

OTMC TRIP REPORTS

2010

Sourced from the 2010 OTMC Bulletins



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TRAMP, PICNIC AND CELEBRATE – BEN RUDD’S

November 1, 2009

Author: Janet Barclay

Published in Bulletin 703, February 2010

Ten of us left the clubrooms in three cars and headed to Spiers Road where all but the drivers disembarked. The three of us then drove to the end of the tramp at Booth Road, and the two other drivers came back to Spiers Road in my car. Re-united again, we all set off up the notorious 'paper' road with Roy reminding us to stick to the track for fear of being shot at by the irate landowner who guards his territory with a vengeance.



Ben Rudd's Shelter

We made our way up to Flagstaff and then down the track which leads to Ben Rudd's Hut site. There our numbers swelled to twenty as we joined members of the Ben Rudd's Trust for the short walk to the Hut site. Here a very pleasant two-hour lunch break was had which included speeches by members of the Trust and then the cutting of the enormous cake to celebrate '10 years plus' since the Trust began. Russell (Janet's son) was chuffed to be asked to join the dignitaries with his hand on the knife as the youngest club member present.

After cake and tea and idle chatter, some of the party visited the Rhododendron Dell while some of us appreciated the little toilet and more idle chatter until the party re-united for the

homeward tramp. We decided that half the party would take the Pineapple Track route and the other half the Davies Track and this is where we parted ways.

The Davies Track group was sure that we would have to wait at the end for the other group, especially as we were hoofing it. But to our surprise, they had arrived at the cars about ten minutes before us. We all jumped into the two cars just as it started raining. One car headed back to the clubrooms and the other dropped Russell and me off at our car in Spiers Road.

Thanks to Roy and members of the Trust for a very nice Sunday tramp/picnic/celebration.

Janet Barclay on behalf of the group.

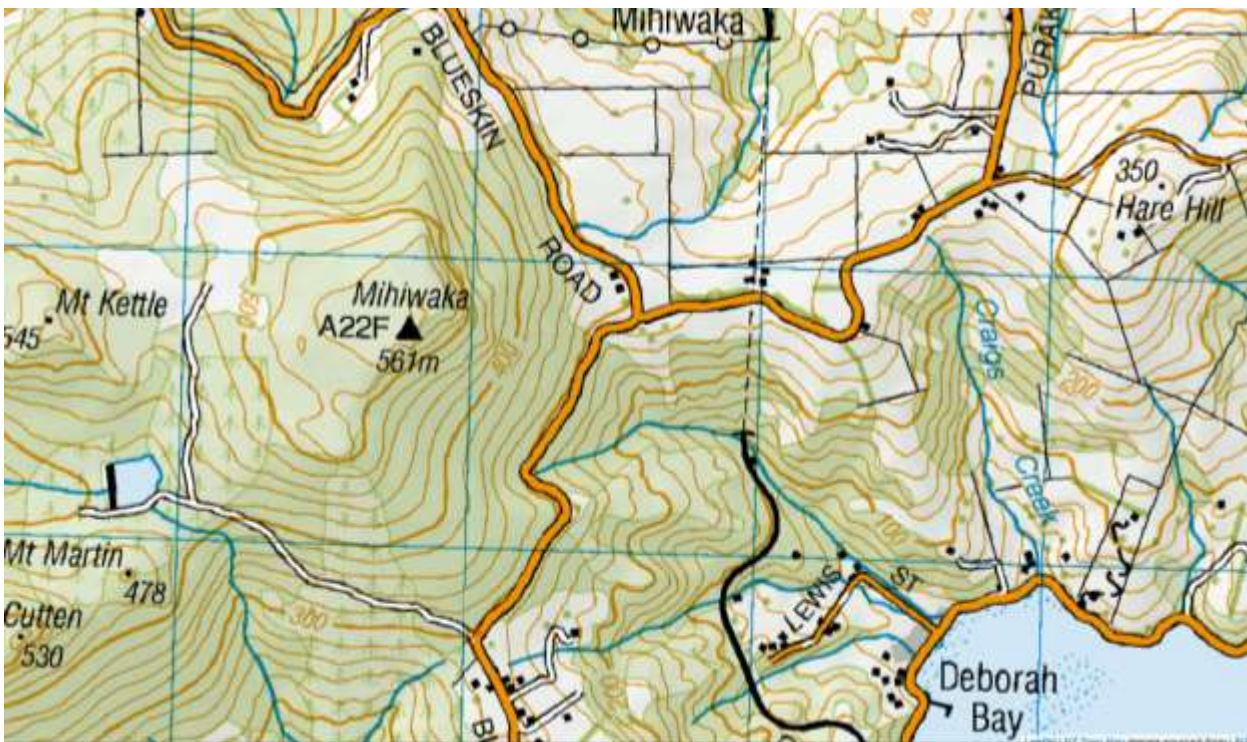
MIHIWAKA

November 15, 2009,

Author: Sue Taylor

Published in Bulletin 703, February 2010

An elite group of three met at the Deborah Bay car park, 2 km past Port Chalmers. As we set off up Lewis Street our leader, Gordon, gave us a potted history of the area and the Lewis family, famous for producing 22 children! Gordon had used his local connections to gain permission to cross two private properties, so we headed directly uphill past the local dynamite store shed and on to farmland. Next history lesson was the donkey track which zigzags up through manuka to the site of a brickworks. We soon discovered the reason for the brick works when we peered in the entrance of a brick lined 1.3km long railway tunnel.



On and up we went making our way through untracked regenerating bush and then farmland until we came out near the junction of Blueskin Road and Purakanui Road. We crossed the road and headed up the track toward Mihiwaka. After a short climb we came to some large lichen covered rocks - apparently climbing venue. The quality of the track deteriorated after this and we scrambled up until we came out on to the tops then along to the trig at Mihiwaka – a 561m climb from sea level. Unfortunately, the overcast weather limited our views from the top but on a fine day they would be stunning. The return trip followed more or less the same route and finished with a quick dash to the vehicles as the rain started. Thanks to Gordon for his organisation.

Sue Taylor for Gordon Tocher and Karen Keith

CLASSIC SILVER PEAKS

November 8, 2009

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 703, February 2010

There were just four hardy souls who met at the clubhouse on Sunday, 8th November. Three (Darryl, Ross and Tony) were refugees from the cancelled Kay Creek/Scott Creek tramp, which meant that if this weekend trip had gone ahead, day trip leader Roy would have been the only one for the Classic Silver Peaks Sunday tramp. What a pack of pikers the rest of you are! The weather was fine and clear, if a little windy, so it must have been Roy's description which included the prophetic words, "This all takes about 10 hours ..." which put all of you off. For the three ex-Kay Creek/Scott Creek members, we felt that as we were all psyched up for the weekend tramp, we needed to make up for it with this trip – and we weren't the only ones. (Wait, there's more!)



Yellow Ridge, as seen from near The Gap, Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve

After negotiating a number of chassis crunching potholes between Semple Road and Mountain Road (Isn't this road supposed to be maintained?), and checking that we had our torches, we set off at 9.50am for a long tramp. As we reached the Green Hut site in well under the hour, we decided that morning tea would be taken at Pulpit Rock. As Ross had not scaled the Pulpit Rock summit (760 mtrs) before, he climbed up for the magnificent view whilst his lazy companions ("bin there, dun that") hunkered down out of the wind to eat and drink.

The next stage was the long haul to Jubilee Hut via Silver Peak itself (777 mtrs) and down the very steep Devil's Staircase. A tail/cross wind kept us cool and enabled a good pace to be maintained. When we reached Silver Peak we were soon joined by a couple of male teenage trampers, one of whom was vaguely familiar (Wait, there's more!), who had come up from Jubilee Hut. After the usual tramping banter with the teenagers and some Sir Ed Hillary jaw-jutting type photos of ourselves on the summit, we started our long descent. We very soon met up with another tramper wending his way upwards – lo and behold, it was Mike Prince, who was also booked to go on the Kay Creek/Scott Creek trip! As Mike is a difficult man to get hold of, he was not able to be notified until Friday that the trip was cancelled. He told us that as he and his son already had their packs prepared, they decided to vent their frustration by spending the weekend in the Silver Peaks and had slept in ABC Cave on Saturday night. So, a total of five Kay Creek/ Scott Creek refugees were justifying their tramping existence on this particular Sunday. (Note: Mike's son, Andrew, is the teenager who was "vaguely familiar". Don't wait, there's no more.)



Rocky Ridge, looking south, Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve

After bidding farewell to Mike, we descended Devil's Staircase relatively unscathed and, after extracting the odd gorse prickle from our hands, proceeded along the Cave Creek valley towards Jubilee Hut. As you may know, dear reader, to get to the new hut requires a steep climb up from the valley floor. Roy and Tony, knowing that a longer steeper climb was yet to come, tried the "bin there, dun that" approach to try and dissuade the other two from visiting the hut; however, this was overwhelmed by Ross and Darryl's enthusiasm for a first-time visit. Mike had informed us that 13 Uni students had spent Saturday night in the hut, so we did not

know what to expect when we arrived. Fortunately, not all students have Castle Street standards and the hut was left clean and tidy. The group had apparently headed out towards ABC Cave, which was to be our next destination.

Following a leisurely lunch, replenishing of water supplies, and use of the luxurious toilet facilities, we descended back into the valley, crossed Cave Creek, climbed past the old Jubilee Hut site, before beginning the long 300m grunt up towards ABC Cave. Roy assured us that there was a track through the scrub and, except for the occasional diversion to examine thorny bushes at close quarters, we managed to keep to it. Once clear of the scrub, the climb continued on an open track with good views of the surrounding hills.

On reaching ABC Cave, Roy took first time visitors Ross and Darryl to inspect its facilities whilst Tony ("bin there, dun that") did some blister prevention sock adjustment in his boots. All back on track, we headed up to The Gap, dropping our packs at the Rocky Ridge track junction before climbing to the trig and once again admiring expansive views: east to the coast, inland to the Rock and Pillars, and north to the Kakanuis. But, we were heading south to Rocky Ridge which meant a drop down to the Yellow Ridge saddle and then a climb up to gain Rocky Ridge proper. (Remember the trampers' maxim: "What goes down, must go back up.") We thought that we would be into a headwind on the ridge; but it had turned west- nor'west and was therefore not a problem as we tackled the frequent undulations and scratchy scrub.

Once off Rocky Ridge, we again sheltered behind Pulpit Rock for a last rest and refuel, at Tony's request because he was feeling his age, before the final lap down Green Ridge. This final descent (which has a remarkable number of uphill sections!) was completed at a steady clip before we emerged on Mountain Road at 7.55pm, 10 hrs 05 min after starting – so, Roy was accurate in his prediction!

Tony Timperley, for: Roy Ward (trip leader), Ross Hunt, and Darryl.

HOMESTEAD PEAK WANDER

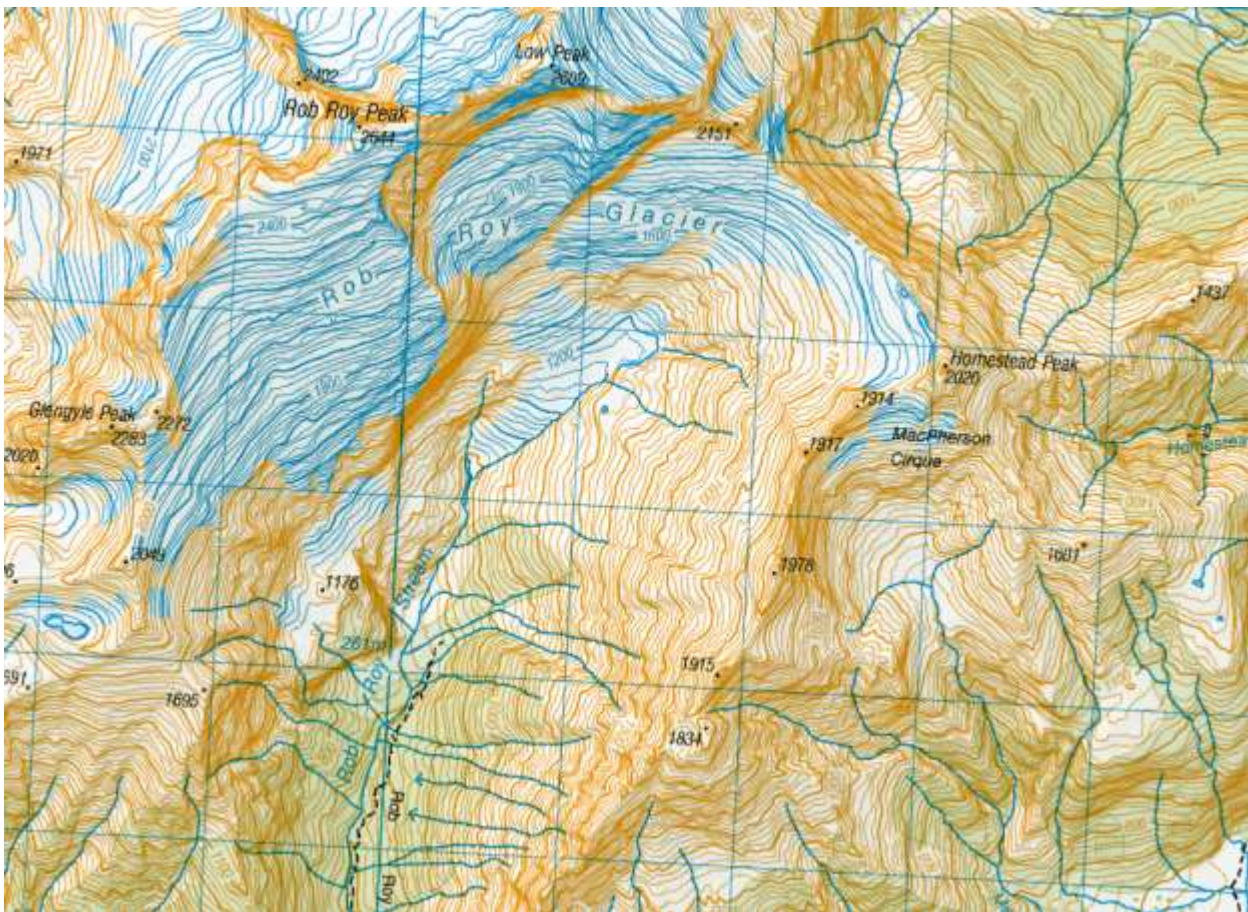
Date not recorded

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 703, February 2010

"That Kea's eaten a hole in your water bottle!" That was at dawn on the second day.

At lunchtime, after a morning drive up from Dunedin, we'd headed to the Rob Roy Stream to head beyond the normal viewpoint, and map out the route up Homestead Peak. A track has begun to emerge above the viewpoint; the route-finding isn't entirely straightforward, and Wild Spaniard waits to pounce. Just over an hour on this track, we ended up at a pleasant site below the moraine and avalanche debris from the hanging glacier dominating the valley's upper end.



The glacier was active. First a drawn-out snapping crack; then heavy hail on a tin roof, then a massive thunderclap, booming and reverberating round the valley. Ice from the cliffs was peeling off and crashing down almost routinely, leaving massive fans and rivers of debris.

We scrambled up the gully behind this site, and then trended up left across slabby, scrub-covered ground; not easy going, and we were slow. A few hundred metres on we joined an intermittent track with the odd cairn, something we must have missed lower down the mountain, and kept going till a broad, snow-filled basin beckoned as a bivvi site. We stopped, rested, ate, and then carried on up without packs for a while. The route to the peak was clear,

though still a few hours travel above us. We hadn't allowed enough time to complete the full journey, but we were happy.

A great, spicy meal; star-flooded sky, (very) attentive Kea, and continuously crashing ice cliffs, saw the evening and night pass. Dawn was clear, pink, and very frosty, and after a welcome coffee we headed down. On the way back we followed the track down the whole way and managed to identify the point where we had missed the turnoff; we won't do that next time. We'll be going back there again to finish it off, a magic wee trip; two full days if time is important, three at a more leisurely pace. A great bit of "off-piste" activity for those who want it.

To us the spontaneity of the trip was a big plus; we'd decided on this particular trip based on a last-minute evaluation of the weather, and it proved to be spot on. We're planning on doing quite a lot of adventurous trips next year, both weekend and midweek, so if anyone else who might want to do likewise (we already have several interested), fancies hearing our upcoming plans, then contact either Adrienne or Andy

WEST MATUKITUKI

October 10-11, 2009

Author: Richard Forbes

Published in Bulletin 703, February 2010

It had been a long time since I had been in the West Matukituki. I had spent some time there as a high school student at the Otago Boys High School Lodge. This was for school camps, field trips and ski trips – four weeks in all. The last time I was at Aspiring Hut was in the early 1990s when my brother and I couldn't get very high due to the low snowline. This trip would be similar. The weather was not good while travelling on Friday night. When we got to the Pie Cart in Alexandra, the town clock displayed a temperature of 4 degrees. This soon dropped to 3 degrees. This was enough to get us back on the road to Wanaka.

