

# Social Programme

## Coming Thursday Night Meetings

- 1 Apr** **Gavin Clark** will show us some film of **OTMC** adventures from long ago
- 8 Apr** **Easter** - no club night
- 15 Apr** Search and Rescue or **S.A.R.** - what is it, who can be part of it and what is involved
- 22 Apr** **B.Y.O.** - Mt Charles, Rustlers Ridge, Arthurs Pass and other Easter trips - tell us about them and show your own pictures
- 29 Apr** **Paul van Kampen and Bruce Bernasconi** will tell us of their adventures hiking in Nepal and the Himalayas

Any ideas, and contact names in particular, are welcome for the Thursday evening activities. Please contact Fiona Webster (Social Convenor) if you can help - see the Committee member list.

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the May Bulletin, deadline is 15/04/04, publication 29/04/04. You can submit material on floppy disc (PC not Mac please), or email 'rbell@pooka.otago.ac.nz' (without the quotes). And you can leave paper submissions in the editor's box in the clubrooms, or post to Robyn Bell, 236A Taieri Rd, Dunedin. Thanks.

# OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 639, April 2004

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

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

### *President's Piece*

The Bushcraft 2004 Programme began in earnest with a full turnout to the opening evening. Questions from the floor could all be answered adequately with the exception of one, "I'm a Y-front guy - what would you recommend?". A blushing presenter deferred to her male colleagues who were equally thrown off balance. We would welcome the framing of an appropriate answer for future presentations, based on the principle of 'forewarned is forearmed'. The first weekend of Bushcraft was a huge success with nineteen participants showing their appreciation and enjoyment. A great debt of gratitude is owed to all those club members who made the weekend a success, which we are sure will continue. On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March, OTMC Life Members will be presented with a certificate to celebrate their efforts supporting our club. Looking through the triplist there are some marvellous weekend destinations on the agenda, including one well across the border to Arthur's Pass. It's time to get the winter woollies out and get going! Wishing you safe and enjoyable tramping. Terry Casey, President.

### Committee Members 2003-2004

President	Terry Casey	454 4592
Vice President/Clubrooms	Sandra de Vries	473 7224
Secretary	Jenni Wright	454 5061
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Imm. Past Pres./Publicity	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Chief Guide	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Ian Sime	453 6185
Gear Hire	Mike Brettell	455 1515
Daytrip Convenor	Cathy McKersey	455 0994
Funding	Greg Powell	454 4828
Library	Jonette Service	454 2323
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987
Social Convenor	Fiona Webster	487 8176
Property Maintenance	Peter Mason	455 7074
Bulletin Editor	Robyn Bell	476 7411
Conservation	David Barnes	454 4492

**Visit us on the Internet at:**  
**[www.otmc.co.nz](http://www.otmc.co.nz)**

# Membership

## Membership

Kevin Knowles is not renewing his membership, and Deirdre Pim's short term membership has expired.

## Life Members

It has been fascinating trying to get a complete list of these throughout the Club's history. Most, but not all, have been listed in *Outdoors* at various times.

Miss L Tweedy (or Tweedie) a first day Club member, was never given a first name in any publication, and her address was always c/o her workplace. Luckily the second Membership Book (1954-61) in the Hocken Library gave her address as 59 York Place. Then the 1935 Electoral Roll showed an Elizabeth Tweedy, spinster, at that address, and also an Elizabeth Tweedy, widow, at the same address. The guess is that with two sisters in law in the same house and with the same name, our one could have called herself Lizzie.

Mr & Mrs Stevenson, who originally gave the Club a loan to buy the Ben Rudd property, and then later declined to accept repayment, were both made life members, but were always listed as Bill & Mrs Stevenson. That's not acceptable nowadays. Again the Membership Book provided the vital clue - they lived at 43 Claremont St, and the Electoral Roll showed Grace Mary Stevenson there.

## LETTERS TO



Dear Editor

I'm 100% sure that Luke was writing tongue in cheek when he mentioned my name in connection with suggestions of potential "mishaps" to the weather station on the Livingstones. But for the benefit of anyone who didn't read it that way (and particularly because I front the club's eco-lobbying activities), can I make it clear that I wouldn't actually do that sort of thing. There are legal ways to oppose the gondola, and I intend to rely on those.

David Barnes

(David is referring to the "Livingstone Range" trip report on page 6 of the March 2004 Bulletin - Ed)

# Daytrips

## Mt Charles

28 March

It's a 20 minute drive from Dunedin to Mt Charles, the highest point on the Otago Peninsula, with great panoramic views from the top at 408 m. We should have plenty of time to explore other areas, perhaps Allans Beach (which often has plenty of seals around) and the Pyramids. You'll need to bring lunch and a jacket for this easy to medium trip.

