

**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.**

9 March

David Cooper will talk on his travels in China

16 March

Roy Ward will tell of his adventures hiking in the
Sierra Nevadas

23 March

B.Y.O. - Routeburn, Rockburn, Lake Nerine,
Greenstone, Caples - we've been busy!

30 March

High Country Parks / Milford Sound. David Barnes
will talk about FMC's '6 Pack of Parks' campaign,
with slides by top photographers like Shaun Barnett
and Gilbert van Reenan. He'll also discuss the lat-
est on proposals for Milford Sound access, and show
the tunnel developer's promotional video and com-
puter animation of their plan.

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

PRESIDENT'S PIECE

2006 with the OTMC has got off to a very good start, particularly for those who have participated in the first two weekend trips. The first weekend was to Mt. Domett (this is now the official spelling) and 19 people had a great weekend. 17 people conquered the 1942m summit of Domett, while a good number also conquered Little Mt. Domett and Grayson Peak to complete an 11 hour day, most of it high on the tops. A pleasant walk out and a debrief under the trees at the Dansays Pass Hotel completed the first weekend trip of the year.

Two weeks later saw 13 people choose to enjoy the classic Routeburn/Rockburn circuit by taking four days to complete this amazing trip. The weather started off misty in the mornings but this soon gave way to clear sunny skies. Having an extra day allowed us to relax and enjoy the magnificent environment. I think I speak for the entire trip when I say that the afternoon/night spent at Lake Nerine was a highlight.

Discussion on the OTMC email list of late has included the type of trips undertaken by the club. I do grimace when I hear of the OTMC being referred to as a social tramping club as this is something I have tried hard (in my role as Chief Guide) to avoid. My vision has always been that the OTMC can and does cater for all tastes and abilities; hence most of our trips are arranged accordingly. We do have some loosely organised social trips (like the Mt. Cook Day Walks), but these are filling a need within the club and are very well received by the participants. Even on these trips there is scope to do something demanding – at the end of the day it is up to the participant to plan their own destiny on a trip. That said, the level of tramping within the OTMC remains similar to any time I can recall within my 20 year involvement. Some big trips, often taking people out of their comfort zone, are happening all the time. Consider the Ball Pass crossing a year ago, the 2005 ten-day trip, a complete Kepler traverse in July, not to mention the big day at Mt. Domett mentioned above. The trip leader plays a key role in deciding the outcome of their trip, and we are always looking for new faces to lead trips – why not give it a go?

As I write this, Bushcraft 2006 is almost amongst us and I expect a final participant tally of over 30, which shows that there is still a very real need for this course. I offer my thanks to everybody who has assisted with this very important part of the OTMC – the rewards of safely introducing trampers to the hills is still very satisfying.

'til next month,
Antony Pettinger,
President.

Membership

Joy Morgan & Barry Brockbank, who have been in Australia for some time and have no immediate plans to come back, have decided not to renew their membership. We wish them well.

Jenni Wright has moved to 13B Harden St, Ph 467 9116.

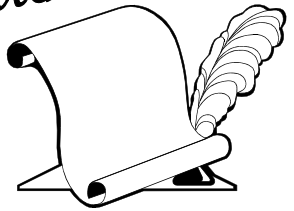
We have been pleased to welcome large groups of new people on Thursday nights so far this year, several with application forms for Bushcraft!

Members who get their Bulletin electronically did not get a membership list last month. They are available from the clubroom table.

Ian Sime

Membership Secretary

Letter to The Editor



Dear Editor

Recent discussions on the OTMC discuss list may have been missed by those not connected. It may be useful to try to sum up what it was all about for those who missed it or tuned out.

There were two views being expressed. It was triggered by the message in the Bushcraft cover letter that states: "There is a generally a minimum age limit for participants of 16 years (exceptions can be made in consultation with us). We especially encourage older people to join the course."

That statement was instigated because some years ago there was an unruly group of school-aged folk, subsidised onto the course, who didn't take the course seriously. They apparently spoiled the course for other people. Leaders were put off leading young bushcrafters, and, if there is reluctance among instructors, it is of course serious for the success or even survival of the course. And without the course, the Club would be worse off.

Some current active members prefer the club to cater for their older-aged group and stated that they have done more than enough of looking after youth in their time. Some demonstrated this with stories of their involvement with young people in other organisations. They are at the OTMC now because they just want to go tramping without a risk of too many teenagers together. They can do pleasant trips with people of all ages. They see the Club among many other recreational opportunities as a kind of refuge.