After signing in at Wanaka DOC, we drove into the West Matukituki Valley. There was the odd snowflake on the windscreen of the van. Nine of us settled into our sleeping bags at the road end at Raspberry Shelter - some in tents and some in the shelter itself. We woke in the morning to bright blue skies and a frost. Then after a quick breakfast, we were off on the two hour walk to Aspiring Hut. It had changed since I was last there. The hut was very well maintained with gas cooking, lights, and a wood burner. The old wooden windows had been replaced with aluminum windows. There was also a warden's hut, toilet block and woodshed. Nearby was a camping ground with shelter. All in all, these were very good facilities.



West Matukituki Valley, looking towards Mt Barth & Mt Bevan, October 10, 2009

Another couple staying in the hut were just departing, so we would have the hut to ourselves. We lightened our packs and headed up the valley towards the new Liverpool Hut on the true right of the valley. Our lunch stop was by a nice side stream on Shovel Flat, with nearby avalanche debris. Then it was through to Pearl Flat where we dropped our packs at the bottom of the track up to the hut. The track was quite steep and a bit of a grunt. The group spread out. Towards the bushline we came across snow which gradually became thicker and deeper. It was decided not to go too far in the snow as it was not hard to get up but would be difficult to descend, as it was very slippery. We caught a view of the new hut which looked very nice, but that would have to wait for another day. It was a steep descent back down to the flats, then back to the hut to settle in for the night. As the sun went down, it started to get cold, so I cranked up the wood burner using the pine and beech in the woodshed. The fire was very efficient and before long the whole hut was cosy. We were down to our t-shirts. The keen photographers were getting shots of the sunset on Mount Aspiring. There was a woman on her own when we returned to the hut who had hitchhiked from Wanaka. Before long, Antony had signed her up for the bushcraft course.



West Matukituki Valley from Liverpool Hut Track, Shotover Saddle on the left, October 10, 2009

Sunday dawned frosty and clear again – perfect weather. We walked up to the lookout just above the bushline which was also the snowline on the Cascade Saddle track. The views from here were awesome. We could see where we had been the previous day, and most of the valley and the peaks from Mounts Bevan and Aspiring towards Sharks Tooth and the Shotover Saddle. Just breathtaking. We headed back to Aspiring Hut for lunch, and it was decided that five of us (including myself) would pop into the Rob Roy Valley for a look on the way back to

the van. We did the Rob Roy track in double-quick time to see the stunning scenery of the glacier. The track was quite crowded with a number of elderly people and young families doing a day walk there. When I got back to the van I was quite sore after all that quick walking. We were underway back to Dunedin at about 5.00 pm.

Many thanks to Antony for driving and leading the trip.

Richard Forbes for Antony, Gene, Michael, Michael F, Connor, Peter, Darryl and Adrienne.

GREEN LAKE

November 21-22, 2009

Author: Adrienne Dearnley

Published in Bulletin 703, February 2010

Not enough punters for a bus, so Gene kindly agreed to take his people mover. We arrived at Lake Monowai after a very comfortable drive around 10:30 pm to set up tents for the night. Pitching my tent underneath the trees seemed like a good idea at the time, but with the wind howling during the night and bits dropping off the trees at frequent intervals, it didn't seem like such a great idea. Then the snuffling started. Was that a wild pig after the goodies stored in my rucksack? Was it anything at all, or just me being paranoid? One way or another, an unsettled night.



Green Lake, from access track from Lake Monowai, November 22, 2009

Inspection of my food stores the next morning showed that something had indeed nibbled its way into my supplies. One breakfast bar and the scroggin eaten into. Never mind, the breakfast bar was already 2 months past its best before date and I bet the nibbler regretted taking on chocolate ginger.

The promised rain started as we breakfasted and kitted up. Only a light drizzle though, so perfectly bearable. The track started on a positive note, but we had been warned that some mud was ahead of us. Hmmm. 'Some' mud?! More like buckets / quagmires of mud. Placing my feet turned into an agony of concentration, with the wrong decision resulting in disappearing up to my pockets in sludge. Damn These Short Legs!

Having to fight the constant suction sapped strength, making the track's inexorable uphill gradient even more difficult. With no glorious views to speak of, this track was beginning to seem like a very BAD decision. Add to that the indignity of a constantly running nose thanks to something irritating my contact lens. Not A Happy Bunny!

Round a corner to be faced with a raging torrent. Gene had waited for us on the other side as he knew we would have difficulty crossing. Have to hold onto one tree above the river level and lower your feet onto another well below the swiftly flowing surface. Then inch your way across. Once again – DTSL! Slipped and ended up hanging from the tree, chest deep in water trying to drag me away. NAHB. Still, at least it washed the mud off, so I was reasonably clean for a short while. And after that, things started improving. Another uphill stretch and finally out onto the saddle and into the open. A view of the lake! Meet up with Antony & Debbie who are intending to tent on the saddle. And the promise that there's now only a 1 hour downhill stretch to the hut.



Sunset at Green Lake (in front of hut)

Six and a half hours after setting off, we reach the hut. And what a very nice hut it turns out to be. With a glorious view onto the lake. The weather, as promised, clearing. Maybe tomorrow won't be as bad as today. Lovely food in the evening by a lovely fire. Conversation a bit limited as everyone is too knackered to talk much. Or just wanting to soak up the atmosphere. Or read the 'Antics' of the opposition. Early to bed so that we can get a good start the next day. NO SNORERS! The silence only broken by sporadic bursts of flatulent gunfire...

Wake to fabulous weather and a mirror like lake. Today is going to be completely different. Try to ignore the "One more river, there's one more river to cross" song that decides to haunt me. This time we set off in sunshine, with the knowledge that the only uphill stretch is the short slog at the beginning. That's easily knocked off, and we're back on the saddle in no time. Today we drop our packs and explore, to be rewarded with fabulous views across the lake, out to the mountains beyond and back down to the hut. Now that's more like it and why I go tramping. Gene persuades us to be quiet for a while and we can hear a kiwi, out for a day on the tiles, screeching away. Weird!

The track has dried out sufficiently for the best paths through the mud to be visible more often than not; robins flit around and alight close enough to almost touch; we see a black fantail; the sunlight dapples the mossy coatings on the side of the track. The raging river of yesterday has unbelievably turned back into little more than a babbling brook. Contact lens behaves itself. My recent purchases of Lorpen socks and Delta 'crochery' have proven fantastic. Life is, once more, GOOD. The track that I would never, ever, as long as I live, do again, may be all right after all. Many many thanks to Gene for all his sterling efforts on our behalf.

Adrienne Dearnley for Gene Dyett, Karen Keith, Peter George and Jill McAliece.

EUCALYPT SPUR

November 22, 2009

Author: Tracy Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 704, March 2010

The team had already assembled by the time I arrived and, it being such a nice day, we didn't need to hang around to get away. It was nice to spot one of our special friends in the group. Two carloads zoomed off to Semple Road and before long we were wandering along the bone-dry track around Hightop and turning off down Eucalypt Spur. Richard was upset to see some isolated broom just getting a foothold near the top. As for me and some others, it was the encroaching gorse and snowgrass cuttings in the track formation that upset us. Several people slid on the steep slope of the dry grass skating rink. Richard collected a beautiful bruise from his slide down the hill. We stopped at the bottom to have a trembly knees session. After 5 minutes we set off again, only to come to Possum Hut within minutes for our lunch stop. I have never been to Possum Hut before, although I did try to get there about 15 years ago with Pam Bardsley.



Descending Eucalypt Spur, Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve

On that occasion we walked from Green Hut site, missed the hut and found a very nice creek, only to find when we walked up the other side that we had made a booboo somewhere along the way. Then we got back to the creek and couldn't find the track at all. We ended up walking

up the stream to Pulpit Rock. We got snowed on. It was a long walk in winter when it gets dark early and our husbands were fretting at home with our small children. When we got to the top of the mountain I was so disoriented I didn't recognise the top of Green Hill! But we made it back to the car before it got dark, somehow.

Anyway. When we left Possum Hut on this trip we struggled steeply upwards onto the ridge crest and came to the right angled bend to the right. The rest of the ridge track going down has been blocked by bits of tree that are supposed to stop your onwards rush as you come down from Green Hut. I can now see that the sharp corner is what you have to take to get to Possum Hut. Going straight ahead would have been just silly. So, I reckon that is how we got lost those many years ago and I won't do that again. (Having said that, please don't anyone think I would argue for signs or better tracks in there. I didn't get where I am today by not getting lost once in a while.)

The clamber up from Possum Hut was the moderate part of the E-M "easy to moderate" trip. It is a bit of a grunt, but it isn't for long. Before we knew it, we were lying in the sun at the Green Hut site wondering what to do now, as it was turning into a short tramping trip. Nothing in moderation; it was all too easy. So, Gavin had the bright idea (Richard and I think he's trying to establish another OTMC tradition) of urging everyone back to our place for a beer. We all walked a bit faster then. Back at the cars we collected some pine needles for my chickens. Then down the bumpy road we went (there are some massive pot holes evolving on that road) to the marvellous beers awaiting us at the Pettinger's' house. Then we all got terribly relaxed in the warm of the sunny living room. The endtgankl tou

Richard. Hic.

Tracy Pettinger for Mary Tonkin, Gavin McArthur, Ian Woodford, Sue Bellamy, Brent Dewar, Aurelie Jonquet, Michael Firmin and Richard P.

TAIERI RIDGE – THE CRATER

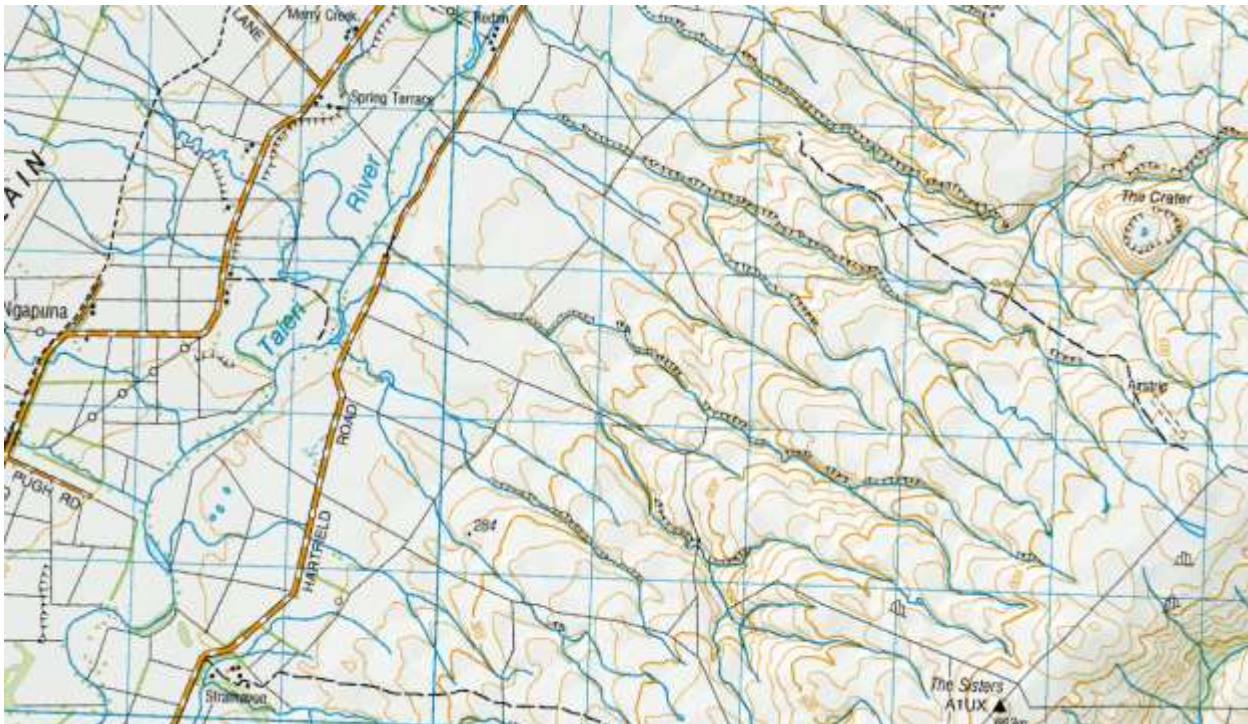
December 6, 2009

Author: Grace Gardner

Published in Bulletin 704, March 2010

Seven souls set out near Conical Hill which bears a lone pine planted in 1918 to mark Armistice Day and walked across farmland gradually climbing up to Taieri Ridge. The weather was overcast and mild, the showers holding off for the time being. Behind us we could see the Rock and Pillar Ranges, and ahead in the distance the Two Sisters, towards which we were headed.

The veneer of green grew thinner as we climbed into big sky country, schist rock formations rising up like the bones of the earth with increasing frequency. Barbed wire fences proved to be an enduring feature of the walk, with many to be crossed. Cows with calves watched us warily as we passed, calling up reinforcements from around the hill when we got too near. Several piles of enormous bones bleached and scattered between the rocks spoke of less lucky bovines. A startled hare shot away up the hill.



As we neared the Sisters the weather grew windier and threatened rain. Instead of lurching at the top by the Trig station, we scurried down the far side and took shelter in a convenient small patch of dry pines to enjoy our meal. Fortified, we carried on, circling around towards the old volcano crater. The land grew harsher, grass mostly disappearing in favour of small alpine plants, with scattered Matagouri and spikey Spaniard in clumps. The rock formations grew more elaborate, to the delight of our resident rock climbing enthusiast Rose.

At one point we could see the whole length of the Rock and Pillar Ranges, with glorious sun shining on one end, a perfectly flat inversion layer of cloud halfway up along the middle, and the far end obscured by black rain cloud. That black rain cloud came up behind us, moving

faster than we were, and shortly passed right overhead drenching us in pelting rain. In another few minutes it had passed right over us, and the weather came out mostly fine again.

The crater was spectacular, a large bowl with the muddy remains of a lake in the middle. Several of us braved the Matagouri and Spaniard to climb right up to the ridge of the crater and admire the view, others cut directly across the crater floor. A family of three white wild goats bounded away when disturbed, and we saw something chasing a sheep, a wild dog perhaps?

From Redan to Moonlight Road we mostly descended. In the wide undulating land there was one lone pine tree growing out of a pile of rocks, the only one for miles. Its roots had grown over and between the rocks, forcing them apart along fault lines, an icon of endurance. Finally, we came out right near the home of the farmer who owned the land we had crossed, just as the sun disappeared and the rain closed in again. Perfect timing! The rain didn't amount to much, certainly not enough to dampen the enthusiasm for ice cream in Middlemarch on the way home. All up we covered around 14 km in a little under 6 hours, with good company and conversation to season the scenery.

Grace Gardner with Rose Pearson, Debbie Nicholson, Ian Woodford, Alan Thomson, Gavin McArthur, Adrienne Dearnley

FIVE PASSES (ANTI-CLOCKWISE)

January 22-30, 2010

Author: Richard Forbes

Published in Bulletin 704, March 2010

Friday 22nd January

That night we travelled to the Lake Sylvan campsite in the lower Route-burn valley after a four-and-a-half-hour drive. There was a little wind, but the skies were clearing, and it was looking good for our trip. At approximately 1.00 am, our last team member Michael arrived.

Saturday 23rd January

We left at 8.30 am after drop ping off the cars to the Route- burn Shelter Carpark. We then crossed the swing bridge over the lower Route Burn and made our way to Lake Sylvan. We then continued on to the Rock Burn hut. I was surprised to see that my 2005 entry was still in the hut book from when my brother and I were last there on our failed attempt at the five passes.



Rockburn Hut (now removed), January 23, 2010

The cloud lifted and it was a beautiful day. No wind and warm – we were all sweating. Lots of jetboat activity which was noisy. After the grass flats, on the Dart the river was hard against the bank, and we went up through the bush to get around it. Lots of bush bashing and very slow going. We had lunch in a clearing here. Beautiful views of Chinamans Bluff and Mount Earnslaw. We then crossed the Beans Burn and then made our way up the true left and then

crossed over quite a spectacular swing bridge to the true right to the first flat. We got there at around 4.00 pm. We ran into another party coming out after completing the five passes and they reported that snow conditions were good for tramping. We had our tea and then listened to the mountain radio and the weather forecast was for rain in the morning, clearing in the afternoon.

Sunday 24th January

I heard the pitter-patter of rain on my Fairydown tent in the early hours of the morning. It sounded like a lot of rain, but when I got up, there were only passing showers with blue sky in between. We headed up the Beans Burn track. The track was a lot better than the last time I was here, with no windfall and even orange markers on the trees to show the way – very easy to follow. A heavy shower of rain meant the jackets were on and after about an hour they were off again with greatly improving conditions. By lunchtime it was blue skies and a gentle breeze, and we reached the rock bivouac at the head of the valley by 3.00 pm. A very nice spot snoozing in the sun. Better than the last time I was here with my brother when we spent two days here out of the rain waiting for the weather to clear.



