

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

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

### **3 Nov**

Scott Mouat, student film-maker with Natural History Unit and the University of Otago, will show us his short film on the Search for the South Island Kokako

### **10 Nov**

Jean Patterson will talk about her time in Korea walking and climbing in Soraksan National Park, and around Kyongyu

### **17 Nov**

James Reardon from DOC will talk about the skink recovery program in the Macraes area

### **24 Nov**

B.Y.O. - you got 'em, let's see 'em!

### **1 Dec**

Walk to the penguins from Sandfly Bay, with Pete and Sue

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

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

# PRESIDENT'S PIECE

Where has 2005 gone to? - it is hard to believe that I am writing this piece for the November Bulletin. Looking back at club activity during 2005 it's actually not so hard to believe as we have achieved a lot this year with many good trips, a successful Bushcraft Course, and many well-received social evenings in our clubrooms. While not too much out of the ordinary is happening right now, the club continues being an active and exciting club to be part of.

The trip programme covering November 2005 to April 2006 is included with this posting, so now would be a good time to organise your tramping calendar for the next six months. It is definitely true that there is a trip on this trip card for every member – from the unknown quality of Jackson Bay through more familiar territory in the likes of the East Matukituki and Timaru River, to the rarely visited Green Lake. Easter 2006 will be visiting the Arthurs Pass area, as in 2004, but hopefully without the unseasonable dump of early snow. Traveling time is around six hours on good roads, so it is not overly far to travel, and the range of trips is extensive. My thanks goes to all those that have offered to lead the weekend trips over the summer period. With Cathy McKersey overseas, Alan Thomson has coordinated the day trip programme and he tells me that he has a waiting list – well done!

Finally a note to all participants on trips – after the trip is over consider putting pen to paper and recording your thoughts for the Bulletin. We aim to have all trips recorded as all Bulletins are archived and form an important part of the OTMC's history. Trip reports to odd places that contain key route information are also well received by prospective visitors to the same area. I'm sure Robyn will welcome any and all contributions, ("*Yes please!!!*") see the third last page for details on how to get your words published.

'Til next month,  
Antony Pettinger

# Basic Snowcraft

## 20 August 2005

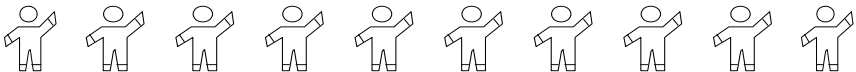
After the trip list hic-up 14 participants and 3 instructors left the clubrooms on Friday heading for Frankton (plan C) to the Christian camp. Saturday morning saw us at the Remarkable ski field for the start of the course. First off we went over the basics of travel on snow, staying close to the ski learner area before we moved further up the slopes. After stopping for lunch we strapped on our crampons and followed the Alta chairlift to find a suitable slope for self-arresting.

Once we had stopped for a quick bit to eat and gone over the basics we let the group at the slopes. The snow was quite soft after being in the sun all morning, so it was ideal learning conditions. By the end of the day we had the entire group sliding down head first on their backs and stopping comfortably. That evening found us at a local pub in Frankton for an enjoyable meal and some light banter.

Sunday morning we went straight up to the same slope as the previous day to do some more self-arresting practice. After a clear night the snow was quite a bit firmer, hence most of the group took a few runs to get their confidence back. After lunch we split into two groups. Aaron took one group up over Wye saddle while Paul and I took the other around Lake Alta and checked out some old snow caves from another course.

I'd like to thank Aaron and Paul for all their help running up to and during the course. I also thank all the participants: Allan Perry, Alan Scurr, Steffan, Fieke, Robbie, Phillip, Sue, Kerry, Karin, Rosie, Ewan, Anthony, Robyn, Tony. I hope you all had a good time and, most of all, learnt some new skills.

Matt Corbett



Editor's Note:

Please note the change in my home email address to "rebell@extra.co.nz" as shown in the "Contributions" information box on page 10.



My work email address remains

"rbell@pooka.otago.ac.nz" Thanks, Robyn.



# VANESSA CLAIRE JOHNSON

(10 APRIL 1974 - 15 AUGUST 2005)

Vanessa was born in Invercargill and grew up in the Manawatu. She spent a year in Denmark as an exchange student and returned to New Zealand to obtain a degree in Chinese from Massey University. It was at Massey that she discovered tramping, a passion which she took with her when she moved to Dunedin after her studies. Vanessa joined OTMC in July 1997. She had tramped a bit before coming to Dunedin but really found her feet with the club.

