newly planted trees and met the farmer coming up on his quad bike. Thank goodness permission gained, especially as there is a sign at the far end of the property saying, “Dogs shot on sight”! Eventually back to near the bottom end of Moon Track. Some had never seen Nicolls Falls before, so it was left turn and up to view these. I am always impressed that such a thing is almost in the centre of Dunedin and the first timers’ reaction didn’t disappoint me. Then back down the track and home early.

I have no idea whether you can follow much of this on the reading, it does sound worse on the page. I wonder if the fact that no-one offered to write the report meant they weren’t quite sure where they had been! Whatever, their enthusiasm was high all the way.

Thanks to Faye Brock, Gary Shade, Hilda Firth, Janet Barclay, Michael Firmin, Nicole Caruso, and Roy Ward. And I never did remember to ask them why they had come out on a Saturday.

Bronwen Strang

MT WATKIN

4 February, 2007

Author: Gordon Tocher

Published in Bulletin 672, April 2007

The day dawned fine and clear, with many folk away for a stretched four day Waitangi weekend. Four intrepid adventurers set off north to turn off State Highway One just before Cherry Farm. After 10 km on gravel roads, we left one car at Bucklands Crossing and carried on about 5 km to our starting point.

The objective was to traverse the DCC's Mt Watkins Reserve and summit Mt Watkins. The route began on a rough farm road, quickly diverting into manuka bush and then into the reserve itself, with regenerating native forest followed by mature native forest including large totara, miro, rimu etc growing on rocky slopes – care needs to be taken with loose rocks. It is a beautiful area and rather different to most other walks near to Dunedin. After reaching the ridge the forest transformed into open grass and manuka, with much pig rooting in evidence.



Multiple Ridges to the north of Mt Watkin

The more open country afforded quicker progress and our objective came into clear view. Our intrepid leader Bill set a cracking pace, as a reasonable distance had to be covered if we were to eat our lunch taking in the views from atop Mt Watkins. Progress was swift over vehicle tracks and past a musterer's hut, then back into the reserve to the foot of the mount. The route becomes steep and increasingly rocky leading into bare rock slopes of small rock columns, the best method is to stick to rock hopping, avoiding bracken, Spaniard etc.

We arrived at the 616 m summit at 12.45, just as low cloud started flowing in to limit our view to the north. It was a pleasant lunch stop with plenty to see, on a clear day this would be an excellent vantage point.

Antony Hamel was able to explain the history of the reserve and how it has only enjoyed such status for about three years, his research is to form part of his updated guide to walks around Dunedin with aerial photos, his trusty GPS tracking our every move and plenty of photos taken to illustrate the book, Antony was kept busy ensuring he was recording everything correctly.

The return journey to Bucklands Crossing was mainly over open farmland, with a brief stop at a hilltop cairn and cross recording the death of a pig hunter in the 1940's. The afternoon became hotter and hotter, indeed it could be said that 4 February was the day summer arrived after a rather fickle January. By the time we arrived back at the clubrooms it was definitely a jandals and icecream day.



Descending Mt Watkin

Thanks to Bill for showing us the way and Antony for his interesting historical information. Thanks also to the DCC for securing the future of such an interesting place – it is well worth a visit.

Gordon Tocher for Bill Wilson, Michael Firmin and Antony Hamel.

WYE CREEK – LAKE ALTA

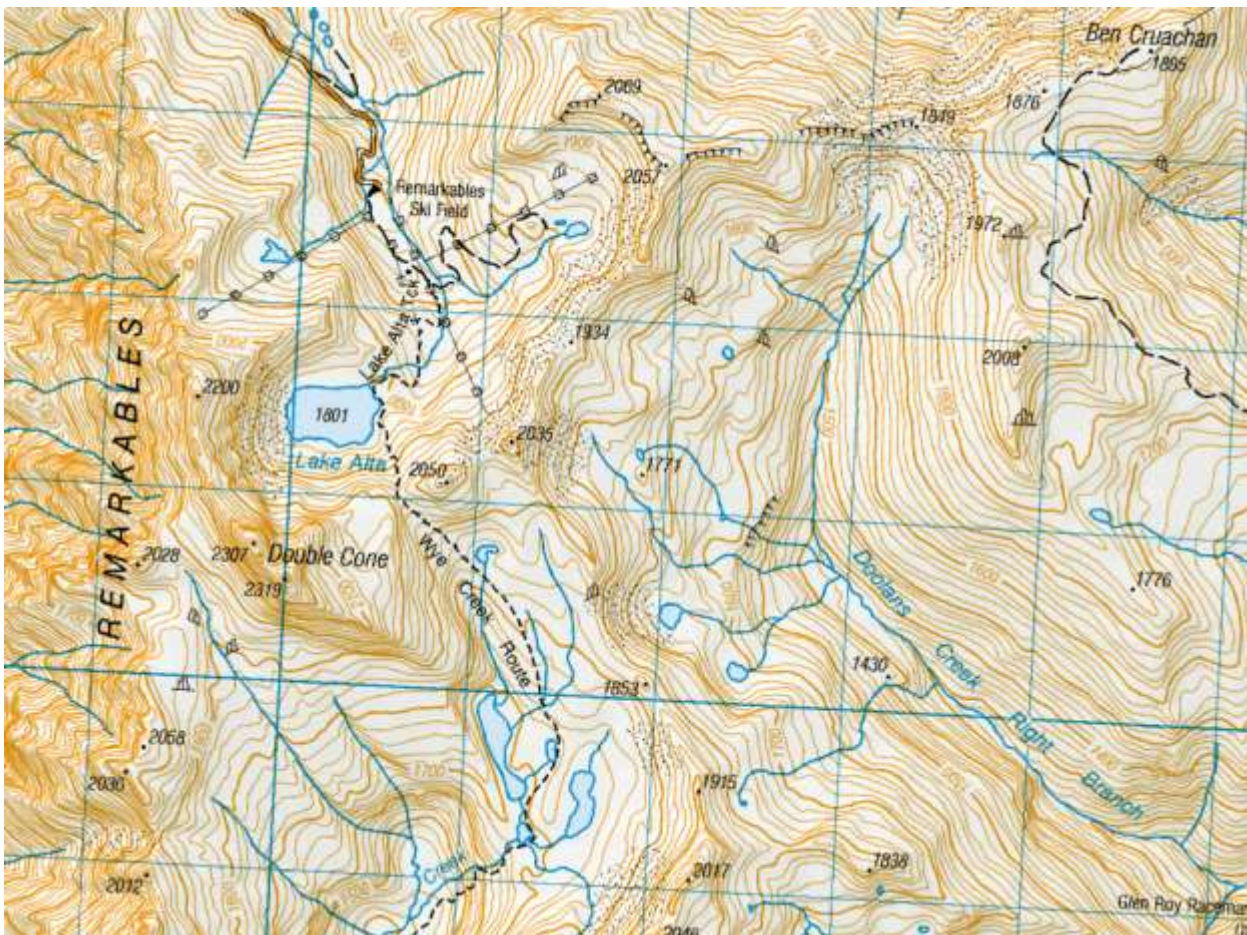
February 17-18, 2007

Author: Michael Firmin

Published in Bulletin 672, April 2007

The Wye Creek Group met at the clubrooms at 6 pm, 13 of us travelling in a van to a car park at the base of the Remarkables by 11 pm. We quickly pitched camp for the night then by 8.30am we were dropped off at Wye Creek, on the Frankton Kingston Road.

The first part of the track up Wye Valley was well marked and quite steep. About 1/3 way up the valley we said “goodbye” to the other two groups who were heading to Lake Hope and Ben Nevis. Our group led by Barry continued up the valley in the hot brilliant sunshine, forever thankful for the water supplies along the route.



At the top of the valley, we had been walking for six hours and climbed 1000m, we then climb a further 300m up a steep tussock slope to the first of the tarns at the headwaters of the creek from which we could look down on the beautiful valley below. After 8 1/2 hours walking and ascending a total of 1300 metres, we welcomed a wash and cooled down in the tarn, pitched

our camp and enjoyed a great three-course meal, surrounded by the beautiful panoramic view of mountains valleys and tarns.

Next day, waking up refreshed, we broke camp, left about 9 am and headed up the saddle to Lake Alta. Here we had beautiful views of Lake Wakatipu and enjoyed our morning tea. Wow! We decided to climb as far as we could up Single Cone, reaching 2280 metres (thanks to Barry's GPS). We then walked back down past Lake Alta, to the Remarkable Ski field building and waited to be picked up. Truly a beautiful area and a great tramp!

Michael Firmin

BUSHCRAFT 2007

February – March 2007

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 672, April 2007

This year's OTMC bushcraft course is fast coming to an end, with the last evening planned for March 27. This year the course may appear to members as low-key, but it has actually been a very busy period for those involved. Although we have a lower number of participants this year, we have still run the same programme as in past years.



On the hills above Tirohanga Camp – the final OTMC Bushcraft Course held at Tirohanga, February 25, 2007

The course started with an introductory evening in late February, followed by the instructional weekend at Tirohanga Camp. Our amazing run with the weather for this weekend continued, with another beautiful weekend. Having a smaller course has meant that the whole atmosphere is more informal for everyone.

In a break from all previous bushcraft courses, we decided not to visit the Silver Peaks, rather we made the decision to combine the practical tramp and river safety day with a trip to the East Matukituki. At last year's debrief we discussed the desirability of tramping in the Silver Peaks, which is pretty demanding, particularly for people just starting out. We felt a trip to a National Park is more representative of tramping in New Zealand, and the obvious bonus is that we could teach river safety skills in a river that is much more than a slow, deep (if you are

unlucky) body of water. It is hard to emphasise what the current can be like when there is none!

The trip itself saw the group travel more or less as one large group to Aspiring Flat in the East Matukituki. Of course, the first obstacle is the crossing of the West Matukituki – even after the high levels during the preceding week (with the school party airlifted out of Aspiring Flat) the river was low and quite crossable. We were again lucky to have two brilliant days, with Saturday especially being very hot. Some of the bushcraft participants managed to provide some additional learning experiences on the homeward leg. There was a perfect ponding area in the river near the carpark which provided a great place to try out pack floatation plus other dunking's. A great way to end a great weekend.



Exiting Aspiring Flats, Kitchener River, March 2, 2007

The course itself is a lot of work, and I thank the following people for the effort and commitment they have given throughout the course:

Introductory Evening: Ann Burton, Matt Corbett, Richard Pettinger, Greg Powell, Alan Thomson, Sue Stevenson, Barry Atkinson, Trevor Deaker and Ian Sime.

Tirohanga Weekend: Ann Burton, Ian Sime, Trevor Deaker, Greg Powell, Alan Thomson, Matt Corbett, Barry Atkinson, Wolfgang Gerber, Debbie Pettinger and Fiona Webster.

Tirohanga Catering Team: Robyn Thomson, Jill McAliece, Chris Burton, with Ann assisting greatly, particularly in the week leading up to the camp.

On behalf of everyone at the camp I thank you all for the awesome job. Well done! Heather Deason also deserves our thanks for the work she has done in previous years, upon which this year's effort was based.

Matukituki Weekend: My thanks to the leaders, Greg Powell, Ann Burton, Jill McAliece & Stuart Laird.

Antony Pettinger

EAST MATUKITUKI (INCLUDING RIVER CROSSING)

March 10-11, 2007

Author: Tomas Sobek

Published in Bulletin 673 (May 2007)

Tramping in my home country, Czech Republic, is not what you call tramping here. As a Czech trampler you would probably wear some old army clothes, perhaps your father's ones. Also you are likely to play a crappy guitar by the campfire during nights and sleep under the sky or in rock bivvies. And if you get too wet on a rainy day you might sleep in bus stop shelters, railway stations, or simply jump on the next train and go home. I did that as a teenager. Later we were hiking in mountains - Carpathians, Alps, and Pyrenees. Sometimes for a week, sometimes more than a month. But when I came to New Zealand my friends warned me - tramping here has specific risks. So, I found OTMC, unfortunately a few weeks too late for last year's bushcraft course. And I was waiting patiently for the next one, occasionally going for a day or weekend trip in between.



Crossing the Glacier Burn – not really the way we were trying to teach! March 1, 2007

Finally, it was here including the most exciting part – river safety weekend. We started straight on Saturday morning. By the time we crossed Matukituki River our feet were properly wet, and they stayed that way until the end of the trip. The track up the valley and further to Kitchener Flats is interesting, none of those highways. At some point even a bit of bush-bashing. But it wasn't that much fun and we replaced the bush-bashing with more river crossing. Isn't it what

you call freedom? The day was sunny and warm, so why not. And as the vast majority of the group was moving slowly, some of us enjoyed a few extras including the Rainbow Valley.

We also learned an obvious piece of wisdom: make sure everybody understands what to do if the group splits. It turned out that a small side trip while waiting for the rest of the group can be more exciting than planned. It was a course anyway, right?