Beansburn, below the bivvy-rock flat, January 24, 2010

Monday 25th January

A kea saw us off – another nice day. A bit more cloud than the previous afternoon. Not too hot to go over our first pass. We headed up the Beans Burn until under the saddle, then we climbed up the tussocks. At about halfway, where we had a rest, I discovered that my Thermarest was missing. I figured it was lost somewhere between the bivvy and the start of

the climb. Not to worry, I only paid \$30 on Trade Me. There was a lot of lingering cloud at Fohn Saddle (pass number one) after a two-hour climb, and it was quite chilly. We then traversed to the Fohn Lakes after negotiating a tricky bluff. We had lunch overlooking the larger of the two lakes. We set up camp between the two lakes, and then went for an explore by the nearby waterfall and ledge looking into the head of the Beans Burn with its glacier and waterfall. Spectacular views in a pretty area. We saw two chamois running down the opposite bluffs and slopes. The mountain radio forecast at 7.30 pm said good weather for the coming days. We heard the other party checking in saying that they would head to the Olivine Ledge. Due to the weather forecast, we decided to stay another day here (as originally planned) exploring.



On Fohn Saddle, January 25, 2010

Tuesday 26th January

A beautiful day by the Fohn Lakes. It was decided that most of us would climb Sunset Peak, 1800 metres. The route up followed grassy slopes with some rocky sections to negotiate. We were at the top by 10.00 am, having started around 8.00 am. We spent two hours on the top taking in the views from Mounts Tutoko and Madeline, down the Olivine River to the Olivine Flats. In the distance was Lake Wilmot and the Pike, a glimpse of the Olivine Ice Plateau and around to the head of the Beans Burn and our campsite between the two Fohn Lakes below us. Before leaving, we all built an impressive cairn that could even be seen from the campsite. After lunch, five of us climbed Fohn which is next to Fohn Saddle with great views across the Fohn Lakes and down the Beans Burn. On the way down, we saw three chamois. One of these was a youngster. By now the wind was blowing a little and the sky was becoming cloudy. The forecast was for good weather until Saturday, the day we were walking out.



View out to the Pyke / Lake Wilmot from Sunset Peak, January 26, 2010

Wednesday 27th January

A bit of an overcast day. We left our campsite at 7.50 am and headed directly over the hill from our campsite and were on Olivine Ledge in 40 minutes. In the distance by Fiery Col, we spotted some of the other group and we met in the middle. Some of their group had already done four passes, and we had only done one. However, there were two more for us to do today. We discovered that the group had camped in Fiery Creek and the remaining group members camped on Cow Saddle and hadn't made it over the Col by that stage. It was drizzling lightly. Once we got to Fiery Creek, it was an hour up to Fiery Col (pass number two). There was a bit of snow so out came the ice axes. It was slippery and

steep. At the bottom of the snow, we came across the rest of the other group. The red rocks down from Fiery Col were spectacular – very grippy underfoot with loads of colours mixed in. Then it was over Cow Saddle (pass number three) and down the rugged Hidden Falls Creek where we camped in a clearing. Another great day.

Thursday 28th January

Another nice day. It was a fairly hot and steep climb to Park Pass (pass number four) - mostly through bush.

We were at the bushline from the campsite in two hours. We started the long sidle to Lake Nerine through steep snow grass. We reached a nice lakelet with great views down the Rock Burn and Park Pass Glacier. Wonderful views. Then came the tricky bit of dropping down to Lake Nerine through steep snow and bluffs which some found difficult and scary. Once camp was set up by the lake bivvy, some of us went to see the lake outlet with amazing views down to Theatre Flat in the Rock Burn. We all turned in by 8.30 pm as we were all cold and tired.



Hidden Falls side of Park Pass, January 28, 2010

Friday 29th January

After a cosy night, it was another beautiful day. Hardly any clouds. We left camp and climbed around the Hidden Falls Creek side of Lake Nerine. We dropped down to a ledge and followed it until sight of North Col. We then sidled up to the Col (pass number five). Antony and I climbed a small peak for some better views which included the Hollyford River, Cow Saddle, Fiery Peak and a nice terminal lake off the glacier on Mount Madeline. It was a cool wind on the Col, so we dropped down into the valley of the Route Burn North Branch. A lot of snow here but easy travelling. We camped by the last flats for our last night. The small amount of port I had been carrying the whole week went down very well by most.

Saturday 30th January

Pouring with rain. We quickly packed up by 7.00 am and hoofed it back to the cars. When we reached the shelter, it was packed with people. A DOC worker was taking surveys and was quite blown away that we had just done the five passes and that we were Kiwis as well! A very

enjoyable trip – couldn't believe the good weather that we had. Many thanks to Antony for organizing this.

Richard Forbes for Antony, Debbie, Tony, Michael, Jo, Hilda and Roy.

HIDDEN LAKES (TE ANAU)

February 6-7, 2010

Author: Anthony Robins

Published in Bulletin 705, April 2010

The trip got off to an excellent start, with ten keen trampers, a prompt departure, and a great weather forecast.

We were in Te Anau around 10pm and walked into Brod Bay to set up camp well before midnight (though some stayed up much later using each other as human tripods to try and take photos of a spectacular moonrise).



Traversing the edge of Lake Te Anau, February 6, 2010

Saturday dawned bright and clear, and we got off to an unhurried start heading North up the shoreline of the lake. A certain party leader and chief guide who shall remain nameless made sure that we had our boots wet (and more!) from sidling along the shore before we headed inland uphill through the bush. Time to find some hidden lakes! With no track, the bush was mostly easy going here, though a wall of fallen trees made for an interesting scramble at one point. Heading North and gently inland from the shore we unerringly hit the first of our lakes, L1, around 11am. L1 is one of the 6 larger lakes (which we imaginatively labelled L1 to L6 from GPS waypoints). The remaining 8 or so smaller lakes are mostly clustered together to the North of L1.

We dallied on the shores of L1 for a while, then headed East back out to the coast of Lake Te Anau. Soon finding a suitable beach, we gratefully dumped our packs and set up camp. After lunch most of us set off, once again Northwards and gently inland through relatively easy bush, until we found our second lake, L2. From the Eastern edge of L2 we were able to pick up a short track connecting two coves in Lake Te Anau that are popular with boaties. We followed this track in each direction, South to East Cove, then North to Mussel Cove. Off this track we also found our third lake so far, coincidentally marked L3. From Mussel Cove we were tempted to carry on, about 2km and a 200m climb, to a lookout point. But with time running out, we decided to head back to camp. Arriving hot and sweaty in the 26 degree heat, the sun was still glorious in the clear blue sky, so the walk ended with a mass swim - very refreshing!



One of the Hidden Lakes, February 6, 2010

After the swim, some of the group were soon back in the water scouring the lake for a half dozen cans of a certain beverage which had slipped their chilly moorings and floated off.

Five of the escapees were eventually recaptured and disposed of. Finally, dinner, a driftwood fire on the beach, and marshmallows! A wonderful camp, the mosquitos and sandflies were the only blot, this was not a trip for sleeping under a fly.

Sunday was overcast and mild. One group chose to head back early to the van, the rest of us donned our daypacks and headed inland in search of more lakes. Navigation on this day was much more difficult, and the three GPS units between us were put to good use.

First stop, the cluster of little lakes to the North of L1. With the aid of GPS we spiralled in to the largest in the group, at times pushing through tangles of saplings and scrub, or squelching

through boot-sucking bog. From this lake we found a second in the group, then scrambled up to a slight lookout point to plan our next course. We decided to head inland West to L6, largest of all the hidden lakes. But after a slow kilometre we found ourselves much more Northerly at L4 instead. (In retrospect it is possible that some mug - ok, me - choose the wrong GPS waypoint to find?). So we headed South West, to L6 as originally intended, then had what seemed like a long scramble East back to the main shoreline and camp.



Camping on the beach, of Lake Te Anau, February 6, 2010

This day really gave us a feel for how easy it would be to become lost in dense bush. It also showed up the differences in GPS functionality, with the older unit (mine) nearly useless for much of the time. Make sure you have a unit with a modern high accuracy antenna and an electronic compass for this kind of work! Having hit camp later than expected, lunch was a quick affair, then it was packs on and retracing our steps from the first day, back out to Brod Bay, then on the highway of the main track out to the van, a bit late at around 4:45pm.

This was a great trip, and those looking for a different kind of challenge in a club trip should give it a try if it comes up on the card again. Many thanks to Antony and to all!

By Anthony Robins, for Anne, Chris, Jill, Sandra, Maria, Robert, Peter, Brent and Antony.

RUSTLERS RIDGE

January 17, 2010

Author: Gavin McArthur

Published in Bulletin 705, April 2010

A good turnout of 12 trampers for the first tramp of the year. After making our way along the Pipeline track we headed up the Rustlers Ridge track to the top Swampy Summit. No views were to be had as the weather on the top was foul indeed, with driving drizzle and strong winds. After a quick lunch break we battled our way along the top to the comparative sanctuary of the bush on the Leith Saddle track. From there it was a short distance back to the cars and home.



Dunedin's northern skyline from the top of Rustlers Ridge

MT CHARLES

January 24, 2010

Author: Gavin McArthur

Published in Bulletin 705, April 2010

The rain started falling as we left the clubrooms. The 6 of us were sure it would be all right on the top of Mt. Charles, how wrong we were. The climb up went well with some good views to be had of the surrounding countryside. As we got near the top a howling gale made its presence felt, coupled with horizontal rain. We only stayed on the top for a short time before we headed down to the lighthouse for lunch. And of course, the rain and wind came too. At the light we huddled by a wall to seek shelter. The wind chill factor made lunchtime a very miserable affair. From the light we headed along the coast and back to the welcoming sanctuary of the cars and home.

Gavin McArthur for the intrepid 18 (Jan 17 + Jan 24)



Mt Charles / Poatiri as seen from Harbour Cone

LIVINGSTONE MOUNTAINS (1)

February 20-21, 2010

Author: Ron Minnema

Published in Bulletin 705, April 2010

It was the least I had promised for the last 18 months to do a weekend trip, and I held up the car for 20 minutes or so at the airport. Having finally been picked up, we then attempted to catch up with the van, albeit within the legal speed limit. Anyway, we met up with the 'others' at Te Anau DoC...I don't think they had waited too long. A quick filling out of the paperwork, then off to Cascade Creek, our campsite.



Livingstone Mountains – Greenstone on the left, Eglinton on the right, February 20, 2010

Of the three parties we had the most leisurely trip planned so we didn't get away until 9 or so, after getting acquainted. We walked up the end of the Routeburn at a leisurely 'pace' or so it seemed. We were thankful when young Robert stopped for a rest to admire the view down the Hollyford (I think he was tired), then off to Key Summit non-stop. Another rest, obligatory photos then we were off on a DoC track (unmarked on maps) onto the Livingstone range. Along the track, up, down, through bush then into open tussock. Our leader had arranged fine weather so we had fantastic views down the Greenstone, across to Lake Marion (a potential future tramp), and down the Eglinton Valley. After the track petered out we rested, ate more food then we were away.

Every time we went up, there was some more down, but more up. Lots of tarns, and spectacular fault lines. Time to look, take photos, chat and eat. Several stops later we arrived

at our destination at around 4pm as Greg (the oldest) was getting tired, and sources of water ahead were thought to be scarce. We rested while Ann, and Antony who had some extra energy completed a reconnoiter for the next day. On their return our 'cook' Ann prepared our meal, fantastic, and we hit the sack around 9-9.30pm as it had cooled down a lot. I must remember to bring the down jacket next time!



Fog on the Livingstone Mountains, February 21, 2010

The next morning we awoke to mist, no views, and limited forward visibility. Antony to the rescue with his compass. Our plan to come out via the Greenstone was thwarted, perhaps another time, and we set out due north. Quite eerie walking in the mist but Robert who knows how to work a GPS kept a check on Antony and early in the afternoon we emerged at Key Summit and wandered down to the vans to wait for the 'others'. The mist duly lifted, and we unfortunately missed the great views from the previous day...who cares, we had photos. Anyway we didn't lose anyone and nor did the 'others', who from all reports had rather interesting trips. Back in Dunedin by 9pm, after fuelling up at the fish and chip shop in Balclutha. An excellent weekend with great company.

Ron for Ann, Antony, Grace, Maria, Robert, and Greg.

U PASS (MISTAKE & HUT CREEKS)

February 20-21, 2010

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 705, April 2010

Twenty-eight years is a long time to wait for a second crack at a thwarted trip, and so I was pleased to finally be heading for U Pass in Fiordland, particularly with a good weather forecast. From the carpark, the track descends through the forest towards the Eglinton River. There's obviously a fair amount of pest control work going on (for mohua, I think) as there are lots of traplines. A sign warning about poison included advice that it was "deadly to dogs", which I thought was somewhat unnecessary deep in a National Park.



Hut Creek side of U Pass, February 20, 2010 (PHOTO David Barnes)

We crossed the Eglinton on a walk wire and then made our way to a sign where the track splits to provide access to the two valleys. We were tackling Mistake Creek first. The well-marked track climbs steadily, initially away from the stream before returning to cross it. This was the point that I'd turned back from on Bushcraft 82, as the river was high. There's been at least one fatality at this spot in the intervening years. When the vegetation started to thin out, we had our first view of Mt Ngatimamaoe, an impressive rock pyramid.

Soon, we were out of the bush and negotiating flats sprinkled with boulders and scrub – not fast travel. A left turn took us into the major tributary of Mistake Creek and our first view of the infamous waterfall. A bit of boulder-hopping upstream brought us close to the base of the fall.

Moir describes two routes – one on the true right requiring “care and confidence”; the other on the true left described as “a natural rock staircase [which] provides easy if highly improbable travel”. We chose the latter, although John & I found one move (assuming that we were on the route) to be more at the highly improbable end of the spectrum than easy. Thanks for the pack haul, Ross. With that out of the way, we progressed through more scrubby boulders – or boulder scrub – to the lip of the hanging valley above the falls. This gave us our first look at the pass as well as a sighting of some chamois frolicking across some old snow at the head of the basin.



Mistake Creek side of U Pass, February 20, 2010 (PHOTO David Barnes)

The ascent to the pass was a straightforward and direct haul of 200m. The pass itself is an impressive notch between two vertical walls. It is part of the Skelmorlie fault, which our eyes could follow to the north and to the south. The southern manifestation is Glade Pass on the far side of Hut Creek. This provides access to Glade House and thus a round trip linking with Dore Pass but has a reputation for increasing difficulty caused by erosion. For us, the next phase was a sharp 500m descent down a rocky gut. For me, a steep descent is a time-consuming thing,

and I think I was half an hour behind my companions at the bottom. However, we'd planned to camp there so it wasn't a problem to anyone. The campsite choice was limited by the fact that the bed of Hut Creek was dry right across the flats. We were able to get water where a small waterfall tumbled over a headwall, so that's where we pitched the tents.

Overnight rain had cleared by the time we were up and about. We knew we had a shorter day ahead, so took a quick stroll up into the upper basin before heading downstream in the dry bed. At the bottom of the flats a track with a well-marked entrance bypasses a section where the stream drops sharply (and with water apparent) and leads to another flat. When the track at the bottom of the lower flat wasn't as obvious as the previous one had been, collectively and in most cases individually we should have had the wit to realise that the sensible thing was to keep looking. But the terrain was sort of OK, the weather was great, and we had time up our sleeves. Subconsciously, we probably didn't want to spend longer than we had to feeding the sandflies by State Highway 94. So, we bush bashed. In days gone by, I was an enthusiastic off-track bush basher. These days I think of Kelvin Lloyd's definition in "45 Years of Antics" – "the bush does the bashing". We had, however, agreed that a major tributary would be the limit of this folly, as the mainstream drops much more sharply from there and the risk of getting bluffed would be real.

Eventually we reached the side stream, where a lunch break – much needed after the morning's exertions – was taken. The track was then located and was easily followed down to the Eglinton flats. We splashed across two channels of Mistake Creek and then decided that the Eglinton was low enough to make the detour to the walk wire unnecessary. Five minutes later we were sitting by the road being photographed by tourists and avoiding sandflies and were soon grateful for an early pickup.

David Barnes for John Kaiser, Ian Woodford, Ross Hunt & Peter Stevenson

LIVINGSTONE MOUNTAINS (2)

February 20-21, 2010

Author: Richard Forbes

Published in Bulletin 705, April 2010

The campers at Cascade Creek camping ground in the Eglington Valley must have thought we were mad. We turned up at 11.00 pm on Friday night and were away at 8.00 am the next morning. Our leader, Ann, called everyone to the van for a meeting, and then a gourmet muffin was produced with three candles and singing of "Happy Birthday" – it was my 39th birthday and I was humbled.