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the OTMC the club organised a series of tramps/trips from Big Bay, West Coast to St Clair Beach, Dunedin. Vanessa took part in the first part of this, a 10 day trip from Big Bay to Glenorchy, with everything from 30 plus crossings of the Olivine River in near chest-deep water with Lynda on tip toes, crawling across a log over a flooded river, to the final stretch in fun yaks with many assorted adventures in-between! Vanessa loved the Olivine area describing the mossy forest as an Ewok forest (she returned to this area and the Olivine Plateau with Kris earlier this year). The next part was from Glenorchy via the Rees and over into Robertson creek and the Shotover. This trip included front pointing (ice axe and crampons) on a schist gravel slope with sparse tussock cover above a cliff, followed by climbing down a waterfall, and finally literally "swimming" over scrub so thick you couldn't touch the ground. These trips really were the turning point for Vanessa. She got the mountain "bug" big time!

Vanessa learnt her mountain skills with the OTMC, participating in both the 1997 Snowcraft II snow caving, etc trip to the Remarkables and the 1997 Snowcraft III trip to Fox glacier. She "enjoyed" the challenge of (among other things) lowering herself into a crevasse and then prussiking back out. Just the start of things to come.

Always with an eye to the opportunity, Vanessa also managed to convince her employer at the time, the ODT, to allow her participate in the 1998 Otago Goldfields Cavalcade and act as a roving reporter on one of the walking trails. What could be better she thought - getting paid to go tramping! Later that year she was an instructor on an OTMC combined Snowcraft I & II course at the Remarkables. As one person said "Vanessa just expected you to do things, which, of course, just did!". She also spent a short while as day trip convener for the club. She had a wonderful enthusiasm for the outdoors tramping/climbing and participated in a large number of trips with the club during her membership.

Vanessa resigned in Nov 2000 when she shifted to Cromwell. This is where she was to gain another dear friend and faithful companion, her dog Winnie. (Winnie was put to sleep after being diagnosed with cancer a few weeks before Vanessa left for South America). Vanessa continued to have a strong association with club through the very good friends she had made. As most OTMCers know, friends made tramping often become life-long friends, and not just for

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tramping. She has been a part of the family (weddings, births and, sadly, funerals). She furthered her tramping and more particularly her climbing passion when she shifted to Wellington nearly two years ago. It was on these many climbing and tramping trips to places like Mt Taranaki and Ruapehu that she met her partner Kris. Together they did lots of trips including an ascent of Aspiring for Kris and almost for Vanessa. It was while on a trip of a lifetime to climb in Bolivia that poachers in the Ulla Ulla National Park murdered Vanessa and Kris. Vanessa has been laid to rest in a part of the country she loved Cromwell. She will be sorely missed by family and her great many friends. She will travel with me always. And as oft quoted by Vanessa, "Feel the fear and do it anyway!"

Paul Bennington



Photo: Andrew MacKay

# Trip Reports

## **KAY CREEK - SCOTT CREEK (SEPTEMBER 2004)**

I was recently rung by the OTMC Bulletin Editor requesting a report for a club trip - my first thought was 'You've got to be bloody joking - that was last year! How the hell am I going to remember anything about that?' So my first task was to try to work out when the trip actually was. (*Would I be so cruel as to not mention "Sept 2004"? Ed.*) My belief that you can find just about anything on the internet was verified when I typed in 'Kay Creek' into Google and did a New Zealand search. Well you wouldn't read about it - the very first hit came up with the following from Richard Pettinger:

*Good morning*

*I feel compelled to write about this last weekend's trip: the Caples, Kay Creek - Scott Creek crossing. What a fabulous trip!*

*I was so proud to witness 16 OTMC folk all complete this alpine crossing, and get out to the vans comfortably by 3 PM. Snow was effectively down to bushline, but this put none of those 16 off for a moment. They were determined and keen, and also quite competent for such an ambitious trip. The level of good humour and mutual support was fantastic.*

*I think the Club is in extremely good heart, in fact I have rarely seen such enthusiasm and good organisation come together in my 35 years OTC/OTMC experience. The weather helped, too.*

