

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 670, Jan/Feb 2007

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.**

1 February

Waitangi weekend - no club night - enjoy your holiday,
whether in the hills or painting the house!

8 February

Steven Swabey will talk about his experiences caving in
Australia

15 February

Philip Somerville and his team will talk about their sum-
mer adventures in the Olivine Wilderness

22 February

Bring Your Own - photos, videos, slides, powerpoints,
etc and tell us what you've been up to.

1 March

David Paulin will show some historic film of the Route-
burn/Rockburn, the Wilkin and the Remarkables.

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

**Visit us on the Internet at:
www.otmc.co.nz**

PRESIDENT'S PIECE

Welcome to 2007 – I hope everyone managed to enjoy some time with family and friends over the New Year period and perhaps even found time to enjoy a wander in the hills somewhere.

2006 finished with a novel type of trip for the OTMC. A few of us had been discussing options for the last weekend trip of the year and we came up with the ultimate day trip – Conical Hill on the Routeburn track in a day, from Dunedin. Number crunching soon brought us back to reality when we realized that it would actually be a very full day, perhaps 20 hours. As this is not fair on the drivers we decided that we should do it over a normal weekend trip, and call it a Mystery Trip. The trip was brilliant. Around a dozen made it to Conical Hill in under four hours, including the snow-filled gully above Harris Saddle. Conical Hill itself was unfortunately in mist, but this did not deter some toasts being made, especially to the OTMC. Back at the camp 10 hours after leaving made for a great day. Thanks to Wolfgang for organising the trip, as well as to the participants who made the trip what it was.

2006 was a great year for the club – the enthusiasm seen from all the people who have participated on our trips, club nights and other events has made all the work that goes into running this trip worthwhile. Our plan for 2007 is to run the club as before – why change a successful formula? Our weekend trip programme will continue to include trips to destinations rarely, if ever, visited by the OTMC. One aspect of club activity we are going to concentrate on after the Bushcraft course is leadership, particularly party leadership. Being a weekend trip leader is really more about organisation prior to leaving town, whereas party leadership is a much more complex role, with many skills required including bushcraft skills and people management, as well as the important issue of assessing risks. Although a lot of the skills can only really be gained by experience we can learn a lot from sharing the experience we have gained already.

The final phase of the clubrooms facelift is nearing completion with the map wall now in the process of being re-established. Much of the clubroom's character derives from the full wall of maps and it is great to see them on the wall again. The maps chosen for the main wall are mainly the upper section of Fiordland National Park, most of Mt. Aspiring NP and some other frequently visited areas like the Ahuriri, Ohau and Mt. Cook areas. Additionally we have added four national park maps, being Fiordland, Mt. Aspiring, Mt. Cook and Arthurs Pass. Although these maps are at a larger scale, they give a good overview of each park. As well as the wall maps, the clubroom's computer has all the

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South Island maps available, and we still have library copies of the folded maps, which can be borrowed for trips.

With the holidays came another tragic report of someone drowning in a river, this time an Australian drowned in the West Matukituki. Although tragic for the family involved, these incidents make us all think about the inherent dangers of crossing any river. I urge all members to be very aware of the hazards rivers present us and remind everyone of the need to be fully aware of crossing techniques. Ascertaining the hazards at a potential river crossing site is the key to crossing safely. Ensure a large safety margin and always think about where you will go if you lose your footing. I am proud of the club's safety record with rivers – let's keep it that way.

Finally, the OTMC wish Aaron Whitehead well in his mission to traverse the backbone of the South Island from north to the south. This is a huge undertaking, and for a lot of it Aaron will be traveling alone. This would be an amazing trip, made more special by the small number of people able to undertake it.

Antony P
President

Membership

Beth Ryden, Box 1435, Queenstown, 021 670769, is a new member this month. The three Rawlings-Blackmore girls, Sonia, Erika and Anna are not renewing their membership.

Changes of address:

Stuart Laird to 50 Bernard Rd, Albertown (no landline phone);

Elizabeth Liefing to 2/3 Royal Tce, Central City; and Richard and Camilla Bennett to 24 Carnarvon St; (phone number unchanged for both);

Aaron Whitehead to 17 Aberdeen Rd, 455 2473

Congratulations to Paul Bennington on his recent marriage to Bronwyn, who is now also a Bennington, and is joining us too! Their new phone number is 487 6840

And Robyn Bell is now Robyn MacKay.

Ian Sime
Membership Secretary

SAR Commendations

On Tuesday, 5th December 2006, the police presented certificates of appreciation to a number of SAR volunteers who had been involved for 10 or more years, including OTMC members Teresa Wasilewska, Arthur Blondell, David Barnes and Trevor Pullar. David and Trevor also received National Awards from NZ Land SAR recognising their long involvement in SAR. Teresa is the OTMC's SAR rep, the local LSAR committee treasurer and one of the organisers of the recent LSAR conference. Arthur has been a key member of the First Response Search Team since its inception in the mid '90s. David has been involved in SAR for 25 years, the last 13 as a front-line search manager. Trevor has about 40 years experience in SAR, and has been an adviser for about 30 years.