Contact Robyn Bell at 476 7411

## Rustlers Ridge (M)

4 April

An easy trip starting from Leith Saddle. The track follows the water supply and then heads uphill to Swampy Summit where it meets the Swampy-Hightop track. We then veer left along Swampy and back to the carpark via the Leith Saddle track. A delightful walk with plenty of bird life. Be there or be square!

Contact Greg Powell at 454-4828

## Easter, April 11

NO DAY TRIP

## Silverpeaks South (M)

18 April

Taking cars to Mt Allen Road then walk to Popular Hut, Mt John, Long Ridge and back to the cars. Approximately 5-6 hours.

Contact Doug Forrester at 487-6416

## Otago Peninsula

25 April

Start at Sandfly Bay and then on to the Nyhon and Hoopers Inlet tracks heading for Harbour Cone. Return to Sandfly Bay by road.

Approx 5 hours.

Judy Wilson 455 3924

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list closes on April 15.

ADVANCE NOTICE

## **Routeburn Track Crossover (MF)**

**May 8-9**

**Debs Carr 456-4356**

This is a trip the OTMC last did around ten years ago. The plan is to base parties at each end of the Routeburn Track and to tramp the Routeburn end to end. Sounds easy, but it is going to be a bit harder to arrange than a normal weekend trip – so please consider the points below before you sign up.

At this stage we are planning to use vans for this trip, meaning that numbers on the trip will be restricted to the number of seats in a van. Hence the numbers we are looking at is either 18-20, or 36-40. This is based on having either 1 or 2 vans at each end. Other numbers won't work out, and I don't think private cars are a good option.

The Routeburn will be in 'winter season', with the 'tourist season' closing in late April. There may be a few people on the track at this time, like the Milford last April, but I don't think we will get 100+ at any of the huts.

For those travelling from the Glenorchy end, it is suggested that you tramp into Routeburn Flats Hut on the Friday night, up to Falls Hut on Saturday morning, then up to Lake Harris and on to McKenzie for Saturday night. From the Divide end, I suggest that you walk into Howden on Friday night. Saturday will entail travelling to MacKenzie, up to and over the Harris Saddle and onto Falls Hut for the Saturday night.

One day on each trip will be longish, so a good fitness level will be required. That said, this will be a great trip. If you are interested in coming along, it would be appreciated if you could sign the list early. This trip has limited numbers – first come, first served basis. In the event that the trip is over subscribed, OTMC members will have preference. Contact Debs for more info, or check out the display at club.

# **GONDOLA**



*Why the OTMC needs to oppose the Caples Gondola*

The proposal to build a gondola in the Caples valley and across the Livingstone Range is a serious threat to an important tramping destination and to the philosophy that underpins our national parks. The arguments in favour of it can be readily stripped away, revealing the true motivation of the proponents – naked commercial gain.

The Caples, in combination with the Greenstone, is without doubt one of the most significant areas for the moderately experienced trumper, be they Kiwi or foreigner. The area has long been favoured by school and family groups, who relish the ability to walk a track that hasn't suffered the excesses of hard gravel surfaces, bridges and steps over every obstacle and grandiose huts that mark the Routeburn, Milford and Kepler. It also avoids the expense of the Great Walks, and the pressure to complete a trip on your allocated days regardless of the conditions.

It has been suggested that there are other places that trampers can go. However, nowhere in the area has that combination of moderate development, reasonably easy terrain and spectacular scenery. The vast majority of the Fiordland/Wakatipu area is simply not suitable for the main users of the Caples. The dumping down of opportunities for "ordinary trampers" in the South is insidious – each year another track seems to get turned into a tourist path, with the argument that those who don't want such developments can go into "the rest" of the national park being raised when anyone objects. But we'll soon have two sorts of tramping – gravel paths and untracked wilderness, with little between. To destroy this recreational opportunity simply to create a different recreational opportunity, and one aimed at the wealthy foreigner, is arrogant. It is akin to digging up your local playground and replacing it with a video game arcade. Sure, people will use it (and the developer will make some money), but what's wrong with having a playground, and where will the kids play?

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The crossing of the Livingsstone Range is likely to be the most significant hurdle the developers have to overcome, both physically and in terms of gaining approval. We don't set aside National Parks in perpetuity to build giant amusement rides – we protect them for their own intrinsic values. Fortunately, the NZ Conservation Authority's draft general policies and the draft Fiordland National Park management plan make it quite clear that this sort of development is not appropriate for a national park. Hopefully the Department of Conservation and the Minister will follow those documents and reject the proposal outright.

The argument that keeping this area for trampers (and hunters – would you want to be in the gondola in the roar?) is depriving the less agile of an opportunity to visit is patently nonsense. If we followed that logic, we also need a gondola up Aoraki/Mt Cook and many other places beyond the reach of many. Those who are unwilling or unable to tramp are able to travel to Milford Sound on State Highway 94, which has to be one of the most scenic road journeys anywhere. They're not missing out by missing the Caples.