Upper Cascade Creek

Five of us in great weather headed to the road and into the bush on the true left of Cascade Creek (by the road bridge). The going was a bit rough with not much of a track keeping close to the river. We crossed the river for the first time by a late flowering southern rata tree, and then crossed as necessary to avoid holes and bluffs. A number of old concrete structures could be seen in the riverbed, which my dad said afterwards could be related to the huge camp that was there when the Milford Road was being built. This camp was nearly washed away by a huge flood. Eventually we found a track marked with ribbons and even a tricky steep section with ropes provided. This track was followed to a fork in the river, where we stopped for a break. We followed the side branch and eventually found a marked track following the ridge to the bushline. We could see where we needed to get onto the ridge to the Livingstone Range, but getting there was a bit tricky, as a steep gorge prevented us getting across the river. We

eventually headed higher into scrub and after a bit of bush bashing got across the river where we had lunch.



The headwaters of Cascade Creek as seen from the Livingstone Mountains route

After lunch we headed into the head of Cascade Creek towards the saddle. The water seemed to be running out, so it was decided to head directly onto the Livingstone Range to some tarns. Up on the Range, the views were impressive of the way we had come. The tarns were a bit on the small side and after a rest (and snooze by some) we climbed higher to find some bigger tarns. Dave's GPS came in handy, and we found a big tarn and set up camp for the night. A short stroll to the edge of the Range and we could look directly into Lake Gunn. No worries, we thought, the worst was behind us, and we only had to stroll along the Range to Key Summit and back to the van the next day. How wrong we would be. We woke in the morning to wind and low cloud. Better get a move on in case it gets worse. And it got worse. Visibility was decreasing all the time and we couldn't see very far in front of us to see the lie of the land. Dave plotted on his GPS a lay-line which was almost due north so all we had to do was to keep onto the line and we would be alright. Initially we kept to the line in the fog, and we knew it dropped steeply off down to Lake Gunn so when it looked like it was getting steep, we steered away to the right. A check of the GPS showed that we were veering off to the right but no worries, we would come right as long as we headed northish. In no time at all, with no visibility, it was steep on the left and right and then also in front of us. We needed to assess the situation. The GPS showed that we were walking in a circle. I pulled out my compass and was shocked to find that north was not in front of us but behind us. Where we all thought Lake Gunn was in fact the Greenstone Valley. We had totally lost our bearings. We backtracked up

the hill to where we had gone wrong and then the fog for a moment cleared and we could see the Ridge where we should be. Two of us headed directly to the Ridge and then the fog came in again. But with some calling, we got together again. We needed to stay together. We were back on track now but still we made sure we were heading north. Pity we had no views as they were supposed to be great up here. We passed many tarns but only saw them when we were right beside them. We were making good time now. We had arranged to meet the other groups by 4.00 pm at the Divide.

We had a quick lunch stop by a large rock out of the wind. Eventually we spotted trees through the fog so we were not far from Key Summit. We picked up the well-worn track to Key Summit and then the Summit itself with signs and boardwalks and hoards of day-trippers. The cloud was lifting now and we got a glimpse of Lake Marion and then the Hollyford Valley. Then it was down the zig-zag track to the Divide. Lots of people enroute especially past the junction to the Routeburn/Greenstone tracks. We were back at the van by 2.00 pm where one of the other groups was already waiting. Antony drove to the third group to see if they were out, which they were. On the way back to Te Anau, I looked up to the Livingstone Range from the road beside Lake Gunn and it was beautiful blue sky. Bugger, those views will have to wait for another trip.

The lessons learnt from this trip were great. A GPS can be a brilliant tool on the tops, but a compass can also be used to take a bearing through the fog. It is easy to lose your bearings and get disorientated in these conditions. Keep together as a group where you are stronger to make decisions. If all else fails, sit it out and the fog will eventually clear.

Many thanks to Ann for leading the trip, and to Dave (and Greg) for the driving.

Richard Forbes for Dave, Ralph, Gordon and Darryl.

FIVE PASSES II (SHANGRI-LA OR HELL)

January 22-30, 2010

Author: Tony Timperley

Published in Bulletin 706, June 2010 & Bulletin 707, July 2010

Our group of eight was divided into two sub-groups of four: Richard Pettinger's group with Tracy Pettinger, Rosie Pearson and Paul Cunliffe; and Gordon Tocher's group with Darryl Woods, Michael Firmin and Tony Timperley.

First Day: The pattern was established whereby Richard's group got away first and those in Gordon's group tried to keep them in sight. The first 90 minutes was most civilized as we (Gordon's Group) walked along the Routeburn, collecting many puzzled looks from the numerous "Great Walk" participants coming the other way when they noticed the size of our 20kg packs and that we had ice-axes. On reaching Flats Hut we mingled with the assembled masses whilst we fuelled up with food and drink before heading up the North Routeburn. The size of our packs was remarked upon, which gave Darryl the chance to impress those "merely walking" the Routeburn that we were "tramping over five passes", that we would be "eight days" in "the wilderness" and that there were "no huts". These key words drew gasps of admiration from his audience, which still rang in our ears as we headed up the North Routeburn towards North Col, our first pass.



Campsite above Shangri-la (photo from OTMC Bulletin)

The rest of the trek to our campsite was uneventful, but hot. We camped by a beautiful tarn, just below the snowline of North Col and with a view right back to the Routeburn Flats.

Richard's group had set up camp by the time Gordon's group arrived and Richard informed these males that they had missed the spectacle of Tracy and Rosie cavorting in the tarn. By 7.30pm we had set up the mountain radio, thanks to the chamois-like abilities of Rosie who bounded over the surrounding rock-faces with the aerial until we had clear reception.

The effort was worth it as the mountain forecast was for mainly fine weather over the next few days, after some morning showers.

The Second Day dawned cloudy, and we did indeed have some spots of rain as we set off to climb North Col. We were soon into the snow; however, it was not rain that we had to contend with but cold wind as we climbed higher over the snow. Conditions just seemed to be getting worse when we crested the col and saw the clouds parting and blue sky ahead. The forecast was correct! After a short break we headed towards Lake Nerine, but it was not long before we had an unscheduled break whilst Richard and Rosie took off to try and find the lake. The rest of us were just getting worried whilst munching our muesli bars, when an apparition, with the sun behind it, appeared in the mist on the ridgeline. After first prostrating ourselves, we looked up and saw it was only Richard, who called to us that Rosie had found the lake.

Lake Nerine is a truly magical place, set high in the mountains in a basin above the Rock Burn. After descending to its shores, we stopped for a leisurely lunch before looking for a way to climb out towards Park Pass. The only route appeared to be up a steep snow slope and as we did not have crampons, only ice-axes, things were not looking good. However, some expert scouting by Paul found that there was a 1 1/2 metre gap between the snow and a rock wall through which we could climb up. We accomplished this relatively easily and came back out on the snow on a much gentler slope, which also looked down and across Lake Nerine. This was an opportunity not to be missed for heroic photos, with everyone (including Tracy and Rosie) putting on their best Sir Ed look. We all agreed that Darryl gave the best impression of the conqueror of Everest.

The next section down to Park Pass is described in Moir as "unpleasantly steep snowgrass and hard earth slopes on the Rock Burn side" – a very accurate description, especially when it appeared that you were looking vertically down into the Rock Burn! Nevertheless, except for a couple of minor slides, we successfully negotiated this section before cresting Park Pass, number two of our five. It was so pleasant here that some of us wanted to stop and camp, but Richard warned us of the strong winds that would get up in the night and funnel through the pass.

Heeding his advice, we continued on and dropped below the pass, with Richard trying to persuade us that "Shangri-la" was not far away. (Note: Richard had visited this spot 25 years ago and it had obviously made an indelible impression in his mind. He repeatedly told us how beautiful it was, that it was a "special place" and you descended to it via a tree – but he didn't know if the tree was still there!) However, as we had been going for ten hours, Gordon's group decided to set up camp at a sheltered spot, whilst Richard's group continued on to Shangri-la, which was by now "only half-an-hour" away. It was decided that Richard would return at mid-

day to guide Gordon's group to his "special place" and we would spend the rest of the day there.

On Day Three Richard duly arrived with Paul at mid-day to take Gordon, Darryl, Michael, and Tony to "Shangri-la" and what a "half-hour" it proved to be! However, before we set off Richard informed Gordon and co that Shangri-la was not as it was 25 years ago as large clumps of tussock and scrub now covered what had been open flat areas, so there may not be any camping spots. Paul said they had had to clear rocks before they could erect their tent fly. Therefore, it was with great trepidation that Gordon's group set off for this "special place". (Note: The following describes Gordon's group's journey as Richard's group had done it the previous evening.)



Gordon Tocher & Michael Firmin on Fiery Col (photo from OTMC Bulletin)

Getting there was an adventure in itself. After an easy tramp on tussock slopes, we overlooked Shangri-la – and, sure enough, there was the tree. Using all our accumulated mountaineering skills we descended the tree backwards, only to be faced by a steep descent backwards down a narrow spine of rock by the side of a water-shute. These obstacles overcome, we descended more conventionally to Shangri-la and began the task of finding a couple of spots where we could pitch our tents amongst the very large clumps of tussock and thorny scrub. (Note: I mentioned this to David Barnes, who also visited this site "25 years ago". He said that at that time there were deer that kept the vegetation down and so made it a "wonderful campsite"; but now there are no longer any deer in this area. – Tony.) Luckily, we found two small

patches, on which, after a couple of hours of clearing stones and (when Richard's back was turned) drastic scrub pruning, we were able to pitch our tents in readiness for a comfortable night.

The Fourth Day was a day of contrasting terrain. First, we bashed our way downhill through the thickest bush most of us has encountered; then we descended diagonally across boulder scree until we reached a flat parkland-like grassy area by the Hidden Falls Creek. This easy going did not last long, however, as we had to bush-bash alongside the creek on the true left until we came to the open country that led up to Cow Saddle. It was here that two things became apparent. The first was the sun beating down; but fortunately our route still followed the creek, so we were able to dip our hats into it, put them on, and have the pleasure of the cool water dripping down our bodies to mitigate the heat of climbing up the saddle. The second was the contrast in the colour of the rock on either side: on the left as we approached Fiery Col was the "normal" grey rock; but on the right the rock was an orangey-red colour. Amongst this red rock there was an almost complete lack of vegetation. (Note: This rock is ultramafic.)



Clockwise group at the Olivine Ledge bivvy rock (photo from OTMC Bulletin)

When we reached the northern end of Cow Saddle (the source of the Olivine River) we all took a break and had a "confab". Richard was for pushing on over Fiery Col and on to the Olivine Ledge bivvy so that the next day we could go and visit some swimming holes in the Olivine River, which he had also visited "25 years ago"! As Tony was suffering from the heat and wanted to stay the night on Cow Saddle, it was agreed that Richard's group, plus Darryl, would press on whilst Tony, Gordon and Michael would stay put.

Whilst they pitched their tents, these three watched Richard lead his group over Fiery Col through Gordon's monocular. On cresting the col, Richard's group decided to find a campsite early on rather than go all the way to the bivvy. It had been a long, hot day.

On the Fifth Day the "anti-clockwise" groups met up with the "clockwise" groups – a case of "Fancy meeting you here!" or "Do you come here often?". Richard's group met the 'antis' on the Olivine Ledge whilst Gordon's group had an experience straight out of an old western movie. As they approached Fiery Col a line of figures appeared on the skyline; luckily it was not Sitting Bull and his braves but Antony and his trampers. We all briefly exchanged greetings and information before the "wises" carried on climbing and the "antis" continued descending.



Meeting of the two Five Pass groups on the Olivine Ledge

Meanwhile, Richard and co had ensconced themselves in the Ledge Bivvy before heading off down to the Olivine River and Richard's swimming holes which, despite the passage of 25 years, were still there. Whilst he and his group were disporting themselves naked in the cool waters, Gordon, Michael, and Tony arrived at the bivvy guided by a very helpfully placed orange pack cover (thanks Paul), which was spotted from a great distance by Gordon through his monocular. When the water nymphs returned, they described in graphic detail what we three unfortunate males had missed. We gained some idea from the way Darryl's eyes were still protruding from his head!

The Sixth Day saw us rising early as six of the group wanted to take in Sunset Peak on the way to the Beans Burn Bivvy. Early cloud had burnt off by the time they reached Fohn Lakes so, after dumping their packs, they climbed the peak via a small snowfield. The views from the

summit were magnificent with Mounts Madeleine and Tutoko dominating the skyline and Lake Wilmot and the Pyke River in the lower distance. Not being content with just admiring the view, Rosie again gave one of her famous impressions of a chamois and bounded across a rocky ridge to the adjoining Corinna Peak.

Meanwhile, the more leisurely Michael and Tony arrived at the lake, had a “munch” (morning tea and lunch combined) before continuing on to the Fohn Saddle. It was on this section that they met two other trampers, a young couple, who had just climbed up from the Beans Burn. These were the only other non-OTMC trampers they had met since leaving the Route Burn, five days ago. After a brief chat both pairs continued on their respective ways, with M & T cresting the final of the Five Passes before waiting for the Sunset Peakers to catch up, which they soon did.



Fohn Lakes and Fohn Saddle from near the summit of Sunset Peak

From the Fohn Saddle we could see right down the Beans Burn and out to Lake Wakatipu. This, along with Fohn Saddle being our last pass to get over, gave a false sense of accomplishment as one could think that the rest would be easy going and we would be out by mid-day the next day. The truth was that we still had two full days of hard tramping ahead of us.

The first task was the very long 650 metre descent from the saddle to the Beans Burn. Wending our way through large clumps of tussock or taking advantage of the clear paths afforded by numerous dry, but strangely short, streambeds we eventually reached the cool waters of the Burn. Here we rested our aching knees before heading along mercifully level

ground to the Beans Burn Bivvy, which offers excellent cave accommodation whilst still allowing discerning trampers the option of pitching their tents on a grassed area of their choice.

Day Seven saw us tramp the length of the Beans Burn, a task which was made easier by good track marked with DoC's orange plastic triangles. When we emerged from the bush at the confluence of the Beans Burn and the Dart River we were surprised at how low the Beans Burn was where we were to cross. We had all been anxious about this crossing (would the water be high, fast, etc.) yet each one of us could have crossed individually if necessary. Nevertheless, all eight of us linked up and crossed as a unit, only to realize that because we did this, we had no photographic record of the momentous crossing – but no-one was willing to go back! Just beyond was a large grassy flat where we decided to set up our final camp and fight off the sandflies.



Dart River, between the Beansburn and Rockburn

Our Final Day dawned to the sound of heavy rain on our tents; however, we were not far into our final trek to the Lake Sylvan carpark when the clouds lifted, and the rain ceased. Tramping along the flats was relatively easy going but when we had to enter the bush, instead of the usual track markers there was a confusing array of different coloured plastic ribbons, which were there not to guide trampers but DoC workers to their various pest traps. Nevertheless, we eventually reached the Rock Burn and the Rockburn Hut where we all gathered to make final arrangements before the final leg to the carpark. As per normal, Richard's group had arrived first, had eaten and drank and were ready to leave by the time Gordon's group arrived. As we were now in both orange triangle territory and track signpost territory, we decided that now we

could safely travel in separate groups, even sub-sub-groups, because we couldn't go the wrong way now - Yeah, right!

Rosie and Tracy set off first, with Richard and Paul saying they would catch them up after the latter had finished pottering around the banks of the Rock Burn. Shortly after they had left Darryl set off as he had to co-ordinate a vehicle shuttle with Richard. Finally, the terrible trio of Gordon, Michael and Tony left for what they thought would be an easy stroll via Lake Sylvan.

Now, you would have thought that five passes was enough, wouldn't you? Believe it or not there were five of the above who unknowingly thought a sixth pass, Sugarloaf, would be a bonus to add to the five already climbed. The aforementioned "terrible trio" were the last to leave Rockburn Hut and were soon climbing and climbing and climbing. It did not occur to them that these contours did not conform with those of the track to Lake Sylvan. They had just arrived at a small level section when they met Tracy and Rosie coming back along the track. "We are sure we are on the wrong track as Richard and Paul should have caught us up by now," they told the trio. Neither had they seen Darryl on their way back and it was then we all realized that we had done far too much climbing.

Reluctantly, we descended to the start of the climb and there we saw the signpost we missed. It had arrows pointing in different directions to Lake Sylvan and Sugarloaf Pass respectively; we had gone in the latter direction. In defence of the five of us, from a certain angle the sign was obscured by a small tree which explained why we had all missed it. It had cost us 90 minutes, of which about an hour was spent climbing. Once on the right track, Rosie and Tracy continued on whilst the "trio" took a break before tackling the final leg past Lake Sylvan.

Meanwhile Richard, Paul and Darryl had continued on the right track and had an uneventful and much easier tramp to the carpark. By the time Rosie and Tracy arrived, the car shuttling bringing Darryl's ute from the Route Burn had been completed. Finally, the "trio" arrived providing more amusement for the campervanners who were sat in their folding chairs watching the world go by.

We all felt a sense of achievement. For the older members of the group, we can now cross the Five Passes off our "bucket list". The going had been tough in parts, much tougher for some than for others; but by helping and encouraging each other, we all achieved our goals and probably felt better at the end of the eighth day than at the end of the first. Besides leading the (clock)"wise" group, Richard was able to revisit those sites which he had first visited 25 years ago and so, perhaps, can also cross them off his "bucket list". But, who knows, we may all decide to return and do the Five Passes anti-clockwise next year!