Aspiring Flats, looking across towards Albertburn Saddle, March 1, 2007

The trip finished with some more river crossing in deeper and faster water as well as a backpack floatation exercise. Everybody was tired but you could see many grins, especially in this last part. And Antony? As far as I know this was his last bushcraft course. And can you imagine that he fell in the river, walking through water just above his knees? A few of us know the details but we will keep it secret.

Tomas Sobek

A SOUTHERN TRAMPER TASTES THE TARARUAS

March 2007

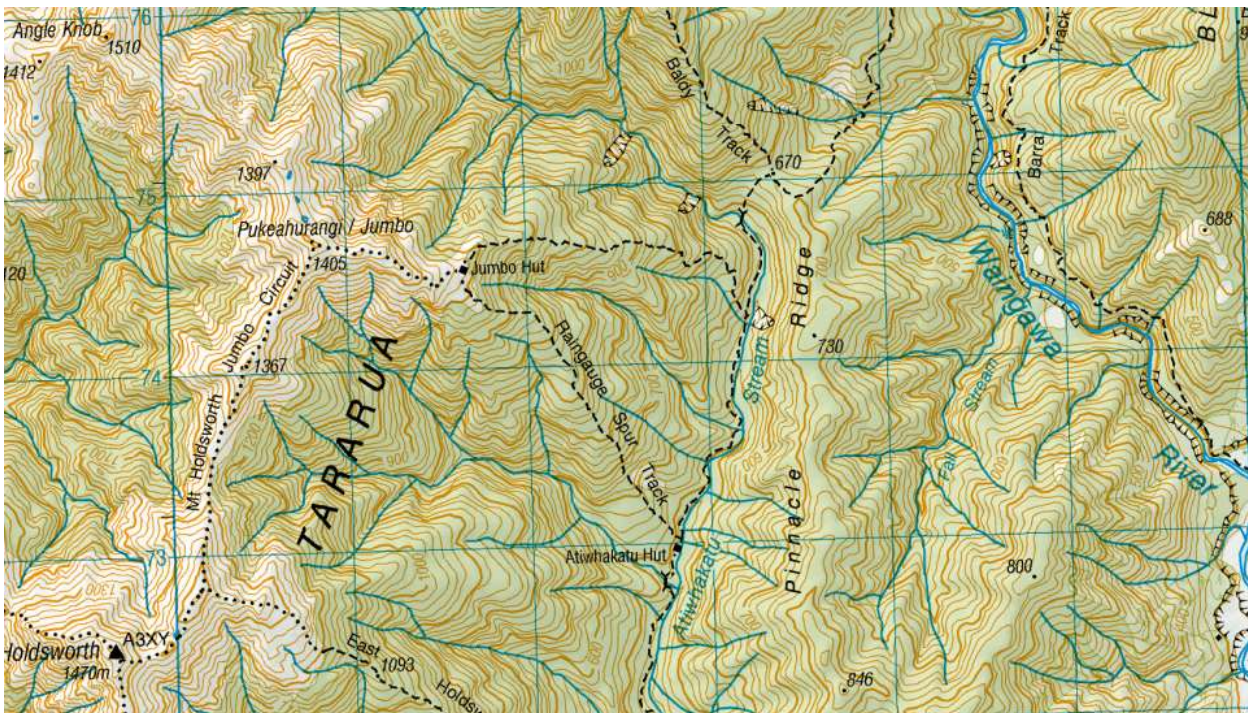
Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 673 (May 2007)

It's almost become a tradition that the March FMC meeting will give me an excuse to get out in the hills in the North Island. 2004 saw me on top of Taranaki while in 2006 we went to on Mt Hikurangi and observed the inside of the island's fifth highest cloud. This year's meeting in Palmerston North meant an opportunity to achieve a long-held ambition to tramp in the Tararuas, the home of organised tramping in New Zealand. I was, however, mindful of the John Pascoe quote, "For sheer miserable monotony of contour, rigour of weather, and bleakness of outlook, it is difficult to beat the Tararuas. They are to Wellington trampers what oatmeal is to Scottish people; dull solid fare which gives them staple virtues", and the reputation for only being clear on top on less than half the days each year.

The Tararuas are the backyard of the three tramping clubs that are older than ours – Tararua (1919), Victoria University of Wellington (1921) and Hutt Valley (1923) – and the Tararua club was used as a model when OTMC was founded in 1923.

Local Tararua enthusiast Andrew Lynch volunteered to arrange something. What he didn't quite succeed in arranging was the weather, so the initial plan to approach from the west and visit Maungahuka Hut via the Tararua Peaks wasn't viable. Plan B involved heading up the Atiwhakatu River and Raingauge Spur to Jumbo Hut, then doing a big side trip out to Broken Axe Pinnacles before heading south to Powell Hut.



A really early start from Palmerston North meant we were underway from Holdsworth Lodge by 7.30. The Holdsworth area is popular with picnickers and day-trippers, so the tracks near the road end are big wide gravel ones. There's a junction not far from the road where a kid on a Duke of Edinburgh Award trip that Andrew had led had gone astray. We couldn't see how she'd headed off on an obviously minor track.

Travel up the Atiwhakatu Valley was pleasant and passed quickly. We were soon filling water bottles at Atiwhakatu Hut in preparation for the ascent of Raingauge Spur. The spur is fairly unrelenting, but we tackled it at a conversational pace, hoping to save our energy for the detour to Broken Axe Pinnacles. Finally the bush was replaced with tussock, and two more minutes saw us at Jumbo Hut. It was very windy, and a peek around the corner revealed that not only were we sheltered from the worst of the wind but the tops around Mt McGregor and the Pinnacles were completely clagged in. Time for Plan C. This involved an early lunch at the hut, and then a short walk across the tops to Mt Holdsworth and Powell Hut – essentially one of the standard introductory Tararua trips. We headed up onto Jumbo and into the teeth of the gale. I have never encountered wind like it. Every step was a battle to stay upright. Despite that, I was very impressed with what I could see. Tussock ridges have always been special places to me, and this place has lots of them.

Our route to Mt Holdsworth was mercifully clear of the cloud that was obscuring most points to the north and west. It stayed on the ridge crest, generally losing a bit of height before the last push up onto Mt Holdsworth itself. A couple of times we found spots that were largely out of the wind, so rested there a bit longer than was strictly necessary, just enjoying the respite. Andrew pointed out various landmarks that to me had previously just been iconic names – Angle, Hector, Cone, the Waiohine and more.

As we headed down the last hill of the day towards Powell Hut, my smug satisfaction at managing to stay on my feet in the gale was shown to be premature, as I was airborne twice in quick succession.

It was early enough to be finishing the day – the early start and cutting out the side trip had seen to that – and we could easily have finished the circuit that afternoon. But a night in the hills is not something to be passed up, so we had a siesta before Andrew conjured up a good feed. My hot book entry said "John Pascoe can eat his oatmeal – this is a great place".

Tuesday dawned very wet, and I resisted suggestions that I shoot up to Mt Holdsworth to experience genuine Tararua bleakness. The track down from the hut is initially steep, but soon becomes a wide track at a comfortable angle, earning its name, Gentle Annie. I'm sure people coming up this way for the first time must curse the steep sting in the tail at the end of the day.

At the Mountain House shelter there were stickers marking the passing of participants in the local hut-bagging/rogaing competition. It seemed to me that they either have a very loose definition of a hut or are desperate for points.

As we approached the road end, the mystery of the Duke of Edinburgh kid's wrong turn was solved. A solitary orange triangle on the minor track caught our eye and had obviously caught hers.

This trip really only provided a taste of the Tararuas, but the scope for lots of non-precipitous tops travel means I'm keen to go back.

David Barnes

SPEECH FROM THE OPENING OF THE REPLACEMENT JUBILEE HUT

May 10, 2007

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 674, June 2007

I would like to start by thanking the Department of Conservation for providing this impressive new hut in the Silver Peaks reserve. It is indeed a special day when we are here celebrating the opening of this new hut, the most significant structure within the Silver Peaks. So, on behalf of the OTMC I wish to thank Robin Thomas, Bill Wheeler and the entire department for this important asset. I know it is well appreciated not only by the club, but other local tramping groups as well as the wider community. The club also appreciates the fact that the new hut will be known as Jubilee Hut.



Jubilee Hut from the access track, May 10, 2007

I would also like to pay tribute to the team that built the hut. As trampers we are all only too well aware of the weather conditions encountered in this valley. Four weeks in here is a long time, and I'm sure the unique qualities of the weather, and the original Jubilee Hut in its last days, were well enjoyed by the team!

The Silver Peaks has always been regarded as the home of the OTMC. The Otago Tramping Club, as it was originally called, was formed in Dunedin in 1923, joining a few other clubs set

up at a similar time. Right from the start club trips have ventured into these hills surrounding us now, and trips here continue to be a regular feature of our trip list to the present day.

With the lack of modern-day transport and roading the OTC looked to the local area for the first trips. Local transport was utilised to access areas we take for granted today. In the city, trams and buses were used to gain access to Flagstaff, from where trips would continue over Swampy Summit and into the southern end of the Silver Peaks. The railway lines north of Dunedin and through the Taieri Gorge were used to gain access to Waitati, Evansdale and Hindon. It was from these points that club members explored the Silver Peaks.



A beautiful Silver Peaks day for the new hut opening, May 10, 2007

Without the equivalent of the modern-day Department of Conservation it was the role of tramping clubs to establish tracks and huts. To mark the 10th anniversary of the Otago Tramping Club a hut was built under Green Hill, suitably named and painted green. Green Peak Hut became a valuable base for club activities and served the tramping community well until vandalism forced its removal in 1988.

To mark the silver jubilee of the OTC in 1948, a second hut was built, across the creek from us now. This hut was completed in 1951 and named Jubilee Hut.

The start of the new hut began in 1947 when a reconnaissance party explored Christmas Creek and Cave Stream for a suitable location for the hut. Two sites were suggested, one at the junction of Christmas Creek and Cave Stream and another site slightly up Cave Stream. These were quickly discounted, and a further site suggested, very close to where we are now. This

too was abandoned in favour of the site eventually chosen across the creek. I'm sure the final site chosen featured a lot less vegetation than what we can see today.

Prefabrication of the hut was undertaken early in 1949, along with site works and the construction of a track up from Christmas Creek. The materials for the hut were railed to Christmas Creek just prior to Easter 1949. From here run holders from Mt John and Lamb Hill stations transported the material to a point halfway down Lamb Hill, overlooking Christmas Creek. Club members transported the material from here to the Christmas Creek / Cave Creek junction over Labour weekend 1949. A further work party in November saw the entire material for the hut shifted to the hut site over one weekend, a very impressive display of club commitment to the project.



The original Otago Tramping Club plaque relocated to the replacement Jubilee Hut, May 10, 2007

Once the materials were on site club members were in a position to erect the hut. By winter 1950 the hut was weatherproof. By March 1951 the new hut was finished, complete with a very prominent stone chimney. The club magazine 'Outdoors' published a report on the hut construction in 1951 and closed with this statement: "Let us all hope that future administrators of the club will appreciate the worth of this splendid asset, the result of so much planning and toil, and keep it intact from the ravages of time and the general public".

I believe that the club did take great care of Jubilee Hut, and I pay tribute to the many work parties carried out over the years to ensure the vision of our forefathers was retained.

Vandalism was never as much a problem at Jubilee as it was at Green Hut, due to its more remote location. Unfortunately, though, time has caught up with the old hut – nothing will last forever, least in this environment. Jubilee Hut has provided much for the OTC/OTMC over the intervening years by way of both work parties and club trips, including many memorable social gatherings over the years.

The OTMC had been aware for some time that the original Jubilee Hut had reached its use by date. I'm sure that there are lots of people who will lament the demise of the original hut, but at the same time are elated with the provision of this new facility. As we officially open the new Jubilee Hut, the OTMC would like to pay tribute to the earlier generation of club members who had the foresight to build a hut in this area, our local hills.

Thank you.

MT SOMERS

March 21-22, 2007

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 674, June 2007

Two words can describe the prevailing weather conditions on this trip: - low cloud. However, although any thoughts of reaching the summit of Mt. Somers were frustrated, we did have an interesting trip examining mine diggings, seeing native falcons, not seeing giant weta (luckily), going by the eerie Pinnacle outcrops, and immeasurably improving NZ –US relations (and earning brownie points with St. Peter in the process).

On the Friday night the Woolshed Creek carpark provided us with some excellent tent-sites, but next morning a blocked toilet and all that goes with it made sure that we did not delay our departure. With commendable bowel control, we headed up the Miners' Track in clear weather, but when we reached the Blackburn Mine the cloud closed in and the temperature dropped, so we pushed on to the high point of Trig R (934m before descending 100 metres to Woolshed Creek Hut.



Woolshed Creek Hut when new, 2007

This hut is new and one of which DoC can be proud. It is built to last, sleeps 20+, but is still relatively basic (i.e. no luxuries) – except for the toilets! The two cubicles are built atop a structure that is almost as large as the hut, and after using them (which we all did – remember

the blocked toilets?) long drops became a distant memory. Much relieved, and after an extended morning tea, we set off for the long slog up to the saddle.

