

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 667, October 2006

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

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

5 October

Chris Handley will talk about a new craze called geocaching. What is it, who does it, and how do you do it? Come along and hear all about it.

12 October

B.Y.O. - bring along your photos, videos, slides, power-point presentations, maps etc and show us where you've been lately!

19 October

Labour Weekend, so no club night - enjoy the Skippers / Mt Aurum tramp, or whatever else you choose to do to relax on your holiday.

26 October

Antony Hamel will tell us of "A stupid place to go for a walk."

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**

PRESIDENT'S PIECE

The AGM is now behind us, and we have some new committee members. I would like to welcome Jill McAliece to the position of Secretary, Matt Corbett, who will be looking after the gear hire position jointly with Dave Chambers, and Roy Ward, who will be responsible for the Sunday day trips. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions made by Cathy McKersey, Heather Deason and Allan Perry over the time they have been involved with the committee. A significant proportion of the committee remain unchanged which means the club continues to run almost like clock-work.

The AGM itself could be termed a rather subdued affair, with little discussion. One issue raised was the 'Outdoors' publication, which has been raised at several AGMs, with the discussion centering on cost versus need. To those who have read the Outdoors over the years, it is apparent how the trips undertaken by club members have changed. Past editions, particularly from the '60's and '70's have a significant number of reports featuring multi-day trips to quite remote areas. While the tramping we do today is no less special, it is more likely to be weekend trips that feature the most. Discussion at the AGM included the option of enlarging the Bulletin or to look at other means of delivering an Outdoors-type publication, maybe by CD-Rom. It has been suggested that the next Outdoors be a special edition, concentrating particularly on two characters, Ben Rudd and the Silver Peaks 'Hermit' (Ross Adamson). Before a decision can be made, the committee needs to receive a firm proposal on the format of the planned edition and then make a final decision based on resources available at the time. In the meantime we would welcome any suggestions from members regarding the ongoing future of Outdoors.

The other issue raised is that a couple of tracks have recently been developed, apparently without the controlling landowner's permission. It was stated that the OTMC has nothing to do with these and does not condone work of this nature being undertaken.

It is that time of year when we start looking forward to the summer tramping programme. Although tramping in winter is a neat experience, it is undoubtedly the warmer days and longer daylight hours that bring out most trampers. The next trip programme is well under way with the weekend trip destinations decided and the day trips

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

being finalised. I have tried again to make the weekend trips over the summer period accessible to the majority of members – I am sure there is something there for everyone. One trip that may require a little forward planning on your behalf is the Matukituki – Rees crossover trip over four days in early February. This will be limited to either 10 or 12 in each direction, with members having priority. Hopefully the weather will be kind and we can enjoy some idyllic camping/exploring on both Cascade and Rees Saddles.

Work on the clubrooms has continued since the major repaint in July, with the displays and maps still to be finished in the main room. Further work needs to be done in the kitchen, washroom and foyer but it is already looking like the colourful, vibrant room we envisaged earlier this year. We are planning to have a formal ‘re-opening’ of the clubrooms later in the year. My thanks go to those who have continued to beaver away with the finishing touches.

Antony Pettinger, President

Membership

This month four new members are joining: Monika Fry, 48 Ann St, 477 2743; Elizabeth Liefing, 9 Scotland St, 477 9205; and father and son, Michael & Andrew Prince, 38 Rawhiti St, 456 2230. Welcome along!

Folk leaving us are: Shirley Croot who has been in Kaikoura for 3 years; Paul & Fiona Gray who have started a family; Daniel List who has moved to Masterton; Hikaru Shirai who is moving to Nelson; and Craig Holmes who is emigrating to Australia.

Jan Piggot is sharing her time between Dunedin and Central. Her country address, on the road between Cromwell and Luggate, is c/o Wood Gallery, RD3, Cromwell, 4438 003.