Tony Timperley for: Richard, Gordon, Paul, Michael, Tracy, Darryl, Rosie.

GARRETT'S BUSH (AND BEYOND)

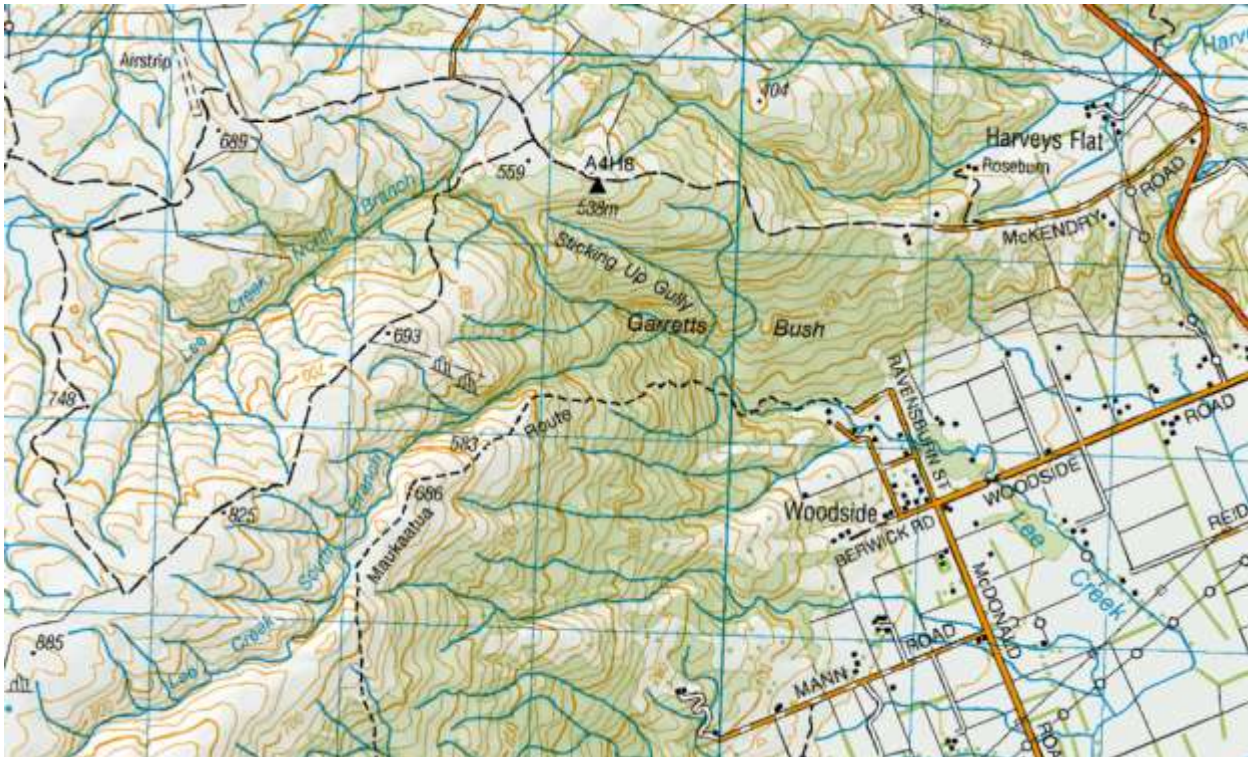
February 28, 2010

Author: Adrienne Dearnley

Published in Bulletin 707, July 2010

12 met up at Woodside Glen to be led a merry dance (off the beaten track) by Ran.

We made it safely to the first corner of the Maungatua track and then started off on our bush-bashing adventure which, for the author at least, resulted in blood, sweat and tears (to clothing and flesh).



After numerous false trails, (well what do you expect when the leader is using an altimeter instead of a compass?) we finally settled for lunch by the north branch of Lee Stream. By that time, we had had many failed attempts at finding the crossover point which would bring us out to the bridge and 4WD track which would lead us to the rocky outcrop with the advertised marvellous views. Some mutinous mutterings had already started along the "does this guy really know what he's doing?" and "how many of you have got torches?" lines.

The ever-lurking bush lawyer had ripped my flesh many times and to make matters worse, I even managed to stab myself with the sharp end of one of my poles. The Merchant of Venice and Shylock's pound of flesh kept popping into my mind - not the best trip to try tramping without gaiters on! But it was all good fun and after a fairly scary sidle along a cliff, many many tanglings with bush, we did finally reach the bridge. Out into the open at last and not too bad an uphill slog to the outcrop. However, the fog had now descended so the marvellous view was somewhat limited (see attached photo).

Then off track again for tussock bashing this time and eerie ghostly sights through the mist. Back into the trees for some more deer track followings. Across to another outcrop and finally onto the Maungatua track to take us back to Woodside Glen.

Stopping at Outram for ice-cream, we were back home earlier than we had feared - i.e., in daylight. And as Ran pointed out, "At least we avoided the gorse this time"!

A trip to be recommended for those in search of a little adventure. Count me in for next year's. The wounds should have healed by then....

Adrienne Dearnley for Paul, Ran, Mr. & Mrs. McArthur, Maria, Lucy, Bronwen, Terry, Rob Seely, Sue Taylor & Roy.

KEA BASIN (REES VALLEY)

April 17-18, 2010

Author: Rebecca and Ella

Published in Bulletin 707, July 2010

This was our first weekend trip with the club, and it consisted of a group of ten happy trampers. Richard, John, Darryl, Ian, Rebecca, Ella, Tina, Andy, Wendy-Anne, and Adrienne. Richard drove the van with squeaky trailer attached from the club heading inland toward Glenorchy. We stopped at Alex for tea and some of us had far too much fried rice from the local takeaways. We were lucky to have a crystal-clear night, and as it got darker the stars came out in full force. We arrived at the trailhead after some impressive ford-crossings in the dark, and everyone set to work on their tents, headlamps on. The efficiency with which the club members put up their tents made us, as newbies, realize this was the beginning of many lessons to learn.



View from above Kea Basin down the Rees towards Muddy Creek (photo from OTMC Bulletin)

After a night of sleep, we hit the trail early. Entering the Rees Valley was magnificent, with the turquoise river to our left, cattle grazing the plain, and glaciers looming in the distance. After a smooth river crossing—the first ever for several of us in the group—we spent the next two hours trudging through many a bog following Darryl's lead. The highlight of this was passing close enough to marvel at the Lennox Falls. One of the first things we admired as newcomers was how bravely the OTMC takes the path less traveled. At about 11am we took a quick break where the trail turned up towards Mount Earnslaw. The next section of the path led us through

native beech forest. We stopped for lunch two-thirds of the way up at a lookout point with panoramic views of the valley, where a native falcon joined us for a snack.

We thought the views couldn't get any better but the higher we climbed, the more spectacular they became. From that point, getting to the Kea Basin was just over the ridge past the rock bivvy. Richard brought us to an ideal camp- site there next to the stream flowing out from the Mt Earnslaw glacier. The basin itself is nestled into the hill, surrounded by rocky ridges on three sides, and overlooked by the glacier itself.

After setting up camp, some of us decided to explore the ridges while others relaxed after the morning's long tramp. Richard led us in a free climb adventure up some pretty steep tussocky hills, which necessitated the use of both our hands and feet. John's GPS tracker informed us that our high point for the day was about 1300m on a ridge looking out over the valley. Here we were met by a great view of the rest of the glaciers further up the valley. On our way back down, we peeked over the edge of the basin at our tents. The way back down was much smoother once we found the track.



Twenty-Five Mile Hut (photo from OTMC Bulletin)

After a delicious bush meal, we all turned in early. Those who got up after dark saw yet another, even more beautiful night sky. The next morning broke frosty but promising another sunny day. We left camp at nine after much resistance to putting wet, frozen boots back on. We enjoyed sunshine for the rest of the day, and before long we had retraced our steps to the river valley, crossing the Rees River and 25 Mile Creek, sloshing through watery bogs, and ducking under several electrified fences. We detoured to Shelter Hut for a quick bite to eat. The sand flies also had their lunch here.

From this point, we followed the muddy DoC track back to the trail head. Back at the van by 2pm guaranteed us an early return to Dunedin.

All in all, we couldn't have had better weather, better views, or better company. A special thanks to our great group leader, Richard (who, by the way, is half mountain goat). This was a very well organized and enjoyable trip. Thanks also to John for his sharing his knowledge of bushcraft with us newcomers.

Thanks, OTMC!

Rebecca and Ella

HARE AND HODSON HILLS

July 11, 2010

Author: Marion Poole

Published in Bulletin 708, August 2010

Having raised my boys in Deborah Bay, I'm familiar with Cold Water Creek, the joys of bushwhacking up to the railway line and further up to Blueskin Road. So, the prospect of getting to know my own backyard even better with a guided walk to Hare and Hodson Hills on the Purakanui and Heywood Point roads was a treat not to be missed.

On a clear crisp day Mike and I and our neighbour Bridget were joined at 9:15 on the Deborah Bay Green by Ian, Dave, Laurel, Lucy, Jane, Lea and Gavin. Gordon led us across the paddock at the bend in Lewis Road to the Old Deborah Bay Water Supply, built by locals in 1910 to supply water and electricity (!) and now disused on Cold Water Creek. Turning north we followed the old bullock track up to the ridge above the Deborah Bay settlement. We spotted some 15 sheep trotting down the railway line. Where would we be without cell phones?



The party with Port Chalmers behind (photo from OTMC Bulletin)

After watching Don rounding up the woolly-headed daredevils, we walked up towards Oliver's horses, who had been advised in advance that Gordon had brought carrots. Navigating deer fences and rock walls we arrived at Hare Hill for lunch. The 360° view stretches north to Heywood Point, northwest over Purakanui, west to the snow-clad Silver Peaks, southwest to Maungatua, south to Mt Cargill and Port Chalmers and east to the Peninsula with Allan's Beach visible between Hereweka and Mount Charles. The wind-sculpted and stunted trees showed that we were lucky to have such a beautiful day. Gordon cheerfully regaled us with stories of fog, mist, sleet and navigating with one hand on the fence line... Then, with the splendid vistas embellished by this mythology, we circumnavigated more deer fences, rock walls, hungry

horses and one very friendly border collie to the trig on Hobson Hill. After touching base with Billy and his Backpackers at Hamilton Bay, we gathered clay down the steep and greasy slopes to the site of the West Harbour School long since dismantled and recycled as two cribs at Aramoana. Then through the saddle to a last high look at the harbour from the northern end of Hamilton Bay and finally to Pulling Point and the ship spotters' lookout before stepping down onto Aramoana Road where our transport back to Deborah Bay awaited us. Nice one Gordon.

Marian Poole for Bridget Ferguson, Mike Atkinson, Lucy Jones, Jane Cloete, Gavin Duthie, Lea Renwick, Laurel Dunn, Dave Wilson, Ian Woodford, Gordon Tocher

LUXMORE HUT & BEYOND

June 27-28, 2010

Author: Richard Forbes

Published in Bulletin 708, August 2010

I had never done any of the Kepler Track, which surprises many people, but I prefer to stay away from the crowds and huts in summer. But during winter, these places are less visited or so I thought. My parents were living at the Manapouri Hydro Village when I was born, and Dad was working on the Manapouri Power Station. I assumed that Dad, who is a keen tramper, had tramped at least some of the Kepler Track, but the only part he did was the Control Gates when he was welding them.



Mt Luxmore, with Lake Te Anau under the fog (June 27, 2010)

Travelling in Antony's car, we left Dunedin at 4.30 pm and took the shortcut road that bypasses Riversdale. The first decent corner we took, the car skidded sideways with tyres squealing. Later on Gene told us the same thing had happened to them in their car. A lot of fog and ice was encountered towards Te Anau, which made for slower going. Lots of snow could be seen in the paddocks through the dark. I wondered what it would be like at Luxmore Hut. We found our cabins at Te Anau Camping Grounds and were pleased that the heaters had been turned on and the rooms were cosy. The other four arrived in Gene's car about an hour later and Gene gave us some coal to carry up the hill.

Saturday dawned foggy and cold. We headed to the car park at the start of the Kepler Track, by the excellently welded Control Gates and started walking at 8.30 am. It was about an hour

to Brod Bay at the start of the four hour climb up to Luxmore Hut. It was still foggy. The track up to Brod Bay was typical DOC Great Walk standard where two people can walk side by side and chat with no problems. A kea was encountered about halfway to Brod Bay. A quick snack (not the kea!) and the long steady climb was started. After about an hour, we broke through the fog and into a clear, calm, sunny day. We reached the big bluffs with impressive DOC walkways and stairs bolted to the rock and the snow on the ground gradually became thicker. Some people were encountered on their way down and they told us 16 were in the hut on Friday night. As we climbed higher, the views gradually became more impressive. The snow became deeper and the bush shorter. Eventually we reached the bushline. The snow on the tops was quite deep in snowdrifts but the way forward was easy to follow. We didn't need the crampons we were carrying. We stopped for lunch at the bushline with a good view on a cool calm clear day with impressive 360-degree views. The lake however was clothed in cloud.



Afternoon stroll to Mt Luxmore (June 27, 2010)

After lunch it was gentle walking for about another hour to the hut, which was quite close to the bushline. After getting organized in our bunkrooms, we pushed on to Mount Luxmore. A couple of our group stayed behind to get everything in order for tea. The snow got a bit deeper, and the footprints fewer the closer we got to the top. The ice axes came in handy to steady ourselves. When we got to the turnoff to the summit, the track further on really petered out. The ridge to the summit was quite windblown, so not much snow. The view from the top was great but a bit cold in the wind. So, we made our way back down to the hut as there were only about one and a half hours of light left. All in all, a great side trip.

Back in the hut Gene was wondering about the firewood situation so that we could burn the coal that we had all carried up. He spied some footprints in the snow leading to the nearby bushline and bingo – there was a shed full of wood there. So enough was carried to the hut to make a cosy fire. Thanks Gene!

The original intention of the trip was a cooking competition but there were no takers. The other people in the hut were impressed with the noise and power of our MSR cookers and Gene cooked us a hearty meal of Pasta D'Oro pasta and sauces, followed by Sam's dessert of cream, brandy and biscuits. Sam even carried up an old-fashioned hand eggbeater to whip up the cream. There was to be a partial eclipse of the moon that night, but only a few of us (fuelled by the warming properties of port) managed to stay awake to see the very start of the eclipse at 10.00 pm. Some women from the Fiordland Tramping Club were there for the night with half of them walking to the next shelter after tea in the moonlight. They got back in the wee small hours saying it was a bit tricky during the eclipse as the moonlight was halved.

The next morning we woke up everyone with Antony's MSR Dragonfly. After breakfast, we did the quick trip to see the caves. Another nice cool clear day with fog still on the lake. The icicles on the cave entrance were impressive and the wooden steps into the cave were well constructed but slippery with the ice. The cave seemed to go on forever. I went as far as I could crouch without having to monkey-crawl further on. Then it was packs on, and down to the cars, back into the fog and mist halfway down the track, and a quick bite to eat at Brod Bay. One of our party did not have an annual hut pass or ticket, so we popped into DOC for them to pay. The woman at DOC was a bit taken aback that someone had called into pay. On Friday night there were 16 in the hut, and on Saturday night there were 24. But not many of these people signed the hut book and most likely did not pay the \$15 hut fee. DOC are talking about increasing hut fees soon but just on this weekend quite a few hundred dollars in hut fees were not paid. I think a lot of non-compliance happens because hut wardens are not on site. Another great trip with the OTMC. Thanks, Gene, for leading, and Antony for driving the car.

Richard Forbes for Gene, Antony, Debbie, Yvonne (Ireland), Sam, John and Rebecca (USA)

SNOWCAVING (AN EVENTFUL TRIP)

July 30 – August 1, 2010

Author: Richard Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 709, September 2010

Not as many experienced club snowcavers crawled out of the woodwork as I had hoped, and the weather forecast was a bit conflicting, so I was somewhat anxious as we pulled up at the Clubrooms at 7.30 on the Saturday morning. Twenty people tore off in four cars. You have to keep cosy on snowcaving trips.

Regrouping in Roxburgh for a hot chocolate gave an opportunity for a bit of a talk about the principles of emergency shelters, and questions to be answered, then it was off up the hill. Even though the road was still frozen from the night's frost, the station-wagons stopped where the snowcats are parked in Winter, and the two 4WD SUVs had to take over pack carrying, while many people walked up the hill unloaded.

We all collected in sight of the usual gully in no time at all but, though the sky was blue, the wind on that road line was already a nuisance. It was now a job to ascertain if the usual gully had adequate snow of good quality. While the last were still being ferried, chased or blown, up the hill, I found three factors in favour of using the usual gully: it was close, there was relatively little wind (actually it was dead calm for a while in there) and the water supply was exposed. Negative factors included: there was that usual cornice (which cannot be fully avoided); and as I dug a quick snow profile pit, I found a layer of granular snow about 20 cm down. I went to another spot, and it wasn't there, but I couldn't be sure how stable the whole slope was. Especially as one forecast suggested rain overnight. It was, as usual, hard to tell if there was sufficient depth for four caves all close together.