It was along this section that the cloud lifted, and the sun came out. Whereas previously we had been grumbling about the cloud cover, we were now praying for it. As the track got steeper the sun got hotter and the only view we had was the next few metres of track we had to trudge up; but at least we would have expansive views when we reached the saddle – wouldn't we? With perfect timing the mist rolled in and obscured any views. As we ate our lunch each looked at the other and wondered who it was who had annoyed he/she up there that controls the weather (known as "Huey" to previous generations of trampers).



Pinnacles Hut

As we left the saddle it was not only us who descended, but the mist did also. However, as we approached Pinnacles Hut this mist created an eerie atmosphere as it swirled around the fantastic volcanic rock formations that are the Pinnacles. On entering the hut we found that we were the only occupants, so quickly chose our bunks and settled in. However, just as we were about to tuck into our evening meal, it was with perfect timing that a young American couple, Katrina and Dave, entered. As we made room for them, we learnt that they had been married eight months, were on an extended honeymoon, and had been educated at a Christian Evangelical Youth Ministry based in Virginia.

As we Kiwis settled down to continue our evening meals, we noticed that the honeymooners were not eating but merely gazing hungrily at our fare. Not one to mince words, Ray asked them, "Haven't you got any food?" and rather sheepishly they replied, "Not much." How they

interpreted "God will provide" we don't know, but on this occasion it was OTMC members who stepped in. Ray gave them generous portions of his and Jill's meal and Katrina and Dave also threw caution to the wind (in more ways than one) and wolfed down large portions of Roy's rice risotto. As we watched Katrina and Dave clean up our leftovers, Ray accidentally pinged an elastic band onto Dave's plate. Dave's immediate response was "No thank you, I don't think I could eat that". To which Jonette, OTMC queen of the riposte, retorted, "That's the only thing you've turned down tonight!"

The next day, before we began our return trip, Carmel cemented US-NZ relations by leaving our American friends some crackers and biscuits (they were heading out in the opposite direction). Again, there was low cloud cover, so a side trip from the saddle to the summit of Mt. Somers was again out of the question. This so frustrated Roy that he dashed up a minor peak that was under the cloud cover and was rewarded by seeing, not an extensive view, but a pair of native falcons perched on the summit rocks. Another falcon (one of the pair?) came to check out Terry and Carmel by perching on a rock not ten metres from where they were resting.



Trig R, one the routes available between Woolshed Creek Hut and the carpark

After another very pleasant extended stop at Woolshed Hut, we split into three groups to go the different routes back to the carpark. Ray, Gavin, Terry and Carmel returned via the Miners' Track and carried out a detailed inspection of the machinery at the Blackburn Mine. The three Js – Jonette, Jill and John – took the Canyon Route which involved a steep descent, which needed rope assistance, from Trig R and numerous river crossings (some in thigh high water) for two to three hours. Luckily they did not encounter the giant weta which is said to inhabit

Woolshed Creek. Roy and Tony, true to their manly natures, took the more rugged Bus Stop/Rhyolite Ridge track. This took them up through varied terrain (including an aluminum ladder) to 994 metres, across a tussocky plateau, before a very steep, seemingly endless descent to the carpark and a reunion with the rest of the group.

After a quick change (except for Jonette –what does she do behind those bushes?), we headed off in search of a pub which served roast dinners.

Tony Timperley, with much assistance from: Terry and Carmel Casey, Jill and Ray McAliece, Jonette Service, John Kaiser, Gavin McArthur, and Roy Ward.

Postscript: On the day after this report was completed, we received an e-mail from Katrina and Dave. It said: "Hello all, We just wanted to send you all a quick note to tell you that we loved staying in that cozy "Pinnacles Hut" with you on the Mt Somers Track! Thank you so much for sharing your delicious food! What a pleasure it was to meet you all. God Bless, Dave and Katrina." As I wrote in the last line of the first paragraph of this report

AKATORE TO TAIERI BEACH

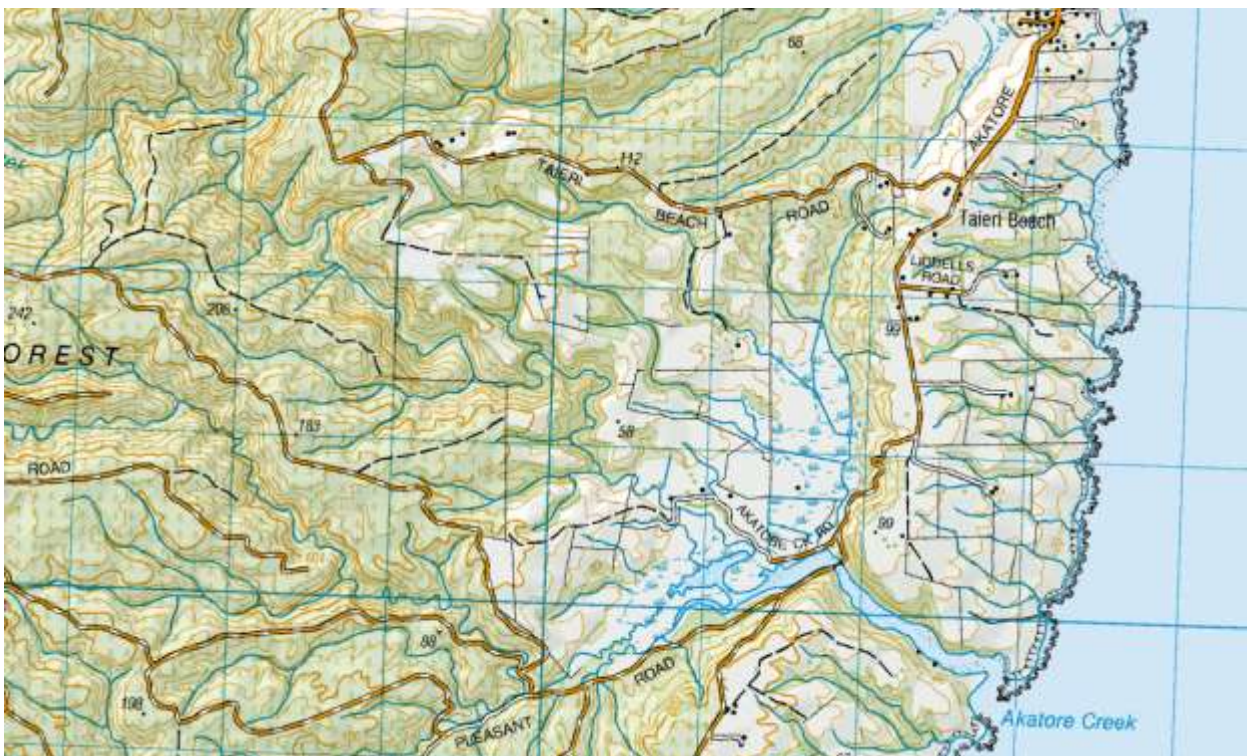
May 6, 2007

Author: Janet Barclay

Published in Bulletin 674, June 2007

It was turning into a gem of a day as 12 of us gathered at Knargston Park (who knows where that is?) on the left, past the fish shop/caravan at Taieri Mouth. We all squeezed into Bronwen, Trevor and Ken's cars for the short trip to our starting point, Akatore. The conversation in our car was based around how to pronounce Akatore and it was agreed that the culturally aware correct pronunciation was in fact Ah/kah/tor/ey.

Anyway, we were soon there. Our local man Trevor gave us an excellent rundown of the local history together with a display of photos he had brought along to show us. And then we were off along to the river mouth, then left along the coastline.



The trip had been meticulously planned to coincide with the tide going out. Perfect for those exciting little moments when you only have split seconds to get round the next outcrop of rocks and up onto safety before a wave wets your boots. There were many squeals of delight as people nearly got caught scrambling to the next high point. Bronwen was an excellent leader by coaxing us at the right moment to "Go now" and making sure we went the right way by pointing it out as she stood up to her ankles in water. At one point we came to a halt at a steep drop-off. Bronwen climbed to the top of a knob to the side and called directions to get around the obstacle – the only time we had to encroach onto farmers' ground by crossing a

fence. Kevin and Katie, however, were determined to conquer that cliff and they spectacularly launched themselves onto the sand.

As we got further around there were spectacular views of Taieri Island and Saddle Hill, and Ken pointed out Pulpit Rock in the Silver Peaks. There were also several caves to explore along the way, much to the delight of eight-year-old Russell, who discovered mice living in one.

With the tricky bits behind us we perched on some knobbly bits (Bronwen's words) on the beach to have lunch. Some cows on the adjacent paddock gathered to watch us but decided that the smell of cheese and pickle sandwiches and berry tea was not what they wanted after all and went back to their grass. Russell discovered that a Tupperware container of chippies doesn't balance very well on uneven rock! He ate them off the sand anyway, "Really crunchy" was his reaction.

A count of heads during lunch revealed that Ken was missing, and he hadn't been seen for a while. Bronwen and Janet had attended a S.A.R. field day just the week before (they even had a handbook at the ready) and thought they may have had to put their skills to practice when Lucy announced that she had spotted Ken fast asleep in the tussocks. Asleep? Was he actually breathing? Ken surfaced and put our minds at ease.

A scantily clad female walked passed soon after. She kept stopping and scanning the scenery, and it was my guess that we had invaded her private sunbathing domain. We decided to carry on and it was not long before Taieri Mouth was in sight. Sharon and Jan announced that they lived just over the dunes and decided to head that way. Ken invited himself to their place for scones, but was sent on his way, there were no scones to be had. Jet skiers could be seen having a great time in the waves out from Taieri Island and it was agreed that we should arrange to do that as well ... next time.

Before we knew it we were back at the cars at Knargston Park, where some chose to relax in the sun while the drivers got taken back to retrieve their cars at Akatore. We all headed home about 3 pm. Some of us stopped at Brighton for an ice cream. A nice finish to a very enjoyable day.

Thank-you to trip leader Bronwen Strang.

Written by Janet Barclay on behalf of Russell Barclay, Katie Grans, Kevin Sprague, Trevor Mason, Ken Powell, Antoinette Righarts, Fiona Sangang, Lucy Skinner, Sharon Tomlinson, and Jan Weir.

MT DOMETT TRIPLE HEADER

January 21-22, 2006

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 675, July 2007

The idea for this trip actually occurred in November 2001 during a successful summit of Mt. Domett. As we had earlier stood on the flanks of Cone and looked across to Mt. Domett, we wondered what a traverse of the opposite skyline ridge would be like. Like many trips, it was added to the list of 'one day we'll get there' trips. Fast-forward to summer 2006 and we were on our way. Even though Danseys Pass is only a couple of hours from town, it is still worthwhile getting away on Friday night to make the most of the weekend. 7pm saw us at the road-end, preparing to walk up Otekaieke River to our planned campsite at the prominent junction above Chinamans Hut. This is definitely my type of tramping - straight up the river, wet feet assured. We arrived at the campsite without any drama and awaited the other teams. Their arrival was not to be, so we enjoyed a peaceful night under the trusty fly.



Mt Domett on left, Little Mt Domett on right, January 20, 2006

The plan for Saturday was to make a grand traverse of Little Domett (1860m), Domett (1942m), Grayson (1660m) and finally Cone (1583m) before returning to our camp. The day was a perfect North Otago day, promising good views from the tops. As we set out from our camp the other teams arrived. They had missed the large cairn at the otherwise inconspicuous turnoff below the hut and camped in an adjacent tributary. Our first target was Little Mt.

Domett and the three parties headed off in varying directions. Most followed the standard route up from the forks, utilising the short length of rope over the one difficult section. The turn-off point from the creek bed is marked by a cairn on the true left, from where you head through scrub to reach the tussock. Upon reaching the rough 4WD track my party followed this to the base of Mt. Domett proper and then veered off, more or less heading straight for the saddle between big and little Domett. Climbing Domett and the surrounding hills in summer is fairly straight-forward, it is really just a rock scramble.



Heading for the saddle that will lead us to Little Mt Domett, January 20, 2006

With the saddle reached it was time for a breather before the last 200m or so to the top of Little Mt. Domett. The weather was perfect and good views were had of North Otago, most of the Waitaki Valley and right through to Mt. Cook. Domett itself didn't look too far away from here so we decided to lunch at our highest point of the trip. A quick rundown some average scree saw us back at the saddle and our packs. Now that we had climbed the 1000m or so from camp it was now just a matter of following the ridge, which proved to be quite simple. The only complaint heard was the intensity of the sun and the complete lack of water on the tops. Hard to please some people! Before too long we were standing on Mt. Domett, certainly a lot nicer here today than the previous visit. What a great spot for lunch, with panoramic views all around.

We found that the best way to drop off Domett was to descend from the northern side and head westwards to get back on the ridge. This saw us back on easy country, but the sun and water restrictions were starting to kick in. As we passed points 1470 and 1570 cloud started building up to the south. Time was getting on by the time we reached Grayson and coupled

with the lack of water and the buildup of cloud we decided to give Cone a miss and head back to our campsite. We descended to the saddle between Grayson and Cone and followed the creek to the junction. In hindsight we were glad we made the decision to abandon Cone as the cloud lowered, particularly over Cone itself. We estimated it would have taken another 2-3 hours to reach Cone from Grayson, given the condition of the party. The view would have been terrible anyway. All in all, it had been a great day out.