*Oddest moment: Roy Ward deciding he couldn't be bothered chewing his raisins, so he arranged for cars and trucks to soften a bag of them for him, by placing them on the road to be run over. He chose to make use of the Blossom Festival traffic, for an extra creamy consistency. You may ask about what is in the mind of such a man. Especially when he chose to do this in the middle of the Manuka Gorge! The well-organised man picked the right moment to open the van's sliding door and place the bag neatly in the most effective place for perfect food-processing. After leaving them for the required several minutes (the time it took to find a turn-around spot) on our return they were just perfect for his needs.*

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*Proudest moment for me: Being away tramping with Tracy, on her second ever alpine pass in snow. My wife's first time ever with an ice axe. And our first time tramping together in fourteen years, without our kids Vincent or Rosa with us.*

Richard P

The above was dated Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Sep, 2004, so I figured the trip must have been the previous weekend – 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> September. (That shall do for the purposes of this report anyway!) Next step was to remember the route. Again to the trusty PC but this time the South Island topo map. The magic phrase ‘Kay Creek’ swiftly directed me to the relevant part of the map and my memory banks started to stir.

For the geographically uneducated, Kay and Scott Creeks are respective tributaries of the Caples and Dart Rivers, both of which flow into Lake Wakatipu’s northern end. This occasion saw us travelling from the Caples carpark up to the head of Kay Creek, then crossing over the tops into Scott Creek and down to the Routeburn road.

This circuit is the perfect length for a moderate weekend trip and could be done in either direction. However, unless you want a 25 odd km walk down a gravel road there are some logistics to sort out transport at either end of the trip. The Kay Creek Hut is no Park Royal so take a tent – from memory the flattest camping spots were about 15mins upstream of the hut.

It’s amazing how details fade over time but here are two which seem to have stuck:

- After lunching near the top of the pass we took off down the hill, only to hear a shout from the tail end, ‘Is this anybody’s ice axe?’ A certain Bruce Bernasconi had a sudden realisation that he didn’t have one. Surely that doesn’t sound like Bruce...???
- Solar radiation had weakened the snow crust on the way down into Scott Creek, making conditions a little floundery. For most people this meant breaking through into knee to thigh deep snow – but for poor Kathryn it was up to her waist and she had to be dug out several times down the hill.

That proves a point really – the best memories are forged by pain, suffering and embarrassment (preferably someone else’s). So the next time you’re thinking about taking the soft option, think again...

Rob Lawrence

# Trip list

## CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

Trips continue to be well organised and enjoyed by all participants. Something of an oddity occurred on the scheduled two day trip to Makarora in early October – nobody went! Instead, all 14 participants elected to take a day or two off work and visit the Siberia Valley. To my mind this is probably the nicest valley I have ever seen, so the opportunity to spend four days there was brilliant. The completely frozen over Crucible Lake was definitely the highlight for all. For those that, like me, have wondered what Siberia Forks and beyond are like I can report the effort involved in getting there is well worth it. We would, however, like to know why such a majestic peak received the name ‘Mt. Doris’.

Cases of parties not sticking together have been noticed on recent trips. The party system used in the OTMC is based on safety and comradeship – in fact sticking together is a fundamental rule of tramping. All it can take is one step too far in the wrong direction for a very dangerous situation to emerge. I accept that on major tracks (Routeburn, Kepler) that parties will spread out. But there still needs to be specific rules made as to where to stop and wait for the party to regroup, and plans should be in place with a backup plan if these rules aren’t followed (i.e. a party member is lost/misplaced). The OTMC don’t make these rules to spoil anyone’s trip, rather we are committed to running safe and enjoyable trips. Besides, the company is often the reason people choose to tramp with the OTMC.

**East Matukituki Valley (All)**

**December 3-4**

**Antony Pettinger 473 7924**

(On the early proposed trip card this tramp was destined for Maitland and Freehold Creek – due to farming operations in the Maitland this trip

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will now be held on Feb 18/19, 2006).

The East Branch of the Matukituki Valley is much less visited than the West, but it provides some really neat options for tramping, with options for all. Three hours from the road sees you at Junction Flat, which can be used as a base. There are two options from here for a weekend, one being a visit to Aspiring Flat. From here, rather than visiting the well known 'Rock of Ages' biv, you will be rewarded more by getting close to the Turnbull Thomson Falls or a jaunt up the Rainbow. To get a good view, you can climb from Junction Flat up to bushline on the Bledisloe Gorge track.