Change of conditions for membership

At its recent meeting, the Committee decided to change the conditions for membership. Since some folk intend to do only day trips, but never overnight tramps, to apply for membership a candidate must have done at least two official Club trips; ie the need for a weekend trip is deleted and two daytrips is sufficient.

Ian Sime, Membership Secretary

SAR CONFERENCE

The NZ Land SAR conference is to be held in Dunedin in November this year and we are working hard to make sure that everyone who is interested knows about the event. There will be three overseas speakers and a huge variety of speakers and workshops, with the workshops on Friday 17th and full conference over the weekend of 18 & 19th.

Please phone me at 477 4987 if you are interested, or visit the SAR website at <http://sar.otago.ac.nz> There may also be a poster with information at the clubrooms.

Teresa Wasilewska

WANTED : **DAYTRIP LEADERS**

On a number of day trips I've been on over the years, I've heard comments along the lines of "A good trip would be ...". Well, now's your chance. In the next week or so, I'll be putting together the summer day trip programme, and for this I need trips and people willing to lead them. The area around Dunedin is well supplied with varied walks, whether it is some new place you might know about that the club hasn't been for a while or at all, or one of the regular (but still excellent) trips, so there's plenty to choose from.

Contact me if you are willing to lead a trip, and even if you don't have a particular trip in mind, I should be able to help you pick something suitable. I'm also interested in trip ideas, but without leaders they won't happen, so contact me now. Let's make this a good season for day trips!

Roy Ward (your new Day Trip Convenor)
473 9518 or "royward@physics.otago.ac.nz"

Trip Reports

ARTHURS PASS TRAIN AND TRAMP 12-13 AUGUST

Months of me rambling on about this trip on a Thursday night had finally come to an end (hooray!!!) It's a wonder that anybody signed up at all. I must admit we've got some patient people. The idea for this trip was born over a year ago as I (with the help of some committee members) were looking for something different, something new for my annual winter trip. So this is how the weekend came about, an Alpine Train/Tramp staying at the Arthurs Pass Village.

Three vans and a car left at different times and we all met and bedded down at Meadow Park, Christchurch, for Friday Night. Saturday morning was an early start as we had to be at the train station at 7.45am to book in, get the tickets, and get our seats. "Hey what the?? Who are those people in our seats??" Oh no, double booked, but thanks go to Christine and Co, who offered to move into the next carriage. At least they got a table with their seats. Some of the carriages had a covered viewing area which I thought was great as the views were wonderful but windy.

The train turned off at Rolleston and climbed gradually over the Canterbury Plains where it passes Darfield and stops at Springfield for five minutes, then into the Alps, passes Cass and stops at Arthurs Pass. But our deal was to continue our travel out to Greymouth, have a quick look around, then back on the train to Arthurs Pass, where were greeted by some white fluffy stuff. Yes folks, it snowed for us.

We dropped off the gear at the Arthurs Pass Outdoor Education Centre, claimed a bunk and set off to check out the local village and, dare I say it, "Local Establishments". We had a wonderful meal at the Middle South Hotel and, to our surprise, when we left the weather had cleared and the snow turned to ice, so it was an interesting walk back to base camp.

My annual quiz was the closest I've had in years and, rather dramatically,

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

“Terry the Duff’s” team prevailed. There was much controversy as always, and I was challenged a few times, but of course I expect that, no I demand it! That’s why I do it, year after year, and I love it. My lovely assistant this year was the Boisterous Barry.

Next morning people were free to do what they wanted, just as long as they were back in time for the train. The beauty of the alpine village was the different walks available lasting from an hour and longer. Some even made it up to Avalanche Peak, a no mean feat, and they were back by 2 pm. Then it was cleaning up and I must admit it was a good effort from everyone. Then time to say goodbye to Arthurs Pass as we waited, and waited and waited, for the train. When it finally did arrive it was to be delayed even more by a coal wagon derailment down the track. The coal trains are a sight to see with five diesel engines pulling 30 coal wagons from Greymouth and up the long steep Otira Tunnel, then eventually out to Lyttleton.