Mt Domett right of centre, January 20, 2006

The rest of the trip was rather uneventful - a nice meander back to the road (a chance to get those feet wet again) and out by lunchtime. A very pleasant couple of hours spent under the trees at the Danseys Pass Hotel completed a very successful first outing for the OTMC in 2006.

Antony P for Ann Burton, Barry Atkinson and Ralph Harvey.

ABC CAVE

June 2007

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 675, July 2007

I spent a fair amount of my tramping youth in the Silver Peaks. I still do frequent day trips there, and there are few corners that I haven't visited. One thing I hadn't done until recently was spent a night at the rock bivvy called ABC Cave.

An afternoon start at Queen's Birthday Weekend 2007 sees me heading down the Tunnels Track, past the Depression-era mining shafts, before crossing the Waikouaiti River and beginning the steep climb to Yellow Hut. The hut was built in the sixties, and after being blown off the ridge was rescued by the club. Nowadays, the encroachment of forestry has meant it's only an hour from a road and it's seldom used as more than a desperate lunch shelter. By the time this is printed, DoC will have removed it.



Valley that leads to ABC Cave, Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve

Beyond the hut, the track climbs through regenerating manuka. Reserve status, conferred in the eighties, has done much for the ecology of the area, but the quid pro quo is the loss of some great views. But quarter of an hour sees me beyond the bush and revelling in the tussock tops on cool, clear day. Another 45 minutes and I'm at the top of Yellow Ridge, with most of today's hard work done. Soon, I'm at the saddle near the Gap, once the best

viewpoint in the range, but now desecrated by a bulldozer. Dropping into the catchment that leads to ABC, there's initially no track, but I've been this way many times and I soon pick up the old farm track which I know means that the gathering dusk won't defeat me.

On my first trip here, we investigated various rock overhangs before finding the "right" cave. The sloping floor and the great beech forest campsites nearby meant we weren't tempted to stay there. Now there's a wooden sleeping platform, making the place far more habitable. The cave was named in the sixties by three young rock climbers associated with the club, Alan Smith, Bruce Clark and Colin McKenzie. Tragically, the first two died in separate climbing accidents in the eighties.

I rustle up a feed, then clamber up the hill to watch the stars until dropping temperatures force me back to my sleeping bag.



Rock Tors on Rocky Ridge (looking south towards Point 767m)

The next day, I'm away not long after the sun is up, as I'm walking all the way to Dunedin. I have to return to the Gap but opt to wade through long tussocks on the ridge above the cave rather than retrace my steps up the gully. From the Gap, I'm on the central spine of the Silver Peaks, Rocky Ridge, for a couple of hours. The views are extensive, with a long section of coast visible to my left, and the hinterland ranges on the edge of Central Otago away out to my right. A couple of falcons keep an eye on my progress. Halfway along the ridge I encounter the first of the eponymous rock formations. I recognise one as the turnoff to a cave once inhabited by possibly the region's only semi-permanent inhabitant – the 'Hermit' who sought

solitude here fifty years ago. I also glimpse the new Jubilee Hut in the valley far below. I have plans to spend a night there later in the month.

At the southern end of Rocky Ridge, I contemplate a ten-minute detour to Silver Peak, at 777m the highest point in the range, but the chilly conditions don't fill me with enthusiasm. Instead, I plod past Painted Forest and on towards Pulpit Rock. From there, it's a sharp descent towards the site of Green Hut.



From Pulpit Rock, with route down to Green Hill and Green Ridge

After an early lunch, I push on to Hightop, and leave the main Silver Peaks area. Here, the landforms change from sharp ridges and peaks to broader ridges and rounded flat-top hills. I start the slog up the ridge towards Swampy Summit, a track that's equally popular with mountain bikers as trampers. A biker here is the first person to breach the cocoon of solitude that I've had for the whole trip so far. This is the hill that breaks the spirit of participants approaching the end of the Silver Peaks marathon. The hard surface of the access road across the summit reminds me that I've been on my feet for six hours.

Another forty-five minutes of ridge travel and I'm on the Pineapple Track. A knee-jarring drop of 260m brings me to suburbia but by taking tracks through a bush reserve and along the banks of the Water of Leith I manage to kid myself that I'm still out in the hills. I end my trip at George Street, after some of my best days ever in the Silver Peaks.

David Barnes

ROUTEBURN CROSSOVER

May 5-6, 2007

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 676, August 2007

Right from the start this trip was going to be popular. Within a week of the trip being announced in March the trip list had around 20 people on it. Originally, I had planned to limit the trip to 24 people to avoid overloading the huts, but the demand would have made the task of selecting who should go unpleasant, so we opted to take two vans to each end of the track. In the end 37 people participated in this trip.

The forecast as we left Dunedin wasn't brilliant, but they aren't often right, are they? We ran into rain not long after leaving Te Anau and by the time we reached The Divide it was steady. Differing tactics were chosen here, with the majority of the group electing to walk over to Howden Hut for what was left of the night. The remaining people decided that staying in the shelter and heading away early would give the same result, minus a wet midnight stroll to Howden.



On Harris Saddle, looking over the Hollyford Valley

Saturday morning and even though it was dark it was obvious it was going to be misty day, with only a light rain. The first team from The Divide arrived at Howden at daybreak – after a short stop it was back into the misty rain for the gradual climb to Mackenzie Hut. The walking

was pleasant enough, with all the side creeks thundering below the track bridges – the rain had been quite heavy during the night. Some elected to bypass Earland Falls by way of the emergency bridge; the others were treated to a true display of nature's power. It is amazing how much wind a good-sized waterfall can produce.

The private company, Ultimate Hikes, are building a replacement lodge at Lake Mackenzie which means the DoC campsite is being relocated alongside the lake. Access to the camp will include a cantilever structure over part of the lake. Of course, the new lodge will have all the mod-cons, and for around \$1100 for the guided walk you too can enjoy the facilities provided!

The climbing really starts after MacKenzie, but it is pretty gradual. The views that are normally seen on the section between the lake and Harris Saddle were pretty much non-existent today. There were a few people coming the other way, and it still makes me shudder to see people tramping in jeans, especially in these conditions.



Lake Harris, looking towards the Valley Of The Trolls

The cross-over with the group from the Glenorchy end was made at the Harris Saddle shelter, with great care being taken to ensure the van keys were not mixed up. After a longish lunch break it was back out into the weather and up to the highest point of the trip – Harris Saddle (there was no point in seeking the view from Conical Hill, although some from the opposite direction had been up there). The section from here to Falls Hut was covered pretty quickly. I see the section below Lake Harris is being upgraded before the summer season – it is the roughest section of the track and probably needs it.

A comfortable night was had at Falls Hut, which was almost full. If DoC has any extra money to spend in the area, they would do well to do something about the bunkrooms – they are always dark, gloomy and cramped.

There is not a lot to say about Sunday. The weather had improved greatly with clear skies and sun. The walk to the road-end is a pleasant stroll. Some members of the group chose to descend the Big Slip of 1994 to detour via Flats Hut. Lunch was enjoyed at the shelter before the sun disappeared yet again. With rain imminent we departed, arriving back in town by 7pm.

The 32km Routeburn track is within the ability of most people over two days, and the advantage of the cross-over is obvious, when the opposing road-ends are so far apart. I am planning a further cross-over of the Routeburn in December, but this time with a further twist: we are going to do it in one day, road-end to road-end. I am keen to visit the area in summer but want to avoid the hassle of booking huts and overcrowding. This time I will limit the numbers with fitness being criteria! Keep an eye on the next trip card.

Antony P for the west to east team.

TEMPLE CROSSING

March 24-25, 2007

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 676, August 2007

The final weekend of Bushcraft 2007 visited the Ohau valleys, which provides an ideal range of trips suitable for people just starting out. Three trips were undertaken this weekend: Huxley Forks (and beyond), the Maitland / Freehold Creek crossover and the classic round trip of the North/South Temple Steams.



North Temple – the route to Gunsight Pass is the gut on the left, March 24, 2007

Although I have personally done the Temple crossing many times it never fails in providing a satisfying trip. A group of eight of us set off up the shortish North Temple. I believe that travelling up the North branch first is the better choice. It means you are climbing up the steep rock gut, as well as allowing the trip to be more evenly spaced out over the two days. By the time we reached the bushline the sun was shining brightly, and it promised to be a hot climb to the saddle. The track ends at the edge of the bush but travel is relatively straight-forward from here, crossing the stream as required.

The temperature increased as we entered the gut proper, but water was still flowing freely. Travel up the gut is more or less a rock scramble, but there are some short sections of very hard scree that can be unnerving, especially for those who haven't encountered it before. We decided at the bottom that we would have lunch on saddle at 1pm, and so we did. I can't

recall conditions being so nice. At 1800m the view is impressive, right through to Aoraki / Mt. Cook itself. Tomas and Stuart arrived at the top long before us and had been further up the ridge to the west for more extensive views.



The view to the north-east from Gunsight Pass, with from Rabbiters Peak in the front through to Aoraki / Mt Cook in the far distance, March 24, 2007

This pass is now officially called Gunsight Pass, but it looks nothing like a gunsight. I still believe the correct Gunsight Pass in this area is the one between the South Huxley and the Ahuriri. It definitely looks more like a gunsight than the Temple one.

The descent from the pass is steep to start with, but with good scree. Lower down the scree turns into larger rocks as the gradient slackens. We met up with some fellows who were returning from a couple of days of face climbing below Belfry Peak – it made our efforts look like a walk in the park. Once below the boulder field we followed the stream until we joined up with the South Temple track. A campsite was found in a clearing, where we spent a rather windy night.

Another clear day dawned on Sunday and as we hadn't too far to tramp, we took our time, enjoying the environment as we went. We checked out the relocated / refurbished South Temple hut before having a long smoko in the sun. Even with our dawdling we were still out by lunchtime and spent the next couple of hours avoiding the sandflies. After meeting up with the other groups it was homeward bound. The trip proved an enjoyable end to Bushcraft 2007.

Antony P for Kirsty Ryder and Lynley McCristell.

ROUTEBURN FALLS SOCIAL WEEKEND

July 28-29, 2007

Author: Tramp Dog

Published in Bulletin 677, September 2007

The journey as far as Glenorchy was uneventful with the almost new minibus (only 10,000 km) being quiet enough for the oldies to fall asleep, with the exception of Wolfie who was driving.

However, shortly after leaving Glenorchy the road disintegrated into a muddy, rutted track. Our lovely shiny minibus proved ill equipped to handle the conditions as it banged and scraped its low under-belly along the gravel before finally getting bogged down. At least with twenty willing hands to push we eventually managed to reach the shelter at around 1 am.



Routeburn Flats (upstream of the hut)

Already wet and muddy, there seemed little point in spending an uncomfortable night there, so it was on with head torches and a walk up to Flats Hut. We had a brief stop by the side of a very large icicle that had fallen from high above, and even looked up to see whether there were any more! Anxious shouts from behind to "Get a move on!" finally saw us getting to bed around 3.30 am, much to the astonishment of the one tramper who had retired at 11 pm thinking he had the hut to himself.

The following morning it was decided to continue up to Falls Hut and hope that the road did not deteriorate further before we started home. The hut was reached a little after 12 pm. The cold rain continued all day so that only the really hardy folk ventured further, the rest spending

the time lazing around, catching up on sleep or preparing for the evening's festivities. Most made some effort for the fancy dress with a rather bad rugby team, penguin, TV head and even Japanese nightwear. First place was tied between a sexy burglar, a doctor and a rubbish bag. The quiz was entertaining and at times mentally challenging, we all learnt something - 'eructation'.

On Sunday the rain eased, and the land was bathed in mist and low cloud, which made it enchanting. All in all, a wet and wonderful weekend.

Tramp Dog

MUD, WET AND WATERFALLS

July 29, 2007

Author: Janet Barclay

Published in Bulletin 677, September 2007

It was a very wet Sunday morning as two cars headed to the Catlins with the promise of seeing some waterfalls at their most spectacular best. Ian had the company of two lovely ladies - Asha and Kristina. I, in the other car, had the company of two eight year olds - Russell and mate Taylor. So I missed all the goss, and had to make do with endless "I Spy" and "Paper, Scissors, Rock"!

We stopped the cars at the Rosebank Hotel and from there Ian led us on a very picturesque backroad trip to Owaka. We carried on and stopped at the Purakanui Falls car park and took a reasonably dry walk to the falls through gorgeous native bush. Ian took the boys under his wing and attempted to give them a lesson on native tree names. Asha and I thought it would be a good idea for them to go on in his car whilst us girls travelled together in mine. But when he started talking about smoking the bark of the fuchsia tree, I quickly changed my mind about that.