The other option is Dragonfly Peak, which at 2165m is a straight-forward climb that offers a great viewpoint over the whole area. For this option you need to camp in the vicinity of the Albertburn Saddle, so fine weather is required. It is also quite feasible to travel northwards along the ridge leading from Albertburn Saddle with some great views over Ruth Flat.

To travel any further into the East Matukituki generally requires a third day, but you then have the option of the classic Rainbow / Wilmot Saddle / Sisyphus / Ruth Flat circuit.

### **Silver Peak Tramp and Train III (All)**

**December 10-11**

**Antony Pettinger 473 7924**

This trip is a Saturday morning to Sunday evening trip. We will be starting at the top of the Northern Motorway, heading up the Leith Saddle Track to Swampy. A leisurely stroll through the Peaks sees us camping in the Cave Stream area. Sunday will see us exploring Cave Stream through to it's junction with Christmas Creek. From here we will head downstream, climb to Mt. John Hut, over Mt. John and down through the forestry to Poplar Hut, then around to Mt. Allan, where we will catch the train back to Dunedin. This trip was first run in 2000 and was a great way to end the year. Expect the train fare to about \$16, and to have a great time in a place we don't visit too often on weekend trips.

Antony Pettinger  
Chief Guide

# Membership

## New member

Robyn Austin, 30 Hereford St, ph 477 2925, is the new member we welcome this month. She has been tramping with us since June, and did the Snowcraft Course in August.

## Two people have moved recently

Sean Irvine to 40 Birchfield Ave, 473 7376; Phil Keene to 7B Eglinton Pl, Te Anau, 249 8540.

Only 23 subs have still to be paid.

Ian Sime

Membership Secretary

## Committee Members 2005-2006

President	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Vice President	Barry Atkinson	487 7820
Secretary	Heather Deason	467 2252
Treasurer	Ann Burton	476 2360
Imm. Past Pres	Terry Casey	454 4592
Chief Guide/Bushcraft	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Membership Secretary	Ian Sime	453 6185
Gear Hire	Greg Powell	454 4828
Daytrip Convenor	Cathy McKersey	455 0994
Funding	Greg Powell	454 4828
Publicity/Library	Wolfgang Gerber	453 1155
Social Convenor	Fiona Webster	487 8176
Clubrooms Officer	Terry Casey	454 4592
Committee	Allan Perry	453 5875
Committee	Dave Chambers	454 3857
Committee (outside committee)	Alan Thomson	455 7878
Bulletin Editor	Robyn Bell	488 2420
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the December Bulletin, deadline is 17/11/05, publication 1/12/05. You can submit material on floppy disc (PC not Mac please); email 'rbell@pooka.otago.ac.nz' or 'rebell@xtra.co.nz'; or post to Robyn Bell, 8 Roy Crescent, Concord, Dunedin. Thanks.

# DAYTRIPS

## **Skyline Track (M) 6 November**

Time to check out the Skyline Track from Sullivans Dam to Mt Cargill and return, time 5-6 hours. Good footwear is essential as the track could be muddy.

Contact: Terry Casey 453 1906

## **Silverpeaks (M/F) 13 November**

The Silverpeaks, 20 km north of Dunedin, are covered in tussocks (hence their name), with the highest point at Silverpeaks 2 (777m). They are quite rocky with open tops and exposed to both southerly and northerly winds, and cloud or fog can roll in very quickly. A great area to explore.

Contact: Ross Davies 472 8723

## **Spiers Road / Davies Track (E) 20 November**

An easy wander up the Spiers Road track onto Flagstaff and then back down Davies track to town

Contact: Richard Pettinger 487 9488

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**Government Track (M)**  
**Mountain Bike**  
**27 November**

The Route follows the old pack track along the side of the Waipori Gorge, into Waipori Forest and then onto Lake Mahinerangi dam. From there we will return to the start using the Waipori Falls road.

Contact: Pete Stevenson 454 418

**Bobby's Head / Tavora Reserve – Goodwood (E/M)**  
**4 December**

This is an area that the club hasn't been to but has some interesting scenery - come and join us in some exploring!

Contact: Tony Timperley 473 7257



**LIBRARY**

*Wolfgang's book review last month on "Mountains of the South" can be borrowed from our OJMC library - see him if you want to take it out for a while. (Judging by the great write-up he gave it, you may have to queue!)*