Well, I didn't think anybody would mind if we had a bash, it being still early in the day, and, if necessary, to move on exploring the range for a better site if this proved unsuitable.

As it happens, after a couple of false starts, we all found a site away from the worst of the cornice, and only one group struck any granular snow, and it was a thin layer. It all looked good. Caves went in, then split into two benches when the ground was struck. A busy three hours saw everyone with enough shelter to survive a comfortable night out of the wind, had it been a real emergency, and then the business of extra comfort, spacious living and interior design set in.

Fastest finished was, predictably, Rob's team, who chose a strange hybrid of a cave, igloo and snowmound. Worth a try, I thought. My cave was just big enough and no more so we could be snug. Jeremy's and Mike's caves, however, were victims of great enthusiasm and not-knowing-when-to-stop-ism, and I scoffed at the need to have a cathedral when a normal cave would suffice. These two caves were huge. One had two entrances. "All a bit OTT," I thought, "they'll be cold."

Dinner was had, and people were settling down to work on sleep deficits, a bottle of wine was found and shared with a few lucky folk, when the cry went out... Eight PM, and Rob's roof had

fallen in, and the rest of the roof was leaking. People were wet and understandably annoyed. OK, time to reconsider accommodation. Apparently, the bivvy rock hut just up the hill was not occupied and would be a possibility this year as its door wasn't frozen shut (like it was last year). Two cars two hundred metres away were also possibilities for emergency accommodation. But, as this was supposed to be about emergency snow shelters, we decided to use what was available. Thank the Lord for cathedrals, I thought, as we found spaces for the homeless, easily and without too much disruption. All-important gear and tools were tucked away in case it snowed or blew. All, that is, except for a certain 3 carrymats. You can't put things down for a minute, eh, Janet? Some thieving wind will come along and deprive you of what's yours, soon as look at you. I was most impressed with Janet's ability to remain cheerful while being re-accommodated, so I rewarded her by thieving Tracy's carrymat for her.

So, everyone had a cosy night after all. The stars outside were slowly disappearing, but it wasn't real cold. We watched candles glow in their tiny personal snowpocket caves while we drifted off to a perfect sleep.

In our cave, however, while others might have been welcoming August in with "Rabbits" (white or otherwise... everything is white here) our first words for the month were "WTF was that?" A troubling "whump" woke all in our cave except for Tracy (sleeps like a baby). The cave looked all secure, but Mark felt the need to check some lumpy blocks at the mouth of our entrance. A piece of the cornice where certain people had been playing and poking around, decided to change location. Sweeping over our cave fair and square, it neatly removed our outdoor décor (of tools). I had never seen the cornice move before, not even with Dave McLean riding a shovel over it repeatedly, on so many such trips.

These incidents were all due to the predicted thawing conditions, something which Rob and I had not prepared specifically for. But, while everyone in their caves was secure and safe, and caves were clearly better than any alternative, given the site and conditions, I was a bit worried about people hanging around outside should more of the cornice decide to go AWOL. Luckily the cornice stayed put (except for a bit well away from us, when we were almost all gone). Nevertheless, we didn't hang around. It was ridiculously windy and that made us all cold, so we grabbed a quick bite and a guzzle of drink, rammed our gear into packs and grabbed the tools and set off for the vehicles. That was a particularly difficult mission, as it turned out, as we fought to stay upright (largely unsuccessfully) over the crusty snow.

Packs went into the SUVs, and after a quick walk down for most of us, with the wind making conversation impossible, we were soon all away in our cars for a hot chocolate, second breakfast and debrief in the "Tussock Hills" establishment in Roxburgh. What a fine place it was. I thought some people looked a bit stunned by it all. In the warmth, over a very nice hot drink, we discussed our trip, and what we had learned for next year. Only one person thought that another snowcaving trip was necessary.

I do hope these keen (and, now experienced!) folk will consider helping out next year.

Thanks to Wayne and Pam Hodgy for being Dunedin contacts, and to Nathan & Yvonne, Tracy, Mike and Darryl for driving (and especially to Mike and Darryl for SUV transport). In hindsight, the trip was bloody good, eh? Don't you agree?

Richard Pettinger for Paul Cunliffe, Mark Jackson, Jo Baillie, Tracy Pettinger, Janet Barclay, Russell Barclay, Rob Seeley, Jeremy Beck, Marisa Beck, Jeremy Thomas, Stefan Fairweather, Yvonne Hayes, Nathan Marshall, Darryl Woods, Mike Prince, Andrew Prince, Elliot Samuel, Hamish Prince & Craig Trompetter.

BLUE MOUNTAIN TRACK

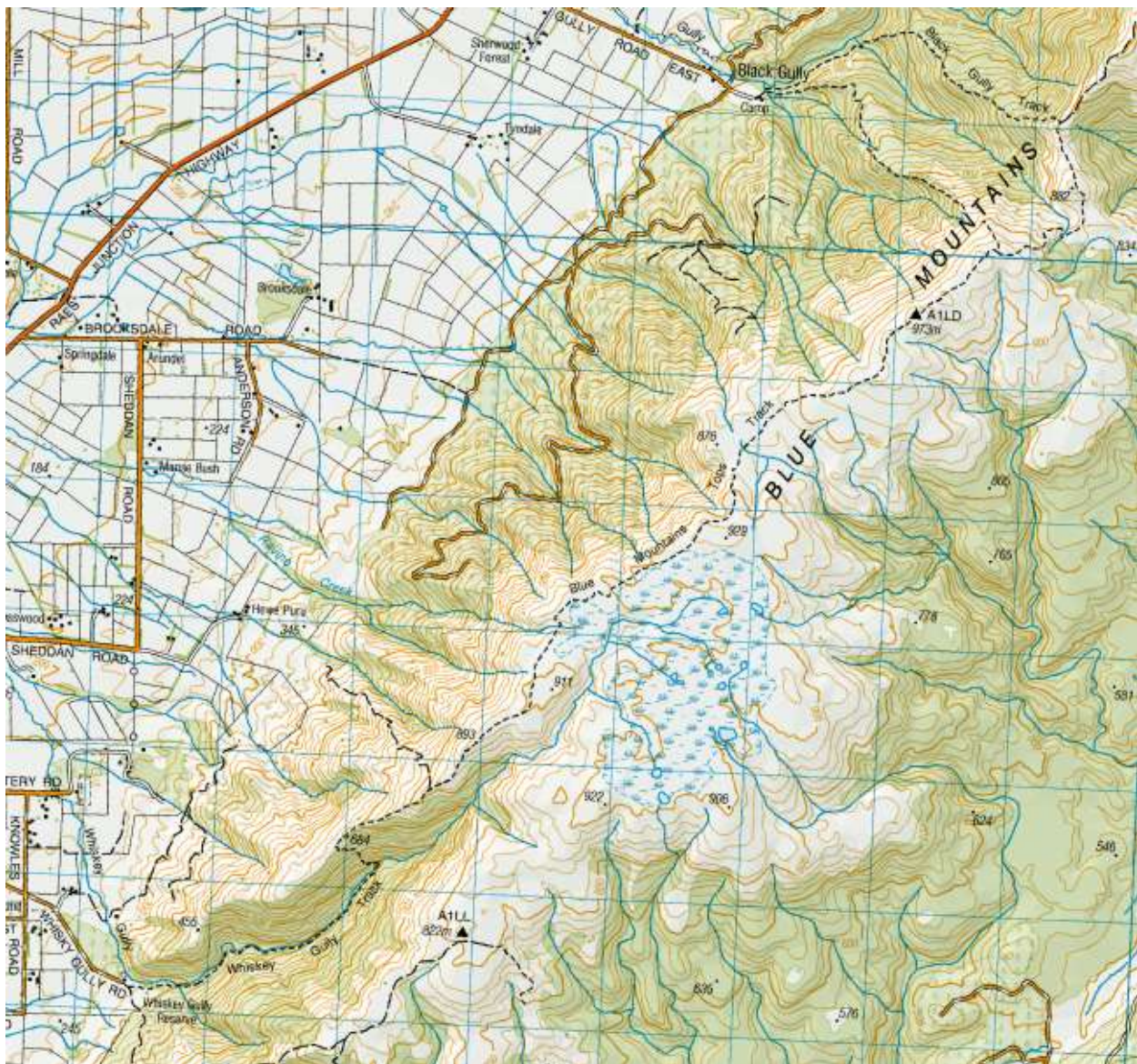
March 28, 2010

Author: Jane Cloete

Published in Bulletin 710, October 2010

This was my first try at organising an OTMC trip, so I write this report from that angle – perhaps someone else will write from the 'received' angle!

I'd been to the Blue Mountains in early April last year and thought it worth a trip for the club. But it needed an early start and late return to Dunedin, not usual for day trips. A few nights before the tramp I had a nightmare – no-one turned up! But I'd put an alternative down that it would be possible to meet at Whiskey Gully, so I drove the 150km in my dream only to find no-one there either!



Planning: What to grade the trip? Definitely not hard, we'd be on a track all the way. Easy? Yes, had it been a shorter trip, but last year I took 7 hrs so I graded it 'medium' and in the end that seemed about right.

Got organised for the trip – extra food/water/sweaters in case they'd been forgotten. The evening before I remembered about trip lists for the clubrooms etc. – quick phone call to Antony P. who said he'd be willing to be a contact person for this end (unlikely to be needed but you never know!). Thanks Antony.

Sunday – good weather forecast and at 6.30am at the clubrooms the Southern Cross was just visible through thin high cloud. Nine of us had assembled by 6.55 (thanks guys, for being on time) and we set off at 7.00 am on the dot in three cars as we had a bit of car-shuffling to do when we got to West Otago: the start/end of the track is 15km apart, by road. Got to Whiskey Gully, just beyond Tapanui, at about 9am and we were walking by 9.10. I'd promised everyone an easy half hour at the start, ambling along beside a wee stream and indeed the first 200 metres were easy! But there was a bit of scrambling needed for short sections until we got to the waterfall. This had a bit more water in it than I'd seen before, so I bravely let Gavin show the way before I followed very carefully! Up the side of the valley 'til we eventually broke out of the bush, at 680 metres, and into sunshine for a morning tea stop. Then steadily on up, in sunshine and on a good track, to 900 metres. After that we were on a small track cut through *Dracophyllum* scrub for the rest of the walk along the tops. There are plenty of track markers and it would be difficult to get lost even in fog. Saw a few deer in the distance. The track has been widened a bit since last year and it evidently isn't used much – we stumped over lots of moss with exquisite wee flowers which wouldn't have survived heavy traffic.

Lunch at about the half-way point, overlooking the wide West Otago plain, but alas there was a mist in the distance which precluded views of Stewart Island or Mt Aspiring, or even of the sea! We examined a small weta (it seemed to be minus a leg or two) and even had a poetry reading to accompany our meal!

After lunch, setting a cracking pace now, on upwards to the highest point of 973 metres, and from there it was only about one km to the turnoff. Thankfully this is better marked than last year! A last stop for a drink/snack in the sunshine before we set off down to Black Gully. The descent takes almost as long as the ascent of the other end – 80 minutes – but we were into the Black Gully reserve by 3.10pm – just 6 hours from the start.

I'd reckoned on being at Black Gully by 4.30 but the early finish was good – time to visit the relations on the way back, or for a cup of coffee with one's sister at Lawrence!

All in all, I much enjoyed this trip. Helped by good weather but made into a fantastic day by such fantastic company!

Many thanks to Rebecca Henck, Gavin MacArthur, Penny and David McArthur, Bronwen Strang, Stefan Fairweather, Jo Baillie and David Barnes for making the effort to get up early and come!

Jane Cloete

FOX PEAK AREA

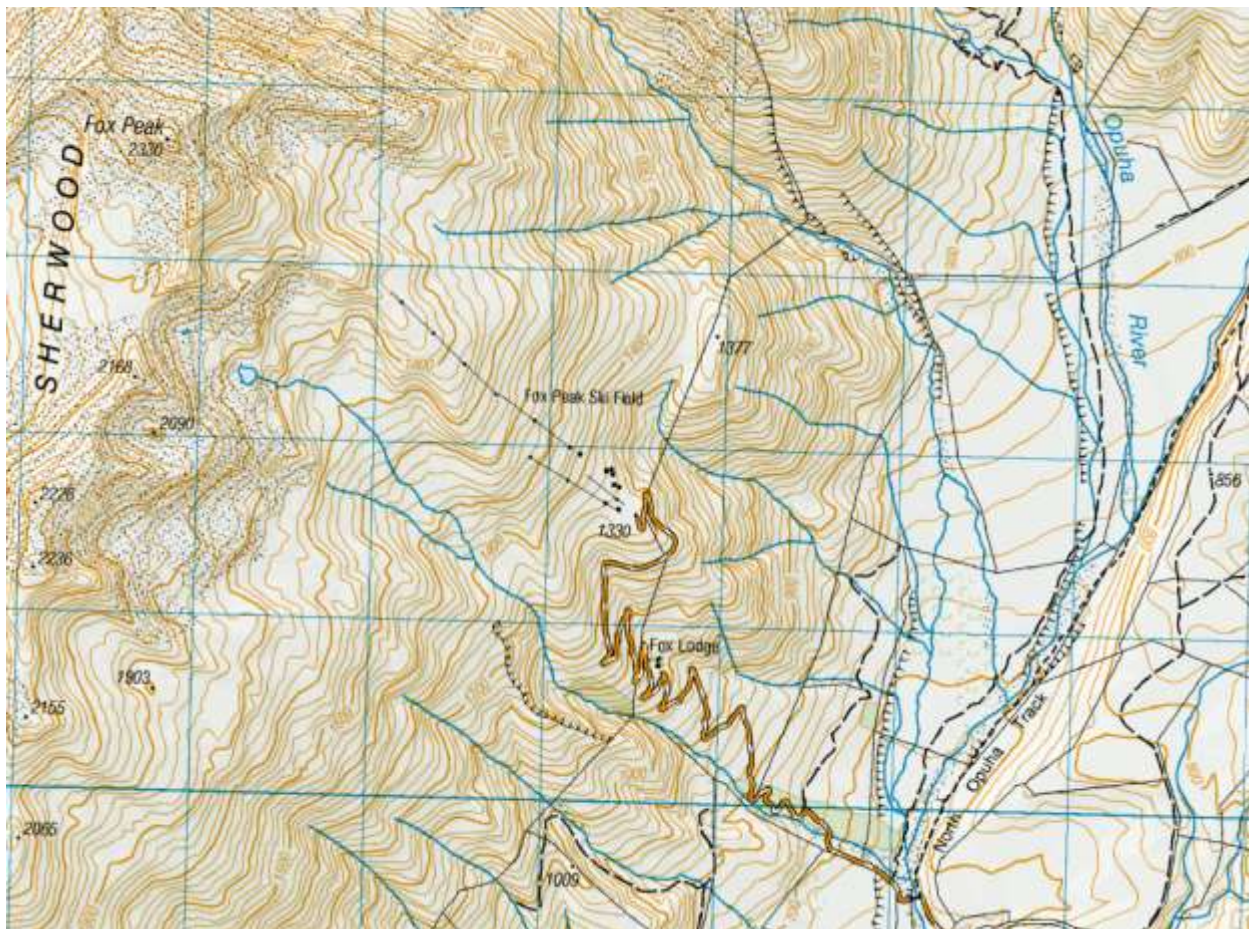
August 27-28, 2010

Author: Ralph Harvey & Andy Cunningham

Published in Bulletin 710, October 2010

On Friday 27th August Ralph Harvey and Andy Cunningham drove up to Fox Lodge and the Fox Peak ski area. We spent the Friday afternoon exploring the environs of the South Basin area. Snow conditions were generally poor – deep graupel and considerable wind drift - but we had a good look around. We spent the night at Fox Lodge, which provided decent facilities at \$25 pppn. On the Saturday we attempted to climb Fox Peak (2330m), and despite poor snow even on the ridgeline, and massing bad weather clouds, we reached the main subsidiary peak at around 2300m. The final ridge from there to the main summit was considered too dangerous in the conditions (we'd almost triggered a slab avalanche lower down the ridge), so we descended with care back to Fox Lodge for tea and the drive back to Dunedin. Despite the conditions the trip was thoroughly enjoyable, and both of us agreed it would be a good place for a Club trip to the area, whether in Summer, Winter – or both.

Ralph & Andy



WINTER ROUTEBURN @ FALLS HUT

July 17-18, 2010

Author: Wolfgang Gerber

Published in Bulletin 710, October 2010

I had a thought that maybe these trips are becoming unpopular, but as the trip list grew my thoughts proved to be quite wrong as 30 people wanted to come along.