McLean Falls, The Catlins

The falls were gorgeous! Kristina, being an enthusiastic photographer, made the most of where we were. Apparently, the overcast conditions were very favourable for the type of

photos she wanted. Luckily the nature of our daytrip was very relaxed, and she enjoyed taking her time to get some perfect photos.

Next stop was the Tautuku Adventure Camp for lunch. We definitely timed it right, as a group had just left and there was still a fire on in the dining room. We sat down beside it for the most cosy lunch I've ever had on a tramping trip. The caretaker informed us that another school group from Taieri College were due to arrive in the morning. She had just finished cleaning up and left one door open for us to get out. The minute she left Russell dropped his drink all over the clean floor. After searching frantically for a mop of some sort and finding none, we managed to sop most of it up with a roll of toilet paper - the fire took care of the evidence nicely. Then it was quickly off to the next falls, Maclean.

I had devised a cunning plan for avoiding having the boys drape mud all through my car and it was working very nicely. After a walk they hopped into the boot, which was lined with a big tarpaulin. There they removed their gumboots and jackets before shimmying over to the back seat. The process was done in reverse before they hopped out for the next walk. I recommend this practice and will definitely use it again.

Matai Falls was our last stop and then it was off to Kaka Point. Ian, Asha and Kristina did the grownup thing and had sophisticated drinks and nibbles at the pub, while I bought the boys an ice cream and headed home.

All in all, it was a great day out and I would recommend it to anyone who hasn't yet seen the Catlins waterfalls. What better way to spend a wet Sunday?!!

Janet Barclay for Ian Sime, Asha Jesudasm, Kristina Bach, Russell Barclay and Taylor Todd.

SWAMPY – SILVERSTREAM – BURNS SADDLE

August 5, 2007

Author: Lucy Jones

Published in Bulletin 677, September 2007

The five of us piled into David's car. He was our trip leader for the day. We set off to the top of the Northern Motorway. We were full of energy and rearing to go for our big adventure of the day. It was very funny because our leader said, "Who are all these people turning up on a very wet morning?". We walked up the muddy Leith Saddle Track in the drizzly rain. It wasn't cold. The track took us to the top of Swampy and we got a fantastic view of Waitati and the surrounding farmland. Walking along the top of the hill we came across the unusual object. It was a long white rectangle with dishes poking out to the sides. David explained that it was a navigational aid for aeroplanes.



The track went along to Trig Q and from there we dropped down to North Coal Creek. It was a steep drop down and I went very cautiously. Thank goodness there were some trees and rocks to hold on to. At the bottom we joined up with Racemans Track near a stream. We had to cross the stream and I thought it was fun getting my feet wet in the cool water. Further downstream was a waterfall and we watched as the water gushed and thundered down. This is where we stopped to have lunch. We needed to boost our energy levels for our big climb up Raingauge Spur in the afternoon.

David and Jonette told me the difference between a ridge and a spur. A ridge goes along the skyline and a spur is a zigzag around corners and bends. I think I've got it right. Rain gauge Spur wound through manuka bush. It was a steady climb and it was a relief to reach the top and see blue sky and sunshine. From there we chose Rustlers Track instead of Burns Saddle as the vegetation was more interesting even though the track was a bit longer. We walked through pretty bush and trees on a narrow track. Near the end it opened into tussock country. The last part of our walk was very muddy and reminded me of quicksand.

"Have you ever heard of sore muscles?"

I would like to say thank you very much to our trip leader David Barnes for an awesome day. Written by Lucy Jones on behalf of David, Jonette, Barry, Lindsay and Trevor.

JAUNT TO JUBILEE

Date not recorded

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 677, September 2007

A busy schedule means I don't often have the ability to grab a weather window and head for the hills at short notice. One wintry Friday, I noticed that an apparently good forecast coincided with a quiet weekend. An email to Eric Lord got an agreement to head for the Silver Peaks after we'd watched our sons' soccer match on Saturday.

Snow had blanketed the area a fortnight before, and its departure had left roads and tracks very sloppy. An hour of mud saw us at the site of Green Hut. The forecast was proving wrong, and it wasn't long before the parkas were back on. The grunt up to Pulpit Rock took us into the murk, and the snow. Lots of footprints suggested the possibility of a full hut, although the mushy snow meant it was hard to tell which way they were heading. We wondered if the club trip the previous weekend had been postponed a week. One last uphill saw us on the summit of Silver Peak and starting the long descent of the Devil's Staircase. It's 300m of increasingly steep track, and near the bottom there's lots of gorse to grab if you slip.



Lower section of the Devil's Staircase, dropping into Cave Stream

The new Jubilee Hut is quite high above the stream, and the track climbs straight up opposite the old hut site. I'd been told of a sidling shortcut, so we took it – a mistake. After a lot of time clambering through bracken, it was dark as we reached the hut. A party of four from South Canterbury made us welcome, and we were joined soon after by three German students who'd come in the easier but less interesting route from Silverpeaks Station. Three parties on a mid-winter's night makes DoC's decision to opt for a ten-bunk design appear prescient, and it seemed my comment in the hut book at the opening a few weeks before, that the hut would lead to a renaissance of interest in the area, was coming true.



Then highest point of the Silver Peaks, 777m, looking across to Rocky Ridge and Kilmog

After a cosy night, we emerged to look at some fairly clagged in tops. The long way out, via ABC Cave and Rocky Ridge, didn't seem that appealing in those conditions, so we headed back to the Staircase – this time sticking to the track. Two thirds of the way up, as we walked into the cloud layer, we encountered fresh snow that had frozen quite prettily on the vegetation and rocks. Photo stops involved very cold fingers.

As we descended towards the Green Hut site, it was goodbye snow and hello mud again. The weather didn't encourage us to linger, so it was straight to the car and home for lunch.

David Barnes

MATUKITUKI TO LOCHNAGAR (AND RETURN)

March 19-26, 2005

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 678, October 2007 & Bulletin 679, November 2007

I like to believe that one of the main reasons clubs like the OTMC exist is to encourage people to visit areas that aren't commonly visited – areas where there are no tracks and no huts, areas where you need to use those under-utilised navigation skills. Following on from my desire to get people thinking of trips away from the usual tracked country I had allocated a period on the summer '05 trip card for a '10 Day Trip'. Several suggestions for a location were put forward and in time consensus had decided on a neat circuit within Mt. Aspiring National Park. We started at Raspberry Flat and headed to Lochnagar via Shotover Saddle and the upper Shotover. From Lochnagar we planned to go to Dart Hut via the head of Pine Creek, Snowy Creek and Rees Saddle. A return to the Matukituki was planned via Cascade Saddle. Finally, here is our story.



Climbing to Shotover Saddle from the East Matukituki, March 19, 2005

All trips benefit from the organisation and planning put into them prior to leaving town. For a trip of 10 days good planning is essential if you intend to be self-sufficient in food and equipment. Food, of course, is a biggie. Our party of four decided to have communal lunches and dinners, with breakfast being self-catered for, due to our inability to agree on what to have. Snacks would also be self-provided. This method worked very well for us. Breakfast

ended up as either (instant) porridge, muesli or, in Ann's case, high powered protein bars. For our initial lunches we had bread and toppings (we each carried a loaf each). Once the bread had gone, we went with Ryvita (aka corrugated cardboard!). Dinnertime each night consisted of soup, a dehy meal followed by chocolate biscuits. No one went hungry (although Mike's pack only seemed to contain extra food!) The meals were great, which justified the huge effort that goes into preparing them.



First campsite, in Tyndall Stream – drying out on day two – March 19, 2005

Cooker fuel is another major weight factor, and although we tried to minimise what we took, it was still a significant weight. As the area we were travelling through was remote we made sure we had a mountain radio. Although we didn't need it for any emergency it was great to be able to get the weather forecast at each night's sked. We made a deliberate decision not to take crampons, but we all had an ice-axe. The trusty tent-fly was our accommodation for camping, which kept weight down again.

After leaving our vehicles in Wanaka (for security reasons) we traveled to Raspberry Flat via shuttle bus. Our first day dawned grey and gloomy, but with high spirits we set off from the shelter. Soon enough the first groans from the average 25kg packs were heard as we tried to peer through misty skies towards Shotover Saddle. The first inevitable debate about which route to take wasn't too long in coming. Our choices were to follow the 'always right!' Moir or choose a diagonal sidle towards Shotover Saddle, further downstream from the conventional route. A note for future travellers over this route: stick to Moir, it would be far quicker. Our route was across tussocks to start with, but soon we hit a band of scrub about the same time as the rain started (or we walked up into the rain). Visibility soon dropped to virtually nil so it

was time for the GPS. We had pre-loaded the GPS with our planned 'waypoints' so in the field it was merely a matter of selecting which waypoint you wanted to get to and follow the arrow. We trudged on towards Shotover Saddle, enduring a miserable lunch in the murk. Eventually we left the snowgrass and headed for the scree on top of the saddle, but the view just wasn't to be. With rain remaining persistent it was now important to get as low as we could in the Tyndall and find somewhere to camp. There are some nice ledges not far below the saddle, but at around 1400m they were still too high. Finally, we found an average area at about 1000m on the true right of Tyndall Stream. I have certainly had better campsites, but beggars can't be choosers. We cooked our first meal in the fly and settled in for a long night, with the rain continuing to bucket down. We made a bad mistake here by not putting our packs at our heads – the rain pooled very quickly in the fly, and from here onto (and into) Ann's sleeping bag. Not a good start to the trip.



Heading towards the head of the Shotover (in the background), March 21, 2005

The rain did ease up the next morning, and by lunchtime it had stopped. Rather than push on with wet gear we elected to spend a second night in the Tyndall and dry out our gear.

The third morning dawned clear, so it was back into it again. Because we were forced to drop so low into the Tyndall to camp, we now climbed back up to the ridge dividing the Tyndall from the Tummel Burn. Then it was just a matter of following the ridge down until you come to a side gully exiting into the Tyndall. We picked up the cairns as this gully led us to the bushline. There is a marked permalot track through the bush to Tummel Burn Hut (which is shown on the wrong side of the Tyndall on the map). Lunch here gave us a further opportunity to dry out our damp gear.

Now that we were in the Shotover Valley proper travel became easier. Apparently, there is a 4WD track of sorts on the true left, but somewhat higher than the river. As the day now was quite hot, we elected to travel down the river. Excepting one area where we had to climb through the scrub this worked quite well. Once past the upper gorgy section it was pleasant strolling to Hundred Mile Hut, which is where we spent the third night.



Lunch at Tummel Burn Hut (head of the Shotover) March 21, 2005

Day four was to be an easy hike from Hundred Mike Hut to Lochnagar, but it was actually tougher than we had expected. We followed a well-defined 4WD track from the hut to Lake Creek. Lake Creek flows very fast at the crossing point, but there is a cable-device here to get across on. Unfortunately, the other team were in front of us and had left the device unreachable, so it was a good practice of mutual river crossings techniques for us. The track from the river crossing to the 'Goatel' is poorly marked and quite a grunt. It did, however, offer good views of the subterranean outlet from Lochnagar itself. It must have been quite spectacular when the rockfall that formed the lake came down around 600 years ago. Above the Goatel (a rather open bivy spot) was the sub-alpine scrub and easy travel. After the less-than-ideal marking lower down it was now simply a matter of following the snow poles to the hut beside the lake.

One of the aims of our trip was to reach Lochnagar and enjoy some time here. The day by now had turned hot and sunny so it was a swim for some first. We had lunch on one of the few beaches beside the lake but were slightly put out by the appearance of a helicopter. After landing on a beach at the top of the lake it spiraled straight up before heading off towards the Rees Saddle. Our peace restored, the afternoon was spent airing out gear and lazing about.

Ann tormented herself by gazing at the route ahead – little did she know that this was the easy side! The other team bunked down in the hut while we made do with one of the few flat spots right beside the hut. The forecast for day five was good so we planned an early start as we wanted to travel right through to Dart Hut if possible.



Lochnagar and Hut, March 22, 2005

Away at 6am and more-or-less uphill from the word go. Today we were heading to the ridge between Lochnagar and Pine Creek, then following ledges (as per Moir) around to the basin in the head of Pine Creek. From here it was a matter of dropping into the Snowy and thence onto the Rees Saddle. Sounded relatively simple, but there were a couple of interesting sections.

The climb to the ridge was straight-forward, where we had a breather to admire the view. From here Moir suggests traversing at the same level for about 200m before dropping into Pine Creek. We started doing that, but it soon became apparent that the ledges were non-existent, and we decided to drop down a steepish snowgrass gut. Unfortunately, the tussocks were very short and didn't give much to hold on to. Eventually the terrain levelled out somewhat. We were now heading to a very broad ledge which meant climbing up again. To get to the Pine Creek basins we climbed down one last rocky section to reach easy country. A check of the GPS and we were on our way. The head of Pine Creek is a vast and beautiful area, with great views. We lunched at a point between Pine Creek and the Snowy, at a grand elevation of around 2000m. By this time wispy cloud was burning off, giving us good views of Mt. Tyndall and the Tyndall Glacier. The Rees Saddle also became visible, and appeared to be so far away, although it was only 5km as the crow flies.