Finally, the one argument that the developers are really pushing is improved access to and less congestion at Milford Sound. The logical answer to that is to stop one of the biggest con-jobs perpetuated on our tourists – that Piopiotahi/Milford Sound is a Queenstown destination. You can get to Mt Cook or Dunedin from Queenstown in less time. The well-informed traveller will visit Milford Sound from Te Anau. Most of the rest currently suffer a 12 hour return journey by bus. However, cutting three hours off that is not going to ease congestion, unless the gondola travellers can be persuaded to still leave Queenstown at 7am, and thus arrive before the less affluent, who will continue to take the bus. Those who do travel early in the day are likely to stay longer – especially if they can't combine the boat ride with lunch – adding to the congestion.

So, nowhere suitable to relocate the Caples tramper; no grounds for a gondola in a national park; no validity in the "access for those who can't tramp" argument; and insignificant changes to congestion? The only reason to build the gondola is to profit those who build it. While the conservation estate is clearly an important part of our tourism infrastructure, there are no grounds for allowing it to be desecrated to provide a cash cow for those prepared to stump up \$100 million.

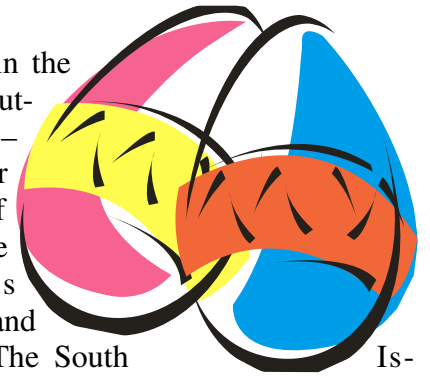
Gondola Be Gone!

David Barnes

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Makarora. As I have only tramped in the area once I'm not going to try and outline the trips that can be undertaken – this is a trip where you can start your research now. There are plenty of guidebooks available for this area (i.e. 'A Trampers Guide To New Zealand's National Parks', by Robbie Burton and Maggie Atkinson, or 'Tramping In The South Island, Arthurs Pass to Mt Cook' by Sven Brabyn and Elise Bryant). Additionally, DoC have a good selection of trips on their website, with guides available at their office.

There are lots of trips available from State Highway 73, the main road to the West Coast. As Arthurs Pass straddles the Main Divide, the park is mainly of an alpine nature, with many 1, 2, 3 and 4 day trips available. See Mike at clubnights, where there will be more information available nearer the time. The trip list will close on April 1.



**April 24-25**

**Rees Valley (Kea Basin or 25 Mile Creek) (All)**

**Dave Chambers 4543857**

Here's a chance to visit the OTMC's most far-flung hut – 25 Mile Hut in the Rees Valley. The Rees forms one half of the well known Dart/Rees circuit, but is the more interesting of the two valleys. It's only a short walk from the Muddy Creek carpark to 25 Mile Hut. Here you could base yourself at/near the hut and have a quick day trip up to Kea Basin (which is located below Mt. Earnslaw). This involves a crossing of the Rees River which isn't too difficult in the right conditions. Sunday can be spent exploring 25 Mile Creek. This creek is untracked and quite spectacular.

Alternatively, you could spend the night in Kea Basin and make your way up towards Esquilant Biv, with great views of Earnslaw. The trip

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# TripList

## CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

*(Repeated from March 2004 Bulletin)*

The weekend trips for the start of 2004 have had a really good response. Gary's trip to the Livingstone Range and Giffords Crack was well supported for the first trip of the year, with 19 people attending. The weather was brilliant along the Livingstones, and the party attempting Giffords Crack made an unusual diversion along the way. We look forward to a report.

Trevor's trip to the Rockburn area was meant to be held under typical Waitangi Weekend blue skies, but the weather let the 24 people on the trip down. As always the members on the trip made the best of the conditions and had a good trip.

The planned crossover from the Ahuriri to the Dingleburn is not happening due to the condition of the private road beyond Timaru River alongside Lake Hawea. Currently a heavy 4WD is required to get along the track.

*The upcoming trips are interspersed with Bushcraft, (see the trip card for dates), so we are having a busy time at the moment.*

### **Arthur's Pass National Park (M-C)**

**April 9-12 (Easter)**

**Mike Brettell 455-1515**

The OTMC hasn't visited Arthur's Pass very often, maybe because of the perceived distance from Dunedin. In reality it is probably as close as some of the other places we visit, like Milford Sound or beyond

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# Trip Reports

## **Ahuriri Crossover**

**Feb 21-22**

Plans can change.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Allan Perry