On Friday, some walked into the Falls Hut and some to the overcrowded Flats Hut. My main concern was the crossing of Israeli Creek as mother nature had made a bit of a mess of the bridge. As it turned out my concern was unfounded as the crossing was a nonevent. The glorious weather we had for the whole weekend was a real bonus for everyone.



2010 Winter Routeburn party on Conical Hill (PHOTO Wolfgang Gerber)

Lake Harris was only partially frozen, so we just followed the track up to the saddle. 12 of us made it up to Conical Hill for some great views just as my panorama on my display at the clubrooms showed. There was hardly any wind with blue skies and snowy mountain tops. It doesn't get any better than this as we must have spent an hour up there absorbing the scenery. Then it was back to the hut where we learned that Phil and Stefan knocked off Ocean Peak, an amazing feat. This turned the trip into E-C (easy-climbing).

After many years of trying, I finally enticed my youngest daughter, Emmy, to come tramping with the "Old Fella". She also made a wonderful Quiz assistant. The winning Quiz team this year was Ian's, which included Brent, Becky and Sarah (who won the women's section in the Moro marathon in September), second place went to James's team, which included Marina E, Trevor, Stefan and Ralph aka Grandad, with one point behind came team Johnston which included Graham, Jasmine, Alison, and Julia. They also had the best dressed table in

conjunction with team Pettinger (R+T Rosa and Daryl) and finally coming up the rare (rear) end was team Derek which included Lucy, Jessica, Mike and his Mate.



Saturday night at Routeburn Falls Hut (PHOTO Wolfgang Gerber)

Next morning some went up to the ledge behind the Hut for a better view of the Flats (once the fog lifted) and Stefan and Abby made it up to Sugarloaf Pass to have a great view of the Rockburn. It was a really great weekend and I gather everyone achieved what they wanted to with great views, great weather, and great company. A big thanks goes to the drivers and food party leaders; you made my job easier. Also, a big thanks goes to Ralph for co-coordinating the Friday night take off.

One thing I thought was really cool that there were 4 people under 20 on this trip.

Wolfgang Gerber for Emmy Gerber, Alan Thomson, Jill McAliece, Abby Lute, Richard, Tracy and Rosa Pettinger, Darryl Woods, Graham, Alicia and Jasmine Johnston, Julia Hjortland, Derek and Lucy Mycock, Jessica, Ian Woodford, Becky Cameron, Brent Dewar, Sarah Chisnall, Philip Somerville, Bruce Bernasconi, Thomas Gleeson, James Cleary, Marina Eglasias, Trevor Deaker, Ralph Harvey Stefan Fairweather, Mike Brettell, and his Mate.

MT CARGILL FROM BETHUNE'S GULLY

June 25, 2010

Author: Janet Barclay

Published in Bulletin 711, November 2010

I was looking forward to the 'Family' tramp to Mt Cargill. I suggested to Russell that he might not be the only kid on this one and I was right.

Eighteen of us assembled at Bethune's Gully, nine grown-ups and nine kids, ranging in age from 5 through to 14. Although Jade told us that you are not a kid at 14.



The youngsters at Mt Cargill (photo from OTMC Bulletin)

The weather was perfect, and the group was keen as we started off with a hiss and a roar. As little legs started to get weary, there was always a knowing parent on hand to encourage them further with a quick top up of energy. I got filthy looks from Russell as he realized he had been hard done by; we had never taken lollies on a tramp before – oops!

Dylan was keen to show Russell and me a shortcut to the top and had us clambering up a rather scary rock face. He was very good at checking to see that everyone was handling it OK and described to us what was coming up next. I could see a capable future leader in the making. Needless to say, everyone made it to the top one way or another, where we enjoyed the magic view, a bite to eat and a group photo of the kids before heading back down.

The descending journey was a lot different from the ascent, with the kids leaving us for dust in a race to the bottom. They had loads of time to play at the playground down the bottom before we finally caught up with them.

All in all, a lovely day enjoyed by everyone. Even the adults not attached to children agreed that it would be nice to have more of these 'family' tramps to encourage the younger generation to enjoy the great outdoors. Anyone with ideas to entice teenagers out? Perhaps a bribe of money instead of lollies might work! And speaking of which, I did buy Russell an ice cream on the way back so all is well between us now.

A very big WELL DONE to Ruby, Neive, Jade, Dylan, Russell, Isabella, Margo, Aidan and little Alex. And a thank you to Richard for organizing from the grownups Debbie, Jane, Lucy, Gavi, Ian, Nic, Debbie and myself (Janet).

KIRWIN'S HUT

Date not recorded

Author: David Barnes

Published in Bulletin 711, November 2010

Sometimes there are places where you want to go tramping or people you want to go tramping with that are just a bit out of the way. Sometimes you need to make the effort. I recently detoured home from Wellington via Westport and caught up with '80s OTMC stalwarts Ross and Pam Cocker, having told them that a trip away together was long overdue.



Kirwin's Hut (PHOTO David Barnes)

We set out from Caplestone, a ghost town near Reefton, and plunged into the forests of Victoria Forest Park. Our destination was Kirwin's Hut, and our route followed an old mining pack track almost all the way. Initially, the track follows the river, with a tunnel to go through for a bit of variation. An hour or so along the track, we met a Reefton resident that Ross and Pam knew, returning from an after-work Friday night dash to the hut – his 105th trip there!! Shortly, the track pulled away from the river and began to climb. Think the Government Track, but slightly steeper. At lunch time a group of mountain bikers came past. They were doing it easy, having helicoptered to the hut for a big descent. An hour after a small saddle that Pam was convinced signalled that we were near the hut, we finally reached a sign indicating a fork that meant we were truly getting closer. Soon, another sign indicated 30 minutes to go, but the reality was only fifteen. The hut sits on a small tussock knoll and has picture windows providing one of the best 'from the dining table' vistas I've seen from any hut. A fitting hut to be the 100th one I've stayed at. The sunset was superb.

On Sunday, we shot up to nearby Kirwan's Hill (1315m) to sit and drink in the 360o views. It's only half an hour and shouldn't be missed. There are alternative routes out via Montgomerie

Hut and either Waitahu Valley or Murray Creek. The former involves a reputedly dull walk on a long 4x4 track, while the former involves complex transport logistics. We chose to simply retrace our steps. The descent took us through a band of mist that created some surreal effects in the forest and meant that the previous day's humidity was a thing of the past. The gradient was such that, even though we were losing height constantly, the knees did not suffer, and we were at the car an hour quicker than the ascent.

David Barnes

BEN THERE, DONE THAT

September 11-12, 2010

Author: Sam Patrick

Published in Bulletin 712, December 2010

On the evening of the ominous sounding date of Friday 10-9-10 (I'm sure that must have some significance) twelve intrepid explorers climbed into the van to be transported to majestic McKenzie country. The weather was good, but the forecast was not. The relatively uneventful road trip was a good chance to meet new friends and catch up with those mates you haven't seen for a while. It's amazing the range of topics discussed, including such things as finance and woman's underwear. Those blokes who admitted wearing woman's underwear shall remain nameless. The trip was punctuated by a stop in Oamaru for dinner and numerous cries of "are we there yet?" Upon arrival at the Top 10 holiday park, we prepaid the fee and after some confusion as to the numbering system located our cabins, unpacked and enjoyed a reasonably comfortable night's sleep.



Saddle between Boundary and Duncan Streams (September 11, 2010)

Waking just before the alarm rang (this only happens if the alarm has been set) it was a quick breakfast and a short wait while the two brave souls who camped by the river found their way to our "camp". Then back into the van and on the road for the short drive to a car park at the base of Ben Dhu aka Ben Dhu basecamp. I'm not very fit but seemed to be coping ok ...so far ...so good. After 30 minutes or so enjoying the view of hills to the left and mountains to the

right, some snow covered and some not, it suddenly dawned on me that from now on it would be all uphill...literally.

But not to worry, I was primed. I was mentally on top of my game, I had power to burn (two cups of coffee this morning) and little more than food, drink, and parka in my pack. Just enough to balance the winter weight gain hidden lower and to the front. Right then let's go! Luckily the hardest part was climbing the near vertical bank from the road to the well-hidden DOC sign announcing the start of the walk. That's not to say the rest of the walk was a doodle, more of a near continuous medium gradient up a scenic valley and onto the summit ridge. We chose the northwest route as the climb was less demanding than the direct route from the road. About halfway up a few people chose a 15-minute side trip to view a little tarn in the bottom of an adjacent valley. Rumours and recollections were heard of some crazy, Antony someone, who descended the scree slope to that tarn at several hundred metres per minute, arriving so long before fellow trampers that he had the tent pitched and dinner underway.



Approaching Ben Dhu (September 11, 2010)

I digress, lunch was had at the top of the valley before the summit push was attempted. Taxing, but not more than any of our group could handle. I just wish I'd eaten more chocolate for lunch. A short walk along the snow-covered flat top brought us to fantastic views of the expansive McKenzie country including Lakes Tekapo, Pukaki and Benmore. Mt Cook Aoraki peeked out through the gathering clouds for the first few to arrive. The weather remained fine where we were. The descent was steep, and a couple of rest stops were had to let knees and ankles recover. The time down was about a third of the time up. After a short rehydrate it was back into the van for the drive back to civilization. Antony managed to hit only one rock while

exiting the car park. An improvement of 50% over the two he found on the way in. The folk in the van rushed the showers when we got back to camp while the riverbank rebels had a cold water wash-up in the river. A couple of hours later we all gathered at the pub for tea and a brew. I love this “roughing it” lifestyle. Shortly thereafter 14 tired bodies hit the hay in preparation for tomorrow’s effort.

Day two started in much the same way but a slight hangover and the van now full to the roof with all our gear. The short drive around Lake Ohau brought us to a car park at the western base of Ben Ohau. Today’s walk would follow a 4WD track most of the way up the hill. Once again, a steady climb with a couple of small flat bits to give us a rest.



View across Lake Ohau from Ben Ohau track (September 12, 2010)

The walk was easier and short than Ben Dhu yesterday. The last 200m or so was up a slightly steeper rocky ridge. After taking in the fantastic panoramic views of Tekapo and Twizel to the east, Lake Ohau at our feet and the mouth of the Hopkins and Dobson valleys to the northwest we had lunch and set off back down. The walk down was an easier affair too, using the 4WD track again. A quick stop at Omarama for ice cream and fuel and then on to Dunedin. The trip back was a quieter event with several people “resting their eyes”. At least no one snored in the van. Much texting to loved ones was undertaken announcing our safe return from “the zone”. Ian even managed to text himself...analyse that if you will. Arriving home, I was happily tired but to my amazement felt no stiffness in the following days. Maybe it was just a lack of chocolate after all.

p.s. note to self...take more chocolate next time.

Sam Patrick for Brent, Ian, Debbie, Antony, Ann, Richard, Becky, Gene, Wendy-Anne, Andrew, Sarah, Ross, Michael and Darryl.

VIEWS OF STRATH TAIERI, MATARAE

May 30, 2010

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 712, December 2010

After a week of rain this trip, on the first non-rain day, should have attracted more than the four who turned up to shake off their cabin fever. Did the rest of you believe that a further 33 days and nights of the same were in the offing?



An interesting trip out to the Barewood plateau crossing the Taieri-cum-Zambezi river at Outram and then, from above, seeing the Plain now offering a range of boating possibilities.

We arrived at Lucy's family's place, Matarae lying some 10k beyond Clarks Junction, and with her mother, Juliet, set off across the soaking paddocks to explore the farm. The land is excellent walking country, a high plateau cut by deep ravines broken up and given interest by the tors which are especially large here. Even in the general gloom the views were extensive, and we could see all the Middelmarsh valley, now populated by little lakes, and the Salt Lake shining in the sun. Juliet said she'd never seen it so big, and we wondered if it was still salty. Water became the theme of the trip with the Jones women frequently remarking that they'd never seen a stream there before. It also rather cut short the walk as the Sutton Stream in spate made further northward progress impossible. This and the failure of the forecast sun to arrive had us back at the homestead after about 4 hours. The rest of Lucy's family were there, and we enjoyed tea and cake and a chat before heading home.

There is potential for great walking here in future with an obvious possibility being a round trip to the Salt Lake or one way with a car shuffle.

Many thanks to Lucy and Juliet Jones and family.

Bronwen Strang, Lucy Jones, Ralph Harvey, Rob Seeley.

ROUTEBURN PEAKS

October 1-4, 2010

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 712, December 2010

Five of us had planned a trip to the Routeburn area with the aim of climbing Mt Xenicus and Ocean Peak, which both sit above Harris Saddle. The walk-in to the Falls hut was fine for the first five minutes, after which rain, and then snow, started to make things look interesting!



Mt Xenicus in winter, from the Routeburn Track

On Saturday morning we headed up towards Harris Saddle; about 100 metres out of the hut the first deep snow was encountered, and after making about 1.5kms in three hours (roughly two-thirds of the way to the Saddle), and having crossed some big avalanche tracks already, we headed back to the hut for lunch and a brew. In the afternoon we took advantage of the tracks made in the morning to head up to the attractive tarn area above the Falls hut, where there are some great views of the area.

With no prospect of getting beyond our high point, we decided to head out on Sunday, so walked back to the car park and then headed to the Greenstone & Caples track end, via an excellent coffee at Kinloch Lodge. That afternoon we walked to the Mid-Caples Hut and spent a great evening with four other people, before walking out on the Monday morning and heading back to Dunedin (all except Becky who – lucky thing – spent the rest of the week at Kinloch!)

Despite the late-season snow meaning we failed to climb our objectives, all agreed we'd had a great time, and given the snow and avalanche conditions, it had also been very instructive!

Sarah Chisnall, Becky Cameron, Wayne Hodgkinson, Ralph Harvey, Andy Cunningham

GABRIELS GULLY

September 26, 2010

Author: Not recorded

Published in Bulletin 712, December 2010

The last Sunday in September saw 8 of us travel up to Lawrence for an enjoyable stroll – the rating of 'easy' was indeed correct!

We parked in the proper car park at Gabriels Gully, but then left the tourist route. There are a good few tracks in the area that leave the beaten tracks but we used only one of them at the very start of the day: straight up! Luckily the track was not too overgrown and even the bit of 'bush-bashing' which I thought would be needed was only a 3-metre push through very light undergrowth! We'd got to the top of the hill at an old dam (no water these days) and then proceeded around the back of the Gully itself. Lots of history (and lots of notice boards to tell us about the trials that the goldminers went through), masses of wild daffodils and, even prettier, wild primroses of both the yellow and purple varieties.



Overview of Gabriels Gully

The tracks were good, and we took our time checking out old mines, the explosives store, bits of machinery etc., all the while coming across patches of spring flowers.

By 11.30 we were back at the cars, so we had an early lunch using one of several picnic tables there (but no toilets – plenty of brambles and Matagouri for that sort of thing!).

As we set out for Wetherstones it began to drizzle, but as soon as we'd put on our coats it stopped again! And the weather was like that for the rest of the day – mostly sunshine with the occasional short showers. The track over the hill was good – even a bridge over a stream so we didn't get wet feet – and it took less than an hour to get to the Old Brewery at Wetherstones. No beer there nowadays but they did leave a legacy of a million billion daffodils. We

donated a gold coin and went for a wander: the Lawrence people have cleared some new tracks and we had a preview of the various varieties of narcissi as we tracked round via a waterfall to the main daffodil paddock. Yes, it's true – we did see a host of golden daffodils and were treated to a reading of Wordsworth's poem at the very top. Bit cold though, so back down to the brewery, then up and over the hill back to the cars. The track seemed much shorter going back!

So, many thanks to my companions for making the day so enjoyable: Hilda Firth, Jude Stevenson, Jill McAliece, Michael Firmin, Janet Barclay, James and Russell.

UNEXPLORED SILVER PEAKS

October 3, 2010

Author: Tracy Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 712, December 2010

Unlike two weeks earlier when only two people turned up for the trip I was intending to take to Mt Charles, (they were Richard and me, who spent a fine day gardening instead), on this trip there was a big mob raring to go. To go somewhere. Somewhere mad. And nobody cared where. Stefan and some others were a bit perturbed to hear that there was an even chance that, had we ventured to David's suggested destination, we might not come home till Monday lunchtime. Something was said about imminent exams and a Very Important dinner party (which was actually David himself not wanting a late return!). And so, a less ambitious trip was called for.



We squashed ourselves into the minimum number of cars that would take 11 people up to the hills and left the clubrooms at a leisurely 10 past 9, (even though Richard and I were actually there at the clubrooms well before 9), by minutes even.

The sun was shining, but it wasn't a hot day. Perfect! At least it wasn't snowing, like on last year's Unexplored Silver Peaks.

We parked up at the first car park on Semple Road and headed off up the track to 'Sleepy Hollow', which is a small swampy terrace on the South Face of Hightop, situated part way down a stream somewhere in that direction. The map is in Richard's head, and he always seems to know where he is going, so that's fine.

The track proceeded through some small wetty wallows, twiggy trees and scrabbly scrub, for a while, plunging into the Silverstream catchment. I felt like one of the dogs on Country Calendar going through the obstacle course.