Head of Pine Creek – we sidled from here to the larger patch of snow, March 23, 2005

With some trepidation we started the 600m descent to Snowy Creek, but it turned out to be an easy route to pick. I really enjoyed the wander down the Snowy itself, crossing the creek as required. After the unknown of the morning, it was nice to be able to really relax, knowing we would soon be on the Rees Saddle ready for a quick jaunt down to Dart Hut. The climb back up to the saddle certainly felt more than the 200m we actually climbed.

The journey to Dart Hut was undertaken at a fast pace – before we knew it, we were crossing the swing-bridge and were there. The replacement hut was still relatively new and is very nicely designed. The trip from Lochnagar to Dart Hut was extremely satisfying and remains one of my favourite tramping days ever.

We had planned to spend the next day at Dart Hut, with a day trip up the Whitbourn Glacier. Unfortunately, the forecast on the mountain radio was not good, with marginal weather for the next day, and poor weather for the foreseeable future. We decided that our best opportunity to get over Cascade Saddle would be the next day (Day 6), so it was another early night ready for a 6am departure.

Away from the hut under headlamp again, following the well-trodden track up the upper Dart. The day was murky, and we didn't get to linger and admire the peaks. Another idea we had before we left town was to camp near Cascade Saddle and spend a day in the area. The mist put paid to this but for us first timers here we were still impressed with both the size of the area and the environment. One thing I hadn't really looked at was the route the track took to get to the West Matukituki. After traversing from Cascade Saddle to Cascade Creek some of us

were surprised at the last climb required to reach the Pylon. This was a 200m climb we had overlooked, however we lunched at the Pylon with absolutely no view, in fact we were lucky to be able to see each other in the mist.



Dropping into Snowy Creek en-route to Rees Saddle, March 23, 2005

We took our time down the steep descent to Aspiring Hut, with some of us lingering for what turned out to be the last views of the trip just above the bush-line. From here there is not too much to report. We had planned to finish our trip by a circuit comprising Scotts Biv and French

Ridge in the head of the West Matukituki, but the deteriorating weather certainly put paid to that idea.



Upper Dart Glacier, from near Cascade Saddle, March 24, 2005

Our party ended up spending two relaxing nights at Aspiring Hut. The hut warden was able to arrange the shuttle bus for us via radio, so our last day saw us departing Aspiring Hut in the rain in time to meet the van. I picked up the pace on the last section due to a hidden agenda – unbeknown to the rest of the party I had stashed some beer (and wine for the lady) in a creek near the shelter and was quite keen to recover it in time to celebrate the end of the trip. I'm sure Mike thought I had lost it as he watched me anxiously lifting rocks in the now flooded stream, but sure enough, the stash was soon located. A nice cold drink and some well-travelled Easter eggs was a perfect end to a very enjoyable trip. The weather could have been kinder at times, but I still had a fantastic trip with some really neat people.

My thanks to Ann Burton, Mike Brettell and Dave Chambers for a most satisfying trip.

Antony Pettinger

SNOWCRAFT WEEKEND

August 4-5, 2007

Author: Derek Mycock

Published in Bulletin 678, October 2007

After a short delay because no one had the key to unlock the trailer, seven intrepid adventurers under the leadership of Matt, Ralph and Dave, set out on Friday evening. A short stop in Alexandra for refreshments with entertainment provided by local entrepreneurs who were selling beer from a keg for \$1 a mug, unless you were young and female when it was on the house!



OTMC Snowcraft 2007 – Remarkables, August 4, 2007 (PHOTO: Matt Corbett)

We were greeted on Saturday morning to a lovely sunrise making it much easier to get up at 7am, and we were all up and away to the snowfields at the Remarkables for 9am. Ice axe in hand (the uphill side) we were soon kicking steps up and down a slope getting used to moving on snow.

After which, with crampons attached, we went higher up in search of a steep snow slope so that we could practise throwing ourselves down. First on our bum, then on ours backs, using

the ice axe to arrest the fall. Try going down headfirst, and don't forget to keep your feet up. So, we did.

After we had all managed to cool off with snow down our necks we walked over to Lake Alta. The ridge looked tantalisingly closely, but with the day drawing on it was back to the car park for 4.30pm. A lovely warm shower washed away the aches and a hot meal had everyone feeling good about the day and retiring to bed early.

Unfortunately, the weather deteriorated overnight and after waiting and hoping for some improvement we decided to return home

Derek Mycock

RONGOMAI AND HONEYCOMB TRACK

August 12, 2007

Author: Teresa Gutteridge

Published in Bulletin 678, October 2007

Flash floods were the first thing to come to mind when we pulled up at Evansdale and discovered the gigantic beaver mound of tree trunks and branches piled against the bridge over Careys Creek. We came across several more of these piles up the river and surmised they were from the 2006 Anzac weekend flash flood. More recent high waters were evident in flattened sedge all the way up the first part of the track that follows the river. The actual track was dry by and large but there was plenty of cold water wading as the track crisscrosses the river. Gaiters served well and all but myself were equipped! Luckily good old woolen socks do keep their warmth.



Rongomai Track

John, a newcomer to Dunedin and keen tramper, announced as he came out of the last river crossing that his feet had only just got wet, thanks to the virtues of his German brand boots and super gaiters. This was truly impressive, as we seemed to become enchanted with the enticing pools of the swift and clear-flowing Careys Creek and obsessed to find Waitiripaka Falls on our way out, having missed it on the way up. We chased a side creek in the only feasible manner, wading and rock hopping for 5 or 10 minutes but didn't discover the Falls. This would

be a great little summer venture to pass a hot afternoon and hopefully be rewarded. This time of year don't forget your spare clothes!

This tributary creek hides just downstream from the spot in the bank that started us up the Rongomai Track. We immediately started up steeply and followed a narrow ridge line through regenerated bush, eventually coming to pine forest which is currently being clear-felled. For a short section we had to do some nifty foot work on the edge of the ridge, clinging to branches, as we maneuvered our way up and around some of this fell that covers the track. The track then became overwhelmed by imprints from hoary great felling machinery. The DOC sign marking the turnoff to the track that traverses the gully over to the Honeycomb track, was completely split in half. As the wreckage didn't look set to abate, we decided to take this gully track rather than carry on up to Mountain Road.

The gully is sheltered and north facing one and seemed seldom used. Well-formed steps manage the steeper muddier patches and huge chest-high ferns often hid our footfall, giving the feel of re-discovering a secret garden. The track seemed to come to an end about halfway, but looking down to our left we saw a huge sculpted old tree trunk fallen down over steps that led the track at a sharp right angle. There was no choice but to maneuver our way, squeezing down past it. In wet weather this track would be very slippery. Pig rooting was evident and a bridge that once served for crossing the natural watercourse at the bottom of the gully, was completely torn out of place, and beached on its side further downstream. But no matter, when we reached the top of the adjacent ridge and joined the Honeycomb Track, we were unanimous in feeling we had just experienced a pretty magic little walk and were puzzled that the DoC signpost gave no indication that the track existed from that side.

As nobody had cleared a picnic spot for us, we stopped up for lunch on the track itself before the Honeycomb started a steep descent back down to Careys Creek. In the summer it would be good to time things to be down at the creek for a break. It certainly beguiles with its cavernous nature and smooth rock formations, and the redundant water-pipes for the Seacliff Hospital supply from Black Gully Dam add intrigue from times gone by. The descent itself was dry slippery and we had to watch our step as much as with the wet mud sliding potential in the gully. From when you reach the creek again it is probably about an hour's walk back out to Evansdale.

We went in about 9.40am and came out at 3.15pm. With the Fall's sideshow and a couple of twenty-minute breaks, that means it took us the recommended 4 and a half hours. We weren't the fastest paced on the block for sure – and enjoyed a fair bit of discussion about the flora, as another newcomer to Dunedin with us was Kate Barnard from the UK, who is on a yearlong working experience at the Botanical Gardens. If I remember rightly, I think debate sided on the Honeycomb being the steeper track.

Either way, you're going to get a good cardiovascular workout for part of the journey. It was a pleasant and varied hike in the good company of Lucy, Kate, John, Janet, and Bronwen. Thanks go to Bronwen for organising us, wielding the map and keeping us on track.

Teresa Gutteridge

PISA RANGE

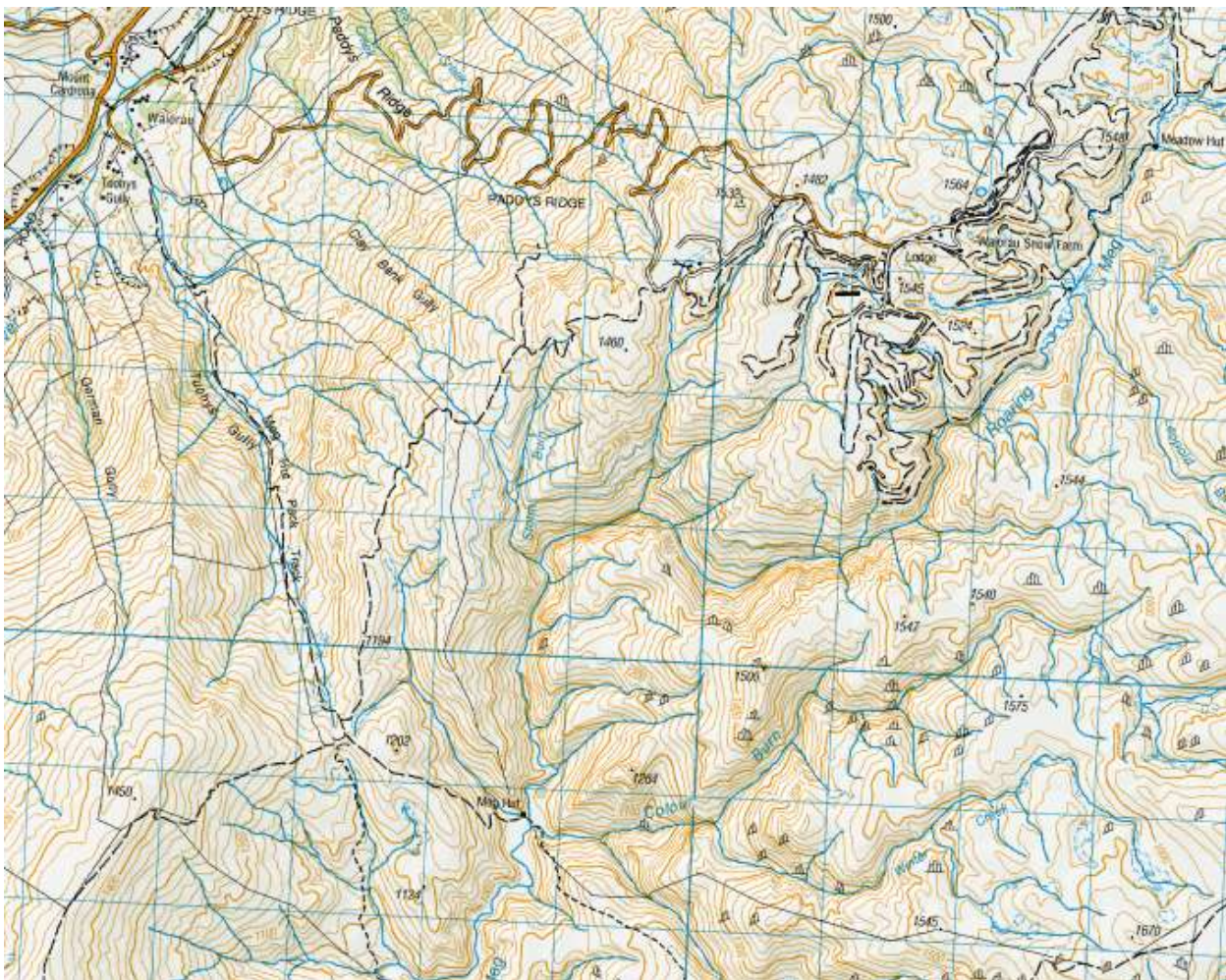
August 11-12, 2007

Author: Harry Griffiths

Published in Bulletin 678, October 2007

One day the trip to Mt. Armstrong from the Brewster Hut will come off. Perhaps next year will prove third time lucky. However, this year the forecast heavy rains from the north-west were materialising as the party gathered and so Plan B, a foray into the south-western Pisa Range using the Meg Hut, swung into action. Strong winds spat twigs and rocked the van on the way over to Alex and the weather prospects were sufficiently grim that we were granted the luxury of a Saturday lie-in at Chateau Somerville.

Leaving Wanaka to sort out its power cut we sped up the Cardrona Valley to Tuohys Gully and the steady 5km pull up the pack track to Tuohys Saddle. (Choose your preferred spelling – the recent Terralink sheet offers both) Heavier showers set in at the saddle and, when the hut was spotted below the descent was taken at a gallop by some. Over a brew a number of options were offered. In a steady downpour some of the party split to explore the valley of the Meg, taking in the Miners Hut, while a couple selflessly offered to stay and look after the hut.