At Arthurs Pass we un-coupled to go back to Greymouth. We finally left AP over an hour late, only to have more drama at Springfield where we were greeted by paramedics rushing past our carriage to help a poor soul who had become quite ill. So back to Christchurch and, as I warned everyone, home very late. For me into bed at 1.40am.

Overall another great trip with the club as we, the committee, strive to give members, family, friends and visitors, a variety of trips during the year. It seems to be working as 38 people signed up for the train. For once the headache wasn’t people pulling out but it was people wanting to join in the fun after the list closed and it was great to see some of the spouses of members come along too.

If you want more info about Arthurs Pass,

<http://softrock.co.nz/apis/index.php?page=2> is one of the many sites available

Wolfgang for Dave Ch, Antony and Debbie, Alan and Sharon, Anne and Chris, Kerryn and Nicola, Alan and Robyn, Stefan R, Jill and Ray, Bruce B, Barry A, Wilbert and Monika, Fieke and David, Terry and Barbara, Roy

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

W, Cathy and Graeme, Terry and Carmel, Christine Cory and Clem, Andrew D, Margaret and David, Alex and Christian and last but not least Jo and Julie.

Quote of the trip:

“Are there any cool people going on this trip?” asked Bruce.

“Yes, you are, Bruce”, I replied.

“Ah that’s really cool”, said Bruce, “Count me in”.

Picnic at Remarkable Rock ↗ 13 August

On Sunday 13 August, four brave women squeezed into Ian’s vehicle for a cosy ride down to Balclutha. From then on, only Ian knew where the heck we were, despite him supplying us with maps to follow. We were heading for Remarkable Rock via the Catlins back roads and we were all glad it was Ian’s car we were in when the tar seal promptly turned to gravel and mud. And we were slightly concerned when the black clouds in front of us started showering us with sleet. We eventually found ourselves following the Puerua Valley Road and there in the distance, covered in snow, was what Ian informed us was Remarkable Rock.

As we sat and looked at it from the warmth of the car, Ian kindly suggested we could do Plan B. But we all agreed that we were here now and we were going to climb to that rock, come rain, hail or shine! Well, as it happened, we got all three on the way up the muddy farm track. We found that walking on the bailage put out for the cows was much easier going. When we came to an electric fence we asked Ian to check to see if it was going, but he didn’t want to do that, so he kindly offered to use his stick to hold the tapes down while we stepped over. As we were doing this he calmly informed us that “Yes, the fence is on.” The shaking stick told us that he was not kidding! With us four women safely over and continuing onwards, Ian had to remind us that someone might hold the stick to let him

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

across too. Brave Judy came to his rescue.

Shortly after this we were walking through snow until we reached the rock about lunch time. The rock was indeed remarkable up close (a bit like a kiwi Ayers Rock) and right on cue it started snowing in earnest, much to Nicole's delight. She's from Malaysia and it was her first experience of snow. So we wedged ourselves between the crevasses out of the wind and had our picnic, then took some photos before making our way down again. The views from the track were magnificent, and the snow-covered hills added to the feeling of being in a special place. Ian pointed out the farmhouse he lived in as a boy and just up the road were his grandmother's house and her brother's house. Our descent was closely watched by a herd of cows and we got the feeling they were willing us to fall in the mud - payback for walking on their lunch! But we all arrived at the car none the worse for wear just before the heavy rain really set in. There was enough time left to drive to Kaka Point to enjoy hot chocolates and lattes at the quaint little pub before heading back into town.

An enjoyable and informative day out, thanks to the knowledge and always gentlemanly manner of Ian Sime.

Janet Barclay for Nicole Quek, Elizabeth Liefting and Judy Wilson.

Burns Saddle/Possum Hut/Swampy

August 20

I'd been really looking forward to a good long walk in the Silverpeaks, so it wasn't only out of concern for David Barnes that I was sorry to hear he had an injury. To make sure the trip happened, I offered to lead it.