We all managed to get through without having our eyes poked out. But the bush lawyer was in abundance, not only there either. It was in my hair and unmentionable places on my body, and probably everybody else's too. There was evidence of pigs along the way too. There were patches of gorse.

We followed the stream for a long way keeping to the true middle most of the way. The rocks were slippery slime and slowed us down a bit. We found a dry spot to sit in and eat our lunch at the appropriate time, while Robert wrung himself out to dry as he had been for a bit of a swim, it being such a nice day. Richard remarked about the nice collection of new-looking tramping gear he had almost stepped on. Seems that a pesky branch had neatly unzipped Stefan's pack, and gravity did the rest. That's nature for you. Stef was fortunate that the deposit wasn't following Robert into the drink.

Immediately after eating, we were at the point where there is a proper track leading up the spur to the right that we imagined could be 50% of Greengage Track (but wasn't). We headed off thataway. There was a handy knotted rope to pull ourselves up the spur with, attached to a sturdy tree and tested by all of us. It was probably 20 metres long and extremely useful, especially for the first pull out of the stream

The spur went on and on and on and on, like they do and when we reached the T junction with the track that leads to Green Hut site we realised we were somewhere else.

So, we went to Green Hut site, sat int' sun, sagged and sizzled and then sodded off back to the cars. On the way back we followed the track that goes around the west and north of Hightop, to Semple Road, a bit that at least two of us, including me, had never explored before.

One carload, which didn't need to get back for exam swotting, checked out the Orokonui Sanctuary visitors' centre, leaving them some muddy deposits from someone's boots. Let's hope the soil, from the unexplored parts of the Silver Peaks, had some handy native species in it.

Thanks to Richard for leading yet another one of the Club's maddest annual trips.

Tracy Pettinger for Alan Williamson, Ian Woodford, David J Barnes, Robert Thompson, Paul Cunliffe, Darryl Woods, Abby Lute, Adam Girardin, Stefan Fairweather and Richard Pettinger

OTMC COMMITTEE (2010-11)

President – Antony Pettinger

Vice President – Richard Forbes

Secretary – Peter Stevenson

Treasurer Ann Burton

Chief Guide / Transport – Antony Pettinger

Bulletin Editor – Debbie Pettinger

Membership Secretary – Richard Forbes

Social Convenor – Tony Timperley

Social Convenor – Ralph Harvey

Day Trip Convener – Wayne Hodgkinson

Conservation & Recreation Advocacy – David Barnes

Bushcraft 2011 – Antony Pettinger

Gear Hire – Gene Dyett

Gear Hire – Ralph Harvey

SAR – Ross Hunt

SAR – Teresa Blondell

Website – Antony Pettinger

Clubrooms – Gene Dyett

Hon. Solicitor – Antony Hamel

OTMC TRIP PROGRAMME 2010

Month	Date(s)	Specific Trip	Leader
January	17	Rustlers Ridge	Gavin McArthur
January	23-24	Mt. Cook In Summer	Ralph Harvey
January	23-31	Beansburn / Routeburn (Five Passes)	Antony Pettinger
January	24	Mt Charles	Gavin McArthur
January	31	Akatore Mouth / Taieri Mouth	Bill Wilson
February	6-7	Hidden Lakes - Lake Te Anau (beyond Brod Bay)	Antony Pettinger
February	7	Powder Ridge / Long Ridge / Green Ridge	Wayne Hodgkinson
February	14	Lammermoors From The South	Antony Hamel
February	20-21	Eglinton Valley (East Eglinton to Homer Tunnel)	Ann Burton
February	20-21	Lake Isobel - Mt Crichton	Greg Powell
February	21	Yellow Ridge / Rocky Ridge / Green Ridge	David Barnes
February	27	OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon	Roy Ward
February	28	Garret's Bush / Lee Creek	Ran Turner
March	6-7	Mt Cerberus / Mavora Lakes	Alan Thomson
March	6	Exportation of Signal Hill	Bronwen Strang
March	7	Mystery Trip (cycling)	Matt Corbett
March	14	Taieri River Track (from Henley)	Tony Timperley
March	20-22	Borland Burn / Mt Titiroa	Peter Stevenson
March	21	Kakanui Peak	Rob Seeley
March	28	Blues Mountains Track	Jane Cloete
April	2-5	East Matukituki (Rainbow / Sisyphus / Ruth Flat)	Antony Pettinger
April	11	Saddle Hill	Alan Scurr
April	17-18	Rees Valley - Kea Basin	Richard Forbes
April	18	Circuit Of The Orokonui Fence	Fieke Neuman
April	25	Careys Creek / Wright Road	Bronwen Strang
May	2	No Day Trip	
May	9	Tavora Reserve (Bobby's Head)	Tony Timperley
May	15-16	Routeburn Track (Crossover)	Antony Pettinger
May	16	Harbour Cone / Lime Kilns / Peggy's Hill	Bronwen Strang
May	23	Yellow Ridge / Rocky Ridge / Green Ridge	David Barnes
June	5-7	Port Craig / Waitutu	Ann Burton
June	13	Victory Beach	Alan Thomson
June	20	Orbell's Cave	Tony Timperley
June	26-27	Kepler Track / Mt Luxmore (Cooking Competition)	Gene Dyett
June	27	Ralph's Coast to Coast	Ralph Harvey
July	4	Lower Silverstream	Janet Barclay
July	11	Hare Hill / Hodson Hill	Gordon Tocher
July	17-18	Wolfgang's Winter Routeburn (Falls)	Wolfgang Gerber
July	18	Upper Silverstream	Wayne Hodgkinson
July	25	Mt Cargill (from Bethunes Gully)	Richard Forbes

OTMC TRIP REPORTS – 2010

July	30-1	OTMC Snowcaving Weekend (Old Man Range)	Richard Pettinger
August	1	Davies Track / Bivouac Rock / Jim Freeman Track	Bill Wilson
August	7-8	Rock and Pillar Range (Leaning Lodge - Incorporating snowcraft)	Tony Timperley
August	8	Tomahawk Area	Jill McAliece
August	15	McNally Track	Janet Barclay
August	22	To Be Advised	
August	28-29	Brewster Hut - Mt Armstrong	Wayne Hodgkinson
August	29	Raingauge Spur	Gavin McArthur
September	4	OTMC Annual Dinner	
September	5	Trotters Gorge Round Trip	Alan Thomson
September	11-12	Day Trips from Omarama (Ben Dhu and Ben Ohau)	Debbie Pettinger
September	12	Mopanui / Doctors Point / McKessar Track	Ran Turner
September	19	Mt Charles	Tracy Pettinger
September	25-26	Otiake Conservation Park	
September	26	Gabriels Gully to Weatherstons (to daffodils)	Jane Cloete
October	3	Unexplored Silver Peaks	Richard Pettinger
October	9-10	Earnslaw Burn	Richard Forbes
October	10	Herbert Forest	Jane Cloete
October	17	Woodside Glen / Maungatua Circuit	Bill Wilson
October	23-25	Ohau Range / Dumbell Lake	Antony Pettinger
October	31	Mt Cutten and Environs	Bronwen Strang
November	7	Ship At Anchor	Alan Thomson
November	13-15	Liverpool Hut / Mt Barff	Andy Cunningham / Ralph Harvey
November	14	Spiers Rd / Ben Rudd's / Rhododendron Dell / Davies Track	Richard Pettinger
November	20-21	Routeburn Track (in one day)	Ann Burton
November	21	Sanatorium Road / McQuilkan's Track	Janet Barclay
November	27-28	Mt Domett (from Lone Creek)	Antony Pettinger
November	28	Rosella Ridge	Wayne Hodgkinson
December	4-5	Homestead Peak / Rob Roy Stream (Climbing)	Andy Cunningham / Ralph Harvey
December	5	Routes from Bethunes Gully	Fieke Neuman
December	11-12	OTMC End Of Year Social Trip (Pigeon Island)	Debbie Pettinger
December	12	Tracks On Otago Peninsula	Gavin McArthur
December	19	Secret Tracks Of Swampy	Antony Hamel

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (FEBRUARY TO JUNE)

OTMC Bulletin Bulletin Number 703, February 2010	<p>Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.) P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.</p> <p>The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.</p> <p>February 4th BYO. Holiday tramp snaps, Mt Cook in summer, dry trips etc.</p> <p>February 11th John V. Hart will give a presentation of his trip to Patagonia with particular emphasis on the Torres del Paine National Park. This was part of a month long trip called 'Patagonia Walkabout'.</p> <p>February 18th Aarn Bodypacks aim to balance the upper body by having a balance pack in the front to counter the back. Aarn of Aarn Design which produces the packs, will present the theories behind the design and showcase some of the packs.</p> <p>February 25th To be advised. But probably requests by members of recent extended holiday trips.</p> <p>Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. If you can help please contact Tony Timperley (phone 473 7257, email tonytimp@stra.co.nz) or Ralph Harvey (phone 453 4330, email ralphh@ihug.co.nz)</p> <p>Visit us on the Internet at: www.otmc.co.nz</p>	OTMC Bulletin Bulletin Number 704, March 2010	<p>Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.) P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.</p> <p>The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.</p> <p>March 4th Walley Hockley walked the Appalachian Trail, which goes along the east coast of the USA from Georgia to Maine. It's 2160 miles or 3476 km long. If his talk is as good as the Pacific Continental Divide Trail he gave last year, it should be a good one.</p> <p>March 11th Phil Somerville, Pam McKelvey and Wayne Hodgkinson tell us about their trip in January to Liverpool Flat - Awarua Saddle - Williamson Flat - Whitbourne Saddle and glacier - Cascade Saddle and back to the Matakauri.</p> <p>March 18th Alan Scurr went on an intrepid journey to India and Nepal. Starting in Delhi and finishing in Kathmandu, he tells us about this journey.</p> <p>March 25th BYO - show us pictures of trips you have done this year.</p> <p>April 1st No meeting as it's Good Friday next day.</p> <p>Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. If you can help please contact Tony Timperley (phone 473 7257, email tonytimp@stra.co.nz) or Ralph Harvey (phone 453 4330, email ralphh@ihug.co.nz)</p> <p>Visit us on the Internet at: www.otmc.co.nz</p>
OTMC Bulletin Bulletin Number 705, April 2010	<p>Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.) P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.</p> <p>The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.</p> <p>1st April No club night - Good Friday the next day.</p> <p>8th April What were our OTMC predecessors doing in the late 1940s? We have another DVD made up of a collection of old movies taken at that time. This time there is a commentary, so we don't have to try and guess where they are tramping. The snippets covered are in the Black Burn, Park Pinn, Cow Saddle, over Alabaster Pinn into the Pyke and Hollyford, then the Wilkin, Rasmakables and Broomburn.</p> <p>15th April First Pinn B. You've seen and heard the 'anti-clockwise' group and their experiences - but what about the trials and tribulations of the 'clockwise' group? Come and learn about the two descent to 'Broomburn', made talking in the Otago River, and see pictures of delirious but like you've never seen before! Oh, and tramping.</p> <p>22nd April We were impressed by John Hart's stunning photos from Patagonia, seen he prepared to be impressed again by John's photos from the canyons of the U.S.A. He walked in the Grand Canyon, Bryce and Lava Canyons, plus Death Valley, the Basin of Utah, and Capitol.</p> <p>29th April BYO - As it was 3 weeks since the last one there should be lots of photos from your recent trips - the Easter tramp, Ross Valley, Ross Basin, etc.</p> <p>Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. If you can help please contact Tony Timperley (phone 473 7257, email tonytimp@stra.co.nz) or Ralph Harvey (phone 453 4330, email ralphh@ihug.co.nz)</p> <p>Visit us on the Internet at: www.otmc.co.nz</p>	OTMC Bulletin Bulletin Number 706, June 2010	<p>Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc.) P.O. Box 1120, Dunedin.</p> <p>The OTMC meets socially at 3 Young Street every Thursday - doors open at 7.30pm, programme begins at 8.00pm.</p> <p>June 3rd As it's Queen's Birthday Weekend, there will be no Club night, allowing you to prepare for the long weekend.</p> <p>June 10th Most of you will have heard of the Icelandic volcano with the unpronounceable name. Over 30 years ago Derek Myrock trumped in Iceland and visited this volcano. He will give an illustrated account of his visit.</p> <p>June 17th In the Club's survey people asked for training nights and our first one is on lighting stoves. On a club tramp not long ago, one party arrived at track end and nobody knew how to light the club stove they had got from gear hire. Also, how many people are the first up in their party but cannot have a brew, because someone has bought a stove they do not know how to light? We hope to have a variety of stoves for you to practice on.</p> <p>June 24th BYO. It is six weeks since the last one, so hopefully you will have heaps of photos to bring.</p> <p>Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. If you can help please contact Tony Timperley (phone 473 7257, email tonytimp@stra.co.nz) or Ralph Harvey (phone 453 4330, email ralphh@ihug.co.nz)</p> <p>Visit us on the Internet at: www.otmc.co.nz</p>

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (JULY TO OCTOBER)

OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 707, July 2010

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.

1st July
Graham Calder has visited Mongolia, Ladakh (Northern India), Peru and Bolivia. He will show us photos of these places.

8th July
Stefan Fairweather tramped alone over Easter and he tells us about his trip. He went up the Young over Gillespie Pass to the Wilkin River; over Rabbit Pass into the East Matakitiki; to Aspiring Hut over Cascade Saddle, and then out down the Dart.

15th July
Tom McTavish went on a winter trip to the Canadian Alaskan border. He will tell us about the people he met there, and about their customs.

22 July
Alex Gough is a PhD physics student at Otago University. Last year he wintered over at Scott Base in Antarctica with a team of researchers. He tells us about their research, and what it is like to work in temperatures of minus 40 degrees.

29th July
BYO. Hopefully photos of Wolfgang's Winter Routeburn, Richard's snow caving trip, and Gene's Kepler trip.

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OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 708, August 2010

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.

5th August
Decky Cameron spent last summer in the Andes, helping to restore Scott's hut. She informs us of what this involved, and described some of the day trips she did while she was there.

12 August
Rodney Micklejohn researched the history of Mt Dorset, a mountain the club runs trips to regularly. He tells us of its history, and shows us different routes for climbing the mountain.

19th August
BYO - Continuing our snow and ice theme, there should be plenty of photos from the snow caving weekend, and the snowcraft Rock and Pillar trip.

26th August
It's our AGM - become involved in helping OTMC to continue to be a successful tramping club. There will be some vacancies on the committee, some new faces will be welcome. If you do not wish to be on the committee, come along and have your say about what you like, or do not like about our club.

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. If you can help please contact Tony Timperley (phone 473 7257, email tonytimp@stra.co.nz) or Ralph Harvey (phone 453 4330, email ralphh@ihug.co.nz)

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OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 709, September 2010

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.

2nd September
Glen Kuol will tell us about his mountain hiking trip in Bolivia.

9th September
David Barnes will introduce the CD of the Federated Mountain Club's photo competition. We should see some stunning photographs.

16th September
And now for something completely different: an education session concerning the prostate. All you ever wanted to know and were too afraid to ask... things like what it is, what can go wrong and what to expect if something does go wrong, with plenty of time for questions. Dr Elspeth Gold (an ex president of our club) is a medical researcher studying this subject.

23rd September
To be advised

30th September
BYO photos: Wolfgang's Routeburn trip, Richard's snow caving trip, and the Rock & Pillar snow skills trip.

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OTMC Bulletin
Bulletin Number 710, October 2010

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.

The Editor Speaks
The AGM has been and gone, and we welcome in a new committee. You will find a brief bio of each of the committee members inside this Bulletin. There are four new committee members and they will introduce themselves more to you in the November Bulletin.

I take this opportunity to introduce myself as your new editor. You will find a few changes in this Bulletin and no doubt there will be more changes as I continue to find my feet. I would love to hear from you so please put pen to paper and write a trip report (day, weekend or even private trip), letter to the editor, book review or any other tramping related contribution you might like to make.

Deb

Committee Members 2010/11	
President	Anthony Petherington 473 7626
Vice President	Richard Forbes 453 1527
Secretary	Peter Stevenson 454 4749
Treasurer	Ann Burton 476 2390
Chief Guide/Tramping	Anthony Petherington 473 7624
Membership Secretary	Richard Forbes 453 1527
Bulletin Editor	Debby Petherington 473 7624
Gear Hire/Outdoors	Glen Tait 455 7465
Daytrip Convener	Wayne Hodgkinson 473 9850
Weekend/Snowcraft Director	Anthony Petherington 473 7624
Snow Convener	Tony Timperley 473 7257
Social Convener/Chair Hire	Ralph Harvey 453 4330
Conservation/Arts/History	David Barnes 454 4400
SAH Committee Liaison	Wesley Hunt 477 3319
SAH Contact	Teresa Bondell 477 6367

Contributions (not of 1000 words) are welcome for the November Bulletin, deadline is 15/10/10, publication 28/10/10. You can submit material by email to deb@ihug.co.nz

OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (NOVEMBER & DECEMBER)