A response to that came from some long-term members who joined when THEY were teenagers. They appeared to be driven by the realisation that their whole life with the OTMC would not have happened if an anti-youth

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SnowCave

Inn

A mountain adventure
by Ged Maybury

Foreword by Sir Edmund Hillary

Now available in its first edition, this book will appeal to those who knew the feel of Bushcraft courses and snowcaving trips in the '70s and '80s, particularly those held by the OTMC from the Dowling St clubrooms. But it will be of significant interest to Club members since then and to members of many other clubs. This is the first ever book written about activities of the OTMC. We can be proud to be associated with it.

It is a fictionalised account of a trip that goes wrong, based on the Old Man Range snowcaving trips when the Club filled buses and there were a lot of young active members. It is set in the decade when TV's "Spot On" crew came along and made a documentary about snowcaving with the OTMC. Because the book is about us it may become an historical curiosity, if not a collector's item.

Here's what Club members are saying: "It really grips you" - Ian. "You can SMELL the OTMC in Maybury's words" - Richard. "My attention was captured" - David. "I enjoyed *SnowCave Inn* and bought two more copies to include with Christmas presents. Who would have thought back then that someone would publish a book about all our hi-jinks?" - Peter. "Every school library should have a copy" - Mother of None. "It's a story about us, the people who enjoy those places. It's so true, even though it's a story" - Ross. "I enjoyed reading it. It brings back memories while sending a good safety message, and I will certainly be getting my kids to read it" - Rod.

SnowCave Inn is blessed with a foreword by Sir Edmund Hillary, encouraging not only sales of the book but mostly promoting us all to get out and enjoy the mountains of New Zealand in safety. In addition it was endorsed by the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council as follows: "*I enjoyed reading this story, and it is with real pleasure that I commend its message on behalf of the NZ Mountain Safety Council. It reflects so well the enthusiasm of youth for adventure. As the story unfolds to reveal the small steps towards potential disaster, and the good decisions based on experience, the reader witnesses good judgement slowly prevailing against a background of poor equipment and minor mishaps.*

For all of us who go into the hills and experience the weather conditions which can bring such difficulty to the unprepared, there is a constant reminder that the line between survival and disaster is drawn by good judgement and a total respect for the hills. Hindsight shows us clearly our mistakes; experience gives us the ability to learn from them and continue our enjoyment. - Alan Trist, Executive Director, NZMSC."

This little book will appeal to all with an abiding interest in the OTMC.

Ged Maybury, under his previous name (which is never used today!), was active with the OTMC in the early 1970s. He is now living in Australia, and is a noted young adult fiction author, with several novels and science fiction books to his credit. He captures a writing style appreciated mainly by teenagers but also by those of us who might understand or wish to understand teenagers.

The OTMC is selling copies for \$12 each (normal retail \$14.95). When we sell them, \$2 goes to the Club, \$2 to Ed Hillary's Himalayan Trust and \$2 to the author. What other good read could give you such honourable use of your dollars? Postage is expected to be 90c. Please send cheques for \$12.90 per copy, made out to Ian Sime, OTMC, PO Box 1120, Dunedin.

Green Stone / Caples 4-6th Feb

First thing is, “Thank you, Ray and Jill, for organizing the weekend”.

My first thoughts to this trip are “will I or won’t I go?” I had listened to many people on different opinions of this trip. It’s taken a while but from this trip I discovered a trip is what you make of it.

Friday night we slept in the shelter at the road end. And on Saturday morning we climbed out of our sleeping bags early got ourselves organised and going for a big day. Dave, Wendy, Sharon, and I were first away and didn’t see the other party of six until after we had had lunch near the Steel Creek Bridge.

A while before this we had heard a noise in the river bed below the track. We stopped to look and were excited to see a fallow deer feeding on the river flats, and as we watched we noticed there were more. We watched until they became aware we were there, and when they bolted we counted eight or nine of them.

All day we were noticing the bird life along the track. Each time we stopped the local robin would pop down and entertain us and became the subject of many photos. The little riflemen were nearly always darting from tree to tree following us along the track. Luckily for us we had a secret weapon to identify birds and their calls. It turned out that Wendy had done a bit of study on local birds. By the time we reached Mackellar hut our group decided mattresses were a lot softer than bed rolls and opted for a hut bunk.

Sunday we were up early again, and once again we were the first group away to go over the pass. We rested on the pass, then headed down through the bush for lunch by the river and more entertainment from the bird life. It was then the long wind down to the Upper Caples Hut, where once again we decided mattresses would be softer than bed rolls and learned we were going to be joined by the Southland and Wakatipu Tramping Clubs for the night.