A group of five of us set out in the rain (but weather predicted to improve) up Burns Track, with Dick at the front setting a very quick pace and soon leaving us all behind. We also found a possum caught in a trap at the side of the track, and stopped to put it out of it's misery (with an aluminium

pole!). At Burns Saddle (where the weather started to clear) we headed towards Green Ridge, taking the turn-off down Eucalyptus Spur (sometimes called Bluegum Ridge). Eucalyptus Spur was a place I'd never been before, as it isn't really on the way to anywhere, but it is a good walk with some fantastic views, so I recommend it as part of a trip.

David had tentatively suggested lunch at Possum Hut, but it was a bit damp and still a little early, so we went up Possum Ridge. We also had a quick look for a side track that used to lead up Green Hill many years ago, but it is all dense bush now. After lunch at Green Hut site, a small side trip down to the water source near the site discovered a very small hut made from some of the Green Hut corrugated iron. Back towards Swampy, Bronwyn was having trouble with one of her boots, and I had a knee I was looking after, so the two of us headed back around Rustler's Ridge, while the others went over Swampy and down the Leith Saddle Track, with them arriving at the cars first.

The only thing that really marred the trip was that there were a lot of gin traps, some with live possums in them, right on the Burns and Rustler's tracks. We dispatched the possums that we saw (breaking the end off Bronwyn's hill pole in the process). A follow up later with the D.C.C. discovered that the traps were set by a contractor to the Animal Health Board. Water and Waste were not happy about traps right on the track (against regulations), so they were very promptly moved.

Thanks David for planning an excellent trip, I'm only sorry you couldn't join us.

Roy for Dick, Pam, Wayne and Bronwyn.



Cameron Creek Abandoned, but Sawyer's Burn Hut Conquered!

2 – 3 September

After a squally night spent with the wind whistling through the Kidd's Bush shelter, we optimistically piled into the minibus and headed towards Haast Pass. Our initial optimism was soon dampened, however, when we drove into rain as we approached Makarora.

The rain had set in as the Cameron Creek group of Kanh, Ran, Grant and Tony disembarked at the beginning of the track and watched the rest of the group drive off into ever increasing rain towards the Brewster track. (Our tramp was supposed to be the "soft" option on this trip, but this was not to be the case as we shall see.) The first few hundred metres was a gravel highway to a viewing platform from where we looked down over the creek. At this point it was braided and, although the separate streams looked slightly swollen, they looked crossable. We knew we had to cross the creek after we had negotiated Cameron Gorge, but if it was no worse than what we could see, this would be no problem. How wrong we were! With each step the track became more difficult underfoot as the rain increased. The gorge was spectacular, but we could not help but notice that the volume of water that was thundering down (in perfect counterpoint to the thunder and lightning that was going on above our heads by this stage) was increasing exponentially the further we squelched up the track.

When we reached the crossing point it took just one look to convince us that we would be going no further. We were still in the gorge and, although it was wider at this point, great volumes of water were still crashing down. We had assumed that the crossing point would be out of the gorge where the creek would be braided and we could possibly cross without problems. As none of us fancied body rafting down the gorge, it was with soddened hearts and boots we turned around and headed back.

We had only gone about a third of the way back when, lo and behold, who should appear out of the dripping bush but two of the "Brewster Hardmen" – Phil and Wayne! (but without rucksacks, note). They had had to aban-

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

don their tramp at the first stream crossing as it was impassable and so they had returned to Cameron Creek to see how far we had got. Shortly afterwards we met up with the rest of the Brewster group and were just about to give them a hard time, but refrained when we realized that they would have brought the minibus back with them, which would save us a 10 km walk along the road in the rain to Makarora for shelter.

As we were all soaked, and it was still pouring, there was some discussion as to whether we should stop at Makarora and share some cabins for the night. However, our wise leader, Phil Somerville, decreed that we should return to Kidd's Bush as it was further east and therefore could be dry. None of us dared to question his undoubted authority. And how right he was! As we drove past Makarora and towards The Neck, the curtain of rain parted and we were into blue skies. Back at Kidd's Bush shelter we were able to spread out our soaked gear to dry in the warm sun. Some of the frustrated Brewster Hardmen and Hardwomen (or should it be Hardpersons?) vented their pent-up energy by climbing Isthmus Peak before dinner.