Phil, Wayne, Trevor, Andrew, and Pam donned as much gear as possible and set off to see how far they could get towards the Roaring Meg Power Station. They had to jog at times to keep warm in the sleet, or was it the pace set by the leader in his running shoes? Several river crossings were made until the cold, wet conditions made the decision to return an easy one. Unfortunately, one of the party leapt a little too eagerly across a flooded stream, injuring her leg, so the pace was a little more sedate and conversational on the return trip.

With a decent blaze and a few cookers in action the hut warmed up. Soon the exotic odours of mulling wine mingled with those from the steaming socks. However, it's inclusion on future trips should be treated with caution as on this occasion it unleashed a flow of increasingly outrageous puns, so much so that two folk erected tents to escape the torture.

Sunday dawned with clear skies and a thin covering of snow to the door. Quickly away across the Meg, we zig-zagged up the poled route of the pack track towards the south-west, racing the sun to the tops where we hoped to find some hardened slopes on which to practice axe techniques. Great views opened out of snow fields bathed in the rosy glow of the rising sun while periodic avalanche protection booms from the neighbouring ski fields told of their heavy overnight falls.

Satisfyingly crunchy at times but frustratingly prone to plunging folk into thigh high drifts, the snow was never hard nor steep enough to permit useful axe practice so the group took in the views with a snack before the return to the hut. Here a final brew was enjoyed, basking in the sun and casting an eye over the dying stand of pine nearby. Black and gaunt they stood and, while they might be a reminder of settlers' early presence in the region, their destruction had been decreed by DoC to prevent their seeding the locality.

A last push up to the saddle before the descent to the van, reached just as the sleet drifted in again. Thanks to good planning, we had made the most of the window in the weather.

Harry Griffiths and Pam McKelvey for Wayne Hodgkinson, Grant Burnard, Lynley McCristell, Andrew Donnelly, Jonette Service, Trevor Mason, Alex Tups and Kristina Buch. And thanks to Philip.

LIFE IN THE DEATH ZONE (MT COOK AREA)

August 25-26, 2007

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 679, November 2007

It was still dark on Saturday morning when Phil emerged from his bivi-bag after a sleepless night, with the wind swirling around him, and stumbled the ten metres to the warmth and snugness of Thar Lodge, where he was greeted by the harmonious snores of his fellow trampers all cosily tucked up in their bunks. It was with sweet revenge that Phil woke the five hardy (foolish?) souls who had indicated on the Friday that they wished to climb up to the Mueller Hut and possibly also scale Mt. Ollivier.



Aoraki / Mt Cook from Thar Lodge, August 24, 2007

An hour later, we sleepily set off to mount the steps to Sealy Tarn. Gusts of wind were felt, but these were few and far between and seemingly not too strong. Tony, in order to relieve the monotony of the seemingly endless steps up to Sealy Tarn, decided to count how many recycled railway sleepers, or parts thereof, had been used. On reaching the top he had counted 1158.

By now we were into some snow, although not enough to warrant crampons. The wind was gusting occasionally but was not a problem. After about a further 100m climbing we decided to don crampons before heading up what had now become a snow-face. As we progressed,

crampon and ice-axe skills learnt in Snowcraft were put to good use, with the novices being instructed on the finer points (excuse the pun!) by the experienced Phil and Ralph. We were still being buffeted occasionally by gusts but were able to cope with this by hunkering down until they passed. This was just a minor irritant – the sky was blue, the views magnificent, with Mt Cook in all its glory. “Doesn’t this view just blow you away!” gasped Grant. His words were prophetic.

It was with some relief that the snow-face leveled out into a basin just below the ridge which we were to climb to next. But our relief was very short-lived. We heard a whistle which became a roar as the strongest wind yet hurtled down off the ridge, bringing with it plate sized pieces of frozen snow which came at us like frisbees. This was no mere gust – it became constant. It was then that we realised that we were in – THE DEATH ZONE! As if to confirm our worst fears, Grant was blown away – this time literally! However, he used his considerable experience to regain his balance as we all hit the ground, hung on to our ice-axes and waited for the wind to ease. When it did, very slightly, we came to a unanimous decision: - it was time to beat a retreat!



Red Tarns. Looking towards Aoraki / Mt Cook, August 26, 2007

With frozen snow frisbees disintegrating into powder as they hit our retreating backs, we retraced our steps. Whereas previously we had stopped briefly to wait out the odd wind gust, now we were having to hunker down in the constant wind, awaiting a brief respite so we could make a short dash before again plunging our ice-axes into the snow and hanging on. Nevertheless, we were able to quicken our descent by further utilising our Snowcraft skills of sliding down a snow slope and self-arresting – all good fun! As we descended, we noticed that

the wind did not decrease and when we reached Sealy Tarn we were still having to cope with a very strong wind. We certainly would not have climbed any further if it had been blowing this hard earlier. As it was now lunch time, and we needed to recover from our ordeal in “The Death Zone”, we found a sunny, sheltered spot in which to relax and contemplate the real meaning of life.

After along lunch and a “power- nap” by Phil, we raised our weary bodies to begin the long descent. We had to take care as the wind was still strong, so it was with some relief that we completed the 1158 steps and stepped onto the valley floor. On the walk back to Thar Lodge we passed a number of strolling tourists, who recognized immediately by our demeanour that we had just returned from a life-threatening situation. Whilst we posed obligingly for numerous photos, we were heard to frequently repeat loudly the words “Death Zone” and “It was hell up there”, to the gasps of the now large, awe-struck audience as they translated the monumental significance of these words from their phrase books. Finally, they parted respectfully to let us continue on our weary way.

No such respect, however, was forthcoming from the other OTMCers. As we staggered into the lodge gasping “Death Zone” and “cuppa tea”, their response was to not even look up from their reading but merely to point to the billy. Ray McAliece even had the effrontery to continue snoring from his bunk! But we knew where we had been and were able to cement our bond by making our own cups of tea.

The next day, fully refreshed and undaunted, the Death Zone team with new member Kate Bernard, mounted the 1073 steps (yes, Tony counted these also!) to Red Tarn and then on to climb Sebastopol. We reached the summit to be greeted by beautiful 360-degree views, which made up for our ordeal of the previous day. The wind had dropped but still had a cold bite to it, so we did not linger.

On our return to Thar Lodge, we found that our fellow OTMCers, who had followed us up to Red Tarn before returning, had cleaned out the lodge, so we had nothing more to do than change and pack our own gear. Thanks guys!

Tony Timperley, with much artistic license (but no hyperbole) for: Ralph Harvey, Philip Somerville, Grant Burnard, and “Young” James.

Postscript: Tony sent an e-mail to DoC asking them to confirm the step numbers. He received a reply which gave him the name of a psychiatrist who specialises in treating Anal Retentive Behaviour.

ON ASSIGNMENT

July 2007

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 679, November 2007

It's ten past eight on a July morning, and I'm perched precariously on a rock on top of Buttar's Peak. The sun is trying to peek above the cloud bank out to sea, but there's no warmth in it. A howling southerly is trying to push me off my rock, and my gloves are failing to keep my fingers warm. Logic says if I moved ten metres I'd be enjoying the view and out of the wind. But I'm not here just for the view. I'm "on assignment" with renowned outdoors photographer and author Shaun Barnett, who is researching for a forthcoming project, and he needs me in this specific spot for a photo.



Mt Cargill from Buttar's Peak

My brief had been that we needed to get to the Organ Pipes and Sandfly Bay, with a good sunrise shot to start the day. Anything else is a bonus. The map suggested that the sun wouldn't be making an early appearance at Sandfly Bay, and it might even be obscured by Mt Charles at Sandymount. So we found ourselves driving up the very icy road to Mt Cargill in the pre-dawn and heading across to Buttar's Peak. Photos secured, we carry on to the Organ Pipes, pleased to have respite from the wind. Quarter of an hour clambering around the Pipes sees enough shots taken, and then it is back up to Mt Cargill.

Although a late afternoon visit to Sandfly Bay is a better time for seeing penguins, the lousy forecast means we head there as our next step. Starting at Sandymount, we first wander over to The Chasm and Lover's Leap. The coastal cliffs really are quite spectacular, especially with a big sea running. This is my first look at Lover's Leap since the development of the crag, and it is interesting to speculate on where some of the routes might lie. From there we carry on around the loop track, avoiding the ongaonga, and then up to the trig on Sandymount. Here I leave Shaun to make his way down the dunes to Sandfly Bay, while I take the car round to Seal Point Road.



Sandfly Bay from below Sandymount

As I stride across the beach at Sandfly Bay, I am surprised there are no sea lions. Last time I was here, there were fifteen – outnumbering the penguins. I make a mental note to find out if it's likely to be a seasonal thing. I arrive at the hide a minute before Shaun – perfect timing. More photos, of course, and then we're retracing my steps to the car. There are a few gulls and some oystercatchers circling above us, but today this doesn't seem to be a key site in NZ's wildlife capital!!

As we slog up the dune, the forecast rain finally hits. We flag Flagstaff and Tunnel Beach – the bonus tracks – and head home for lunch, then shoot down to the museum for a look at the Andris Apse exhibition. While there, I get a text from Barry Flamank saying he's on Flagstaff and it's sleeting. Looks like we made the right call.

David Barnes

UNEXPLORED SILVER PEAKS

October 7, 2007

Author: Tracy Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 680, December 2007

Maybe it was the heavy rain in the night, or Richard's suggestion that you must be crazy to do these trips, or the size of the keen crowd who were away at Mt Somers, or the forecast for a cold front at midday. Whatever it was, only one person turned up to do this trip with us. Trevor had seen quite a bit of the Silver Peaks but wanted a bit of a workout somewhere not too lame. Unfortunately, I was the one who turned out to be lame – a frozen shoulder that I thought would be OK unless we had vertical fern like two years ago. Richard wasn't therefore keen to commit to a remote or too lengthy venue and, as it happened, none of us had been on all of the new maze of tracks on the west of the Swampy–Flagstaff ridge. Trevor was disappointed, saying he would leave that country until he was in his seventies.



Anyway, we parked up at the foot of Freeman Track and set off into that system of tracks, emerging on Swampy to eat lunch in the shelter of a building. By this stage more than my shoulder was frozen so I decided Richard should cut his lunch short and then we could all go home. I felt better going home, until I slipped in a creek and wrenched my already delicate shoulder. So, sorry Trevor, you didn't get much of a day, but we enjoyed your stories very much.

We explored the maze and had no real idea where we were at some stages, and bush-bashed in true masochists' style when we lost interest in the track.

Richard was very upset to see all the Darwin's barberry growing alongside the tracks. He began pulling out the first ones he saw, but soon lost interest as the job would take a few more people than us three. He would have been still up there.

Tracy for Richard Pettinger and Trevor Mason

SPIERS ROAD – BEN RUDD’S – DAVIES TRACK

November 4, 2007

Author: Richard Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 680, December 2007

There were seven keen folk at the clubrooms for this easy walk on a morning of beautifully fine, warm conditions. Some people who might have been having too much fun the night before didn't show up by 9:10 am, so we set off to Spiers Road, Halfway Bush, and juggled a car around to Booth Road.

The trip starts up through a patch of gorse on the only legal road to the Club's Ben Rudd's property. We noted that some of the all-important white marker posts have been wrenched out of the ground, at least one being bent somewhat. There must be large elephants working these fields.



Lower section of Speirs Rd Track

If you couldn't see the posts, there was a line of sweet violets to follow. There was no sign of the adjacent farmer, but we did see Shrek and his/her many mammoth-woolled kin. The group did some interesting speculation on various values. We passed Ben's walls and speculated on the evidence of the little fellow's remarkable strength. A bit of holly and Darwin's barberry was encountered before we struck off up the rest of the road to the Flagstaff walkway. A brief stop for breath and views on the summit, and then we set off in a straight-line bearing towards Swampy Summit. Veering too much to the left, we struck the most rugged piece of the trip, the

bit of the property between the reserve and the firebreak, which took a while to negotiate. (This section was rougher than anything the Unexplored Silver Peaks trip a few weeks before had stumbled upon.)

We took in the results of the vegetation management below the skid site then dropped to the shelter, where the water hole looked very sad indeed. Packs were left while we investigated the Douglas seat and the "Rhodies Gone Wild", most of which were "Rhodies Gone To Seed". Never mind, it still looked great: a Himalayan Experience on our doorstep, complete with bamboo (yoiks!). The lovely streams there made a welcome refreshment stop. The tiny scattered remnant of Darwin's barberry on that bit of the Jim Freeman Track was dispatched.



Ben Rudd's Shelter (3rd hut/shelter at this site)

A sunny, convivial lunch was had on the Linda Mercier seat, and nobody seemed in a hurry to leave. But the threat of a SW change had been ever-present and threatening for an hour or so, so we thought we'd try to get home before it came through. No such luck. Although we didn't muck around, it reached us when we were in the open just before the bush of Davies' Track. It became very cold and damp quite fast. The bush was dark, but really pretty in a spooky kind of way, with the occasional hobbit running under our feet.