Monday was a quite walk back to the car park and on arrival we had a difficult decision dry biscuits and cheese for lunch, or lunch at Glenorchy Hotel. I will let you guess the decision, but it was unanimous!

Thank you Dave, Wendy and Sharon - you made this an enjoyable weekend

Allan Perry

Trip list

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

With the aim of having the Winter 2006 trip programme ready to distribute with the April Bulletin, work is currently underway to compile an interesting selection of trips. The Winter/Spring weekend trip programme always proves harder to put together than the summer trips due to the conditions likely to be encountered, but I believe we have a trip here for everyone. We are starting off with a weekend circuit of the Kepler in early May. Following this we have trips to the Rees, West Matukituki, Leaning Lodge, McKerrow Range, Ahuriri, Lagoon Saddle, Lake Isobel and Skippers. We are having a Winter Routeburn, but this will not be the expected social trip. Rather, Wolfgang is changing tack this year and organising the ultimate tramp and train trip (where the tramp and train component times are transposed compared to the Silver Peaks version). There has been a lot of interest in a club trip on the Tranz Alpine train, so Wolfgang is organising this as an alternative to the usual Great Walk social trip. August should see the Southern Alps in full alpine splendour. The full proposed trip programme can be seen on the club website.

Eglinton Valley (West Branch) (All)

March 25/26

Antony Pettinger 473 7924

We are headed for the Eglinton Valley, which is the main valley that drains the mountains between Te Anau Downs and the Divide. We will have drop off points right through to the eastern portal of the Homer Tunnel. There are trips available for all grades from “Easy” (3 to 5 hours tramping time per day) through to “Fitness Essential” (10+ hours tramping per day!)

This area offers some of the greatest areas for tramping in our area.

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There are options to get up high, visit picturesque lakes, or complete round trips over mountain passes. Here are some ideas:

- Base yourself at Homer Huts and day trip up to Gertrude Saddle. This is not usually a difficult trip in good conditions, and offers great views down to Milford Sound, and through to Mitre Peak. On the Sunday it is well worth climbing up to Homer Saddle above the tunnel. Again, this is not difficult.
 - Day trip to Lake Marian one day, and on the other visit Key Summit and the start of the Routeburn Track.
 - A classic round trip is Mistake Creek / Hut Creek via U Pass. U Pass is an alpine pass, and no specific climbing skills are required. A head for heights is handy for the one difficult section.
 - If the weather is suitable, a traverse along the Livingstone Range is well worth the effort, with great views into the Greenstone and Eglington Valleys, as well as the Darren Mountains and Mt. Christina.
- Trip list closes March 16.

Garvie Mountain/Blue Lake (All & MTB)

1 & 2 April

Ian Sime 453 6185

We turn right at Riversdale and go up the Waikaia Valley, into bush at Piano Flat, and camp at the bush edge where Christies Hut used to be. (See the Garvies story elsewhere in this Bulletin.)

In the morning it's a 10 minute walk down to the bridged river, and from there mainly a track formed by 4WD vehicles in the tussock. Bush Hut (or its environs, depending on whether Glenaray men are based there for mustering, and we won't know that till nearer the time) is a good destination for easy parties, while Blue Lake Hut can be reached by fit groups.

Mountainbike riders could reach Blue Lake early enough to explore

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further upstream around Lake Scott, and perhaps climb through The Gap to Skeleton Lakes.

Groups with good compass skills, either on foot or on bikes, could come back out via Boggy Saddle, Titan Rocks and Station Ridge, to meet the road near Glenaray homestead.

Hut charge is \$10/p/n.

Easter 2006 (April 14-17)

Arthur's Pass (M/C)

Leader to be confirmed, contact Antony on 473 7924

NOTE: I am still looking for a leader for this trip. As I am having my Easter trip prior to Easter I am unable to lead or act as contact for this trip. Unfortunately, trips without a committed leader tend to be unsuccessful. If you planning on going on this trip please consider acting as leader - I can offer all the assistance you need to get you underway. Please contact me on 473 7924 if you can help.

There are just so many options available in the Arthur's Pass area given four days. Travelling time from Dunedin averages just six hours on sealed roads, not a lot more than the Greenstone or Divide.

The scope of trips available in the area is staggering. One we attempted in 2004 was the Edwards / Tarn Col / Hawdon circuit, although bad weather curtailed this. We used our last day to climb Avalanche Peak, above the Arthur's Pass township – a recommended day trip. I won't try and list all the options you have, rather you can do your own research. Grab a map and visit the DoC website. The information in the Arthur's Pass section is very comprehensive, with many 1, 2, 3 and 4 day trips very well detailed with full route guides. With this in mind, you can plan to either do 4 day trips, a couple of 2 day trips right though to a full on 4 day trip.