On Sunday, after a calm, clear night broke to a calm, clear day, our still frustrated leader called for volunteers to climb Sentinel with him. The Brewster Hardpersons all suddenly softened and found aches and pains that they were previously unaware of, except for Wayne who bravely got his gear and jumped into the van with Phil. After the dynamic duo had departed, the rest of us did not loiter and by 9.15 am were heading up towards Sawyer's Burn Hut, a climb of about three hours according to the track marker.

Tony, as usual, took longer than the others to get ready and set off at 9.30 am. However, this was part of a master plan: he and Ran were sharing a day pack which Ran was carrying first and Tony reasoned that if he timed it right, he would catch Ran just as they reached the hut. Tony would apologise, then offer to carry the pack (minus the weight of food and water which had been consumed for lunch) all the way down back to Kidd's Bush. That was the least he could do, wasn't it? Unfortunately Tony undid his own plan. Being unfettered by the weight of a rucksack, he was unable to restrain himself and bound up the track like a geriatric gazelle, catching up with Ran within an hour. Despite attempts at flattery by Tony

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

“Your pack looks custom made, it moulds into your back.”; “If it was my pack, I wouldn’t let anyone else wear it.” etc...), Ran gladly handed the pack over.

The view over Lake Hawea from above the bushline was so stupendous that the whole group (including the Brewster Hardpersons) agreed to a half-hour stop. Despite this, we still reached Sawyer’s Burn Hut in under two and a half hours. The hut is basic but cosy, and has two bunks, although there is plenty of room on the floor. After descending from the hut to the stream, we all enjoyed a leisurely lunch in the warm sunshine before heading back to Kidd’s Bush. There was time for a leisurely afternoon tea and snooze in the sun while waiting for Phil and Wayne, but when they did arrive on the dot of 4.00 pm, we showed no mercy and made sure we were away by 4.05 pm. (We have to admit, though, that theirs’ was an epic feat – but we wouldn’t tell them directly!)

Tony Timperley for: Kanh Mai, Ran Turner, and Grant Burnard.
(Plus some Brewster Hardpersons on Sunday.)

Mopanui / Doctors Point ***10 September***

After parking our cars beside Mopanui we descended down a track that leads to Purakanui and on to the pa site. After enjoying smoko we proceeded along the beach to Doctors Point and on to Orakanui for lunch. We then climbed up through the reserve past the Tallest Tree to the top road, up to the top of Mopanui, and then back to the cars.
All in all a very pleasant day enjoyed by all.

Gavin MacArthur

Trip list

21-23 October (Labour Weekend)

Skippers / Mt. Aurum Area (All)

Antony Pettinger 473 7924

Skippers, being a tributary of the Shotover, has a fantastic historical past based primarily on gold mining. This weekend trip is suitable for all grades, and is similar in concept to the trips run to Macetown over the years. Although there are options to base-camp and explore from there, the best way to enjoy the Skippers area is to spend the three days travelling up one branch of Skippers Creek, over a moderate saddle and back down the other. This enables you to explore the remains of the gold mining operations, as well as giving you a good opportunity to clamber up to any of a number of highpoints and admire the view.

The left branch of Skippers Creek is the site of New Zealand's first hydro-electric power scheme, commissioned in 1886. A transmission line consisting of No. 8 wire ran for 3 km to the right branch and the town of Bullendale, where it powered a stamping plant. The remains have been partly restored giving an insight to the early pioneering spirit prevalent throughout Otago in the 1880's.

At over 2200m, Mt. Aurum is the highest point, although snow conditions may preclude us from climbing it on this trip. Good views can be had, however, on the ridge leading from the left/right branch saddle.