At the bottom of the track, the leader became all emotional about what a privilege it is to be able to lead trips to such nice places with such nice people. Then we went home.

Thanks to Alan Scurr for bringing his nice, new car. To Roy and Kate for walking home from Booth Road despite the rain and saving us more car shuffling. Richard Pettinger for Roy Ward, Hilda Firth, Janet Barclay, Andrea Crawford, Kate Barnard and Alan Scurr.

TIMARU RIVER – CORNER PEAK – DINGLE PEAK

November 3-4, 2007

Author: Greg Powell

Published in Bulletin 680, December 2007

Timaru River feeds into Lake Hawea and is reached via a gravel road from Hawea Flats township. On Friday a group of seven keen trampers set off in two private vehicles, camping that night at the Timaru River car park. Fine weather and a nice, sheltered spot meant a reasonably comfortable night's sleep for all.



Corner Peak (left), Lake Hāwea, Lake Wānaka and through to Mt Aspiring / Tititea from Dingle Peak, November 3, 2007

After a leisurely breakfast the group set off up the Timaru River following an angler who had arrived during breakfast. The river itself is quite gorgy in places and was much higher than I remember last time I tramped this route. A number of river crossings were required and in spite of the high-water levels these were all done safely (even though one of the ladies stated she had got her “naughty bits” wet!) Once out of the gorge the going was easier and we reached the musterers hut where Deer Spur creek feeds into the main river. After a quick breather we broke left from the Timaru River and headed up Deer Spur Creek. 30-40 minutes later we left the valley floor and climbed a steep ridge that heads to the saddle between Corner Peak and Mt Dingle.

Once we were further up the ridge, we identified a suitable camping spot for the Saturday night and at this point the group split into two. Four continued on up the ridge to the saddle and from there on to Corner Peak, while the other three dropped their packs near the campsite and proceeded to Mt Dingle.



View towards Hāwea township from Dingle Peak, November 3, 2007

By about 7.30 pm all had arrived safely back at the camp site to enjoy a very social and delicious meal. It was a little windy and looked like the rain forecast for Sunday might arrive early. However, this was not to be, and we all enjoyed a bit of a sleep in on Sunday before commencing our descent back down the ridge to the Timaru River and the cars.



Head of Lake Hāwea and into the Hunter River from Dingle Peak, November 3, 2007

An enjoyable weekend with all achieving their tramping goals. The small number made for great company and a lot of fun and hilarity.

Greg Powell for Ann, Hilary, Dianna, Antony, Jonette and John

OTMC COMMITTEE (2007-08)

President – Antony Pettinger

Vice President – Greg Powell

Secretary – Jill McAliece

Treasurer Ann Burton

Chief Guide / Transport – Antony Pettinger

Bulletin Editor – Robyn Bell

Membership Secretary – Ian Sime

Social Convenor – Fiona Webster

Social Convenor – Tony Timperley

Social Convenor – Ralph Harvey

Day Trip Convener – Roy Ward

Conservation & Recreation Advocacy – David Barnes

Library – Kathryn Jeyes

Publicity – Ralph Harvey

Publicity – Tony Timperley

Gear Hire – Matt Corbett

Gear Hire – Dave Chambers

SAR – Teresa Wasilewska

Website – Antony Pettinger

Clubrooms – Terry Casey

Hon. Solicitor – Antony Hamel

OTMC TRIP PROGRAMME 2007

Month	Date(s)	Specific Trip	Leader
January	21	Aramoana / Heyward Point	Gordon Tocher
January	27	Little Known Trips On Flagstaff	Bronwen Strang
January	28	Mountain Bike (Mystery Location)	Matt Corbett
February	3-4	Rees Valley	Antony Pettinger
February	3-6	West Matukituki / Rees Crossover (via Cascade Saddle)	Ann Burton
February	4	Mt Watkin	Bill Wilson
February	10	OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon	Roy Ward
February	11	Te Papanui / Lammerlaws	Ian Sime
February	17-18	Hector Mountains / Ben Nevis	Barry Atkinson
February	18	Post Office Creek via the Shoreline	Antony Hamel
February	24-25	Bushcraft 2007 (Tirohanga Weekend)	Antony Pettinger
February	25	Chalkies / Powder Creek (with a twist)	Ran Turner
March	3-4	Arthur's Pass National Park	Matt Corbett
March	4	Taieri Ridge / Crater Lake	Alan Thomson
March	10-11	Bushcraft 2007 (East Matukituki Weekend Trip)	Antony Pettinger
March	11	Classic Silver Peaks Circuit	Ross Davies
March	18	Racemans Track	Carmel Casey
March	24-25	Bushcraft 2007 / OTMC Trip (Ohau Valleys)	Antony Pettinger
March	25	Last Chance To Visit Yellow Hut? (Hightop - Rocky Ridge - Tunnels)	David Barnes
March	31	Wine Trail	Wolfgang Gerber
April	1	Three Ridges (Yellow / Rocky / Yellow)	Roy Ward
April	6-9	Makarora Region	Antony Pettinger
April	15	Quarantine Island (Family)	Cathy McKersey
April	21-22	Mt Somers	Terry Casey
April	22	Bendoran	Antony Hamel
April	29	Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX)	Teresa Blondell
May	5-6	Routeburn Track (Crossover)	Antony Pettinger
May	6	Akatore to Taieri Mouth	Bronwen Strang
May	13	Possum Hut - Eucalypt Spur	Roy Ward
May	19-20	Mavora Lakes (Kiwiburn)	Ray & Jill McAliece
May	20	Woodside Glen / Lee Stream	Ran Turner
May	27	Possum Busters	Gavin McArthur
June	2-4	Hump Range / Port Craig	Matt Corbett
June	10	Somewhere In The Silver Peaks	Wayne Hodgkinson
June	16-17	Luxmore Hut / Mt Luxmore	Debbie Pettinger
June	17	Bobbys Head / Tavora Reserve	Tony Timperley
June	24	Quarantine Island (Family)	Cathy McKersey
July	1	Yellow and Hermites Ridge	Bill Wilson
July	7-8	Jubilee Hut (Traditional OTMC Mid-Winter Social)	Greg Powell
July	8	Stone Hill - Purehurehu Point	Gordon Tocher

July	15	Skyline Track (Mt Cargill Section)	Kathryn Jeyes
July	22	GPS Familiarisation Exercise	Teresa Blondell
July	28-29	Winter Routeburn (from Glenorchy - with Southland and Hokonui Clubs)	Wolfgang Gerber
July	29	Catlins Waterfalls	Ian Sime
August	4-5	Snowcraft (Iceaxe and Crampons)	Matt Corbett
August	5	Swampy / Silverstream / Burns Saddle	David Barnes
August	11-12	Winter Armstrong (plus Makarora Options)	Philip Somerville
August	12	Mt Allan / Mt John	Roy Ward
August	19	Lizzie's Back Track Tour - Fun and Adventure	Alan Thomson (2)
August	25-26	Mt Cook Area	Peter Stevenson
August	26	Nardoo Revisited	Antony Hamel
September	2	Green Ridge / Link Spur / Raingauge Spur / Rollinsons Track	Bill Wilson
September	8-9	Eyre Mountains (Five Rivers)	
September	9	Sandfly Bay / Lovers Leap	Wilbert Stokman
September	16	Taieri River Track	Terry Casey
September	16	SAR: Silver Peaks Familiarisation (non OTMC Trip)	David Barnes
September	22-23	French Ridge	Dave Chambers
September	23	Exploration From Waipori Power Station	Antony Hamel
September	30	Mt Cargill / Grahams Bush	Michael Firmin
October	6-7	Mistake Creek - Hut Creek	Matt Corbett
October	7	Unexplored Silver Peaks	Richard Pettinger
October	13-14	Combined SAREX	Teresa Blondell
October	14	Saddle Hill	Alan Scurr
October	20-22	Mt Titiroa (from Borland)	Antony Pettinger
October	28	Doggy Day Out	David Green
November	3-4	Timaru River / Mt Dingle	Ann Burton
November	4	Spiers Road - Ben Rudd's - Davies Track	Richard Pettinger
November	11	Quarantine Island (Family)	Cathy McKersey
November	17-18	Jackson Bay - Stafford Bay	Ann Burton
November	18	Yellow Ridge / Rocky Ridge / Jubilee Hut / Yellow Hut	Trevor Mason
November	25	Pyramids / Victory Beach	Alan Thomson
December	1-2	Routeburn Crossover (In One Day)	Antony Pettinger
December	2	Outram Glen / Lee Stream and Beyond	Ran Turner
December	8-9	Lake Roxburgh (End Of Year Celebration)	Ray McAliece
December	9	Nicholls Creek / Bivouac Rock / Jim Freeman Track	Bill Wilson
December	16	Jubilee Hut	Michael Firmin

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (FEBRUARY TO MAY)

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 670, Jan/Feb 2007

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.

1 February
Waitangi weekend - no club night - enjoy your holiday, whether in the hills or painting the house!

8 February
Steven Swabey will talk about his experiences caving in Australia

15 February
Philip Somerville and his team will talk about their summer adventures in the Otago Wilderness

22 February
Bring Your Own - photos, videos, slides, powerpoints, etc and tell us what you've been up to.

1 March
David Paulin will show some historic film of the Routeburn/Blackburn, the Wilkin and the Remarkables.

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convenor) at "fionaw@otmtg.co.nz" or 487 8176 if you can help.

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

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 671, March 2007

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.

8 March
Ken Mason will talk about his tramping and mountaineering career spanning ~50 years

15 March
Joan Green will talk on hiking the South Downs Way

22 March
B.Y.O. - show us what you've been up to!

29 March
Phil Aland from the University of Otago will talk on high altitude physiology, fitness and acclimatisation. *(A lively, knowledgeable speaker who has won several awards for his innovative research - highly recommended! Ed)*

5 April
No club night - enjoy your Easter break

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convenor) at "fionaw@otmtg.co.nz" or 487 8176 if you can help.

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www.otmc.co.nz

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 672, April 2007

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.

5 April
It's Easter, so there is no club night - enjoy your break

12 April
Antony Pettinger will talk about his expedition to the Antarctic

19 April
Barry Atkinson, Ann & Chris Burton and Ann's dad will talk about their recent trip up the Hollyford Track

26 April
B.Y.O. - and you know what that means!

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convenor) at "fionaw@otmtg.co.nz" or 487 8176 if you can help.

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

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 673, May 2007

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.

3 May
Hob Cunningham talks about Rogaining - a sport similar to orienteering that is rapidly gaining in popularity

10 May
Heather Dunkley will talk about the Friendship Force - a travel group with a difference

17 May
Marc Schallenberg will talk on Didymo - what it is and what we as trampers can do to avoid spreading it.

24 May
B.Y.O. - bring your recent slides, photos, videos and tales to share

31 May
Queens Birthday - no club night

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convenor) at "fionaw@otmtg.co.nz" or 487 8176 if you can help.

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

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (JUNE TO SEPTEMBER)

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 674, June 2007

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.

7 June
Phil Ainslie from the University of Otago will talk on high altitude physiology, fitness and acclimatisation. *(A lively, knowledgeable speaker who has won several awards for his innovative research - highly recommended! Ed)*

14 June
Dave, Ralph and Alan will talk about their nine days in the St James - Nelson Lakes area

21 June
Graeme Loh will talk about the "Melina's Ark" Catlins trout eradication conservation project

28 June
BYO = Bring Your Own (photos, slides, videos etc and tramping tales)

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convener) at "flonaw@otmtags.co.nz", or 487 8176 if you can help.

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

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 675, July 2007

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.

5 July
Phil Ainslie from the university of Otago will talk about the effects of high altitude physiology, fitness and acclimatisation.

12 July
Garth Irwin will talk about kayaking around Canada and Alaska

19 July
Pharmacist Paul Larson will discuss what a pharmacy can offer trampers (and travellers)

26 July
BYO - tell us about the trips you've done lately

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convener) at "flonaw@otmtags.co.nz", or 487 8176 if you can help.

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

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 676, August 2007

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.

2 August
Harry Griffith will talk about his experiences day hiking in Greece

9 August
Teresa Wasilewska and Co. will talk about SAR, what it is and what role there is for trampers

16 August
Derek Mycock will talk about his time touring Afghanistan (before the American troops arrived)

23 August
Bring Your Own - recent tramping tales illustrated.

30 August
OTMC Annual General Meeting - your chance to have your say in the running of your club. Put your name forward. Get elected. It's your chance.

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convener) at "flonaw@otmtags.co.nz", or 487 8176 if you can help.

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

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 677, September 2007

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.

6 September
Terry Duffield, Rob Sealey and Pam McKelvey will talk about their experiences tramping the Landborough, Broadrick Pass, the Huxley and Hunter Valleys

13 September
Chuck Landis will talk about his time in Mustang in northern Nepal - a place he describes as the last forgotten kingdom

20 September
Bring Your Own trip photos, slides, powerpoint presentations etc to share.

27 September
First Aid Refresher talk by our own Fiona Webster - you never know when you'll need this valuable information!

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OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