There are some photos available on the club website of Edwards Valley and the climb of Avalanche Peak from the 2004 trip.

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attitude had always prevailed and, even, that they would not have met their spouse!

Naturally, with such differing expectations about what the Club has done for the various individuals and should continue to do, there was bound to be conflict. The pro-status-quo faction argued that those who want to spend their tramping days bringing up children are welcome to do just that, as long as they don't ruin others' trips. A pro-youth response implied that many members had already DONE just that very thing, for years within the OTMC, and had brought in lots of new blood - and argued that the Club would suffer if the supply was ever terminated.

I believe these kinds of debates are healthy. They need to occur from time to time, and it's all part of the cyclic nature of life in the Club. I sincerely hope that mutual understanding has resulted and that the Club continues to offer something for everyone. And stays vibrant.

A side issue that emerged is that the Club looks in great shape because of good attendances on a wide variety of excellent trips (thanks Antony) and membership is healthier than it has been for years (thanks Alan and the strategy), but that the trip leading is being largely left to a few committee members. I urge people to give the committee members doing so much hard work more assistance with leading trips. Your experience is valuable and should not be wasted! I'm sure you know how good it feels to put something back into the Club.

When I was on committee I don't recall so much being left to us. It was a huge commitment and hard work for many years, sure, but it never got to the point when it seemed hardly worth it, thanks to very wide involvement.

Here's to a growing, confident and enthusiastic club, offering essential socialisation opportunities to EVERYONE.

Richard Pettinger

Committee Members 2005-2006

Due to space restrictions this edition, see the previous Bulletin for a full list of the Committee and their phone numbers. Or look up this address at our website

<http://otmc.co.nz/committee.html> Or phone Ian Sime, membership secretary, at 453 6185

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the April Bulletin, deadline is 17/03/06, publication 30/03/06. 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

Te Papanui; Lammermoors/Lammerlaws Easy tramping + MTB option 5 March

We drive over Rocklands Station to the gate at the Park entrance, then travel through high tussock land along a 4WD track. You can see forever. Brian Patrick, the butterfly and moth specialist from our Museum, will be accompanying us, which will give a whole extra dimension to our day!

Mountainbikers should be able to get right round the head of the Taieri River to Lammerlaw Top; trampers not so far. It's a "there and back" trip.

Ian Sime 453 6185

Lee Stream (E/M) 12 March

This walk starts from Outram Glen. The track initially follows close to the river then climbs up into bush for around an hour before returning to the water. Lunch at the junction of Lee Stream and Taieri River. Car pool cost \$6.

Leader: Ken Powell ph 488 3395

Bushcraft 2006 – River Safety Day (I) 19 March

Whilst this instruction is primarily aimed at the Bushcraft participants we may be able to take a few more OTMC members who want to up-skill in the area of river safety. We are leaving the clubrooms at the usual 9am, headed for the Taieri River at Outram Glen. Bring your

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normal tramping clothes, boots, and a fullish park, preferably with everything well waterproofed. Lunch, a hot drink and a change of clothes will also be required as you will get wet.

Please ring me beforehand so I can ensure with have an adequate instructor/pupil ratio.

Leader: Antony Pettinger 473 7924

Nichols Creek / Morrisons 26 March

Yes! It's all Right Here! Only ten minutes from Dunedin's Octagon you can tramp the hills and experience bush, waterfalls, birdsong, tussock country, grand vistas and history.

We start off at the Nichols Creek track (Leith Valley Road) and climb up the west side of the valley through bush and meadows. We meet the Swampy Ridge Track and make our way to Swampy Ridge before taking a shortcut across tussocks to the powerline track. A descent down into Morrisons Burn gives a view of our second waterfall and a wonderful bushwalk out to the Road.

Expect the trip to take 3.5 to 4 hours, and we'll be home mid afternoon ...just in time for an afternoon nap or the lawns!

Contact: Ran Turner 473 8652

Pyramids / Victory Beach (E) 2 April

The Pyramids are an interesting rock formation that is well worth visiting. The beach, a one hour walk, takes its name from the wreck of the steamship Victory (1861). We'll leave the clubrooms at 10am, since it's a 30 – 40 minute drive from the clubrooms, and the day should only take around 5 hours. Cost is \$5.

Leader: Sandra de Vries 473 7224