Huts are scarce, so camping will be required. This trip is a private car trip, 4WDs are preferred, but we will work out final details when the trip closes (19 October).

4 – 5 November

Piano Flat / Waikaia (All)

Jill McAliece 455 6740

This trip follows on from the club trip to the Garvies in April. The history

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

(from DoC) is that Piano Flat is named after a member of an orchestra, which was formed to entertain early settlers and miners. Harry Selig, the piano player, was reputed to have been the first person to recover gold on the flat and for a short time the area was known as Piano Harry's Flat.

The area is now a reserve of 10,500ha with several day walks available. One option is to camp at Piano Flat and day trip from there. For some great views the trip to Titan Rocks (and beyond) is worthwhile, while three trips are available nearer the Waikaia River, including one featuring a working water race (dating from the gold mining days). A nice trip to ease us into the summer tramping programme.

Trip list closes October 26

Committee Members 2006-2007

President	Antony Pettinger	473 7924
Vice President	Barry Atkinson	487 7820
Secretary	Jill McAliece	455 6740
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	Matt Corbett	487 6595
and	Dave Chambers	454 3857
Daytrip Convenor	Roy Ward	473 9518
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	487 7237
Committee	Dave Chambers	454 3857
Committee	Alan Thomson	455 7878
(outside committee)		
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 November Bulletin, deadline is 13/10/06, publication 26/10/06. You can submit material on floppy disc, CD, or USB flashdrive (PC not Mac please); email 'rebell@extra.co.nz'; or post to Robyn Bell, 8 Roy Crescent, Concord, Dunedin. Thanks.

DAYTRIPS

Coast to Coast (E-M) 1 October

See the September Bulletin for details.
Leader is Ralph Harvey, 453 4330

Post Office Creek By Bike 8 October (Cycle)

Many of the club have walked much of this route but fewer have got to really enjoy it. The plan, depending on who shows on the day, is to drive to the Government Track carpark. Ride up there and over to Mahinerangi. Do the track around to Post Office Creek then back around the roads to Kowhai Spur. Anyone capable of doing one of Bruce's Peninsula trips should be fine on this one. I will be keen to check that everyone has sensible brakes though, so if you're in doubt give me a yell and we can give them a pre-ride tune. I will have most of the basic bike tools but a spare tube or two is worth bringing as the gorse can be a bit aggressive. Note this is a MTB ride with some mud and the odd tree root so leave the skinny-tyred road bikes at home where they belong.

One American friend of mine commented that Government Track is one of the longest rideable bits of single track he has encountered in NZ. He hasn't done Post Office Creek yet, which is nearly as long, so it should be a fun day. I'm assuming it'll take 5-6 hours to do the whole circuit, which will allow plenty of time for breaks, breakdowns and general hilarity. Alternative options are... Government Track-Kowhai Spur only (about three easy hours). Government track return (a good bad weather alternative) and, finally, starting at Mahinerangi Dam and doing only the Post Office Creek leg (a little under three hours easy going). I have no intention of

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

cycling back down Waipori Road... it sucks!

Any questions or hate mail can be addressed to me via phone at home: 476 6340; or email: robert.porteous@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

Rob Porteous

Unexplored Silverpeaks (M/F)
15 October

This is an annual outing to a new, surprise destination to be dreamed up on the day! Join the maddest members of the OTMC, for lots of insanity and a little challenge. Leave the clubrooms 9 am, \$7 transport cost.

Leader: Richard Pettinger 487 9488

22 October

This is Labour Weekend, so there is no daytrip. Enjoy your holiday!

Saddle Hill Traverse (E/M)
29 October

I hope to do the same walk as last year, which took about six hours. We meet at the clubrooms at 9 am, then drive to East Taieri and park on Riccarton Rd East, 200 m up from the main south highway.

We'll walk through a variety of farmland and native bush, stopping for lunch at the woolshed on Scroggs Hill Rd. After traversing both hills we'll go back down to our cars. Transport cost is \$3.

Leader: Alan Scurr 489 5538