Congratulations to all four volunteers - they certainly deserve their awards and we are very proud of them!

FOR SALE

Kathmandu Retreat 240 camping tent, current model, only used 3 times, excellent condition. Two rooms plus vestibule, front and side entries; ample room for our queen-size airbed, cello, and lots of stuff; would sleep 3-4 comfortably. Great ventilation in hot weather and has proven itself in strong wind and rain. Retail price \$749, selling for \$300 ono.

Phone Robyn MacKay 488 2420

Trip Reports

Piano Flat / Waikaia

4- 5 November

A devoted group of OTMC trampers gave up a weekend of Guy Fawkes mayhem (much to the relief of the Fire and Police Departments) and instead spent the time grunting up to Titan Rocks from the Waikaia valley floor on the Saturday, and sweating along the river bank in Auckland-like humidity on the Sunday.

On arrival at Piano Flat, our group of ten was greeted by the offended stare of a morepork, which supervised proceedings from its perch in a tree for a few minutes, before becoming bored and flying off across the river to make life more exciting for little furry creatures. Someone remarked that our seeing the morepork meant that it was going to rain. (Why is it that the morepork is supposed to be a harbinger of bad news – or weather?)

However, the omen did not come to pass as we awoke next day to clear skies and were soon crossing the swing bridge over the Waikaia and heading for Titan Rocks, some 900 metres above us. At first glance on the map, the track looks as though it is an unrelenting, steep slog to the rocks; but although there are some long, “grunty” sections, there is some respite given by small plateaus. We also crossed some clear streams, which gave an excuse for us to pause and replenish our water bottles.

Once we cleared the bushline, we realized that there were no more rest areas and that the final 200 metres would be a slog up steep tussock slopes. This realization, combined with most pleasant surroundings of a babbling brook and shady trees at the bush-edge, persuaded certain members of the group that they had gone far enough. (For a large fee I have promised not to reveal their names; and for an even larger fee I have promised not to reveal the names of those who had an afternoon nap.)

Meanwhile the masochists amongst us sweated and panted to the summit plateau and the twin outcrops and tors that make up Titan Rocks. From the southernmost tor there is a view down the length of the Waikaia Valley and

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beyond, which made the final slog worth while; whilst from the northernmost tor we looked over rolling tussocklands, some of it still snow-covered, towards Blue Lake, where some of us had been in early April.

A strong, cold wind ensured that we did not stay too long on the plateau, so after a snack in the lee of the rocks, we started our return. The steep, slippery tussock slope made for an interesting descent, especially for those with small feet who found it difficult to gain friction. On reaching the bushline the topic of conversation was how many slips onto their backsides each person had taken – it became quite competitive! This was in contrast to one elderly group member who has exceptionally large feet and this asset, coupled with a new pair of boots with virgin tread, enabled him to bound down the slope like an arthritic antelope. After awakening the beauty sleepers, we continued descending more sedately to Piano Flat and a welcome cup of hot tea.

But our exertions were not over yet! A short way up the road was a kids' playground which contained a roundabout and rocking horse which those of us over 50 had not seen since our childhood, as they had long since been banned by OSH. The roundabout can be made to rotate at such a speed so as to fling off its riders (ask Ray, he was flung off backwards into nearby bushes!) and the five-seat rocking horse has a lethal bucking motion for the unfortunate occupant of the rear seat. As you can imagine, an exciting and dangerous time was had by all. How did we survive our childhood? Today's kids don't know what they are missing!

On Sunday we set out for a more dignified and leisurely riverside stroll, although it turned out not to be as leisurely as we had hoped. The true right bank track turned out to be quite rough in parts and have a number of steep "undulations". This, combined with sub-tropical humidity, made for a high perspiration rate (which was good for business at Waikaia pub a couple of hours later!). In such situations it is wise to follow Alan's technique of stopping frequently to see if you can spot any trout, as this gives you a valid excuse without having to admit you are "knackered". (Alan and Tony spotted two trout in twenty stops!)

The return trip down the true left bank was less arduous and had the added interest of a group of kayakers undergoing training on the river. At Piano Flat, after a quick, cooling slosh in the river, we all headed for a welcome cool drink and some hot food at the Waikaia pub. Our timing was perfect, for as we left Piano Flat it started to rain.

Tony Timperley for: Jill and Ray McAliece, Sue and Peter Stevenson, Alan Thomson, Katherine Jeyes, Trevor Mason, Sue Barnaby, Fiona Willement, and Robin Frame.

Trip list

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

17-18 February

Hector Mountains / Ben Nevis (All)

Barry Atkinson 487 7820

This is another area that the OTMC rarely visits. The Hector Mountains lie on the eastern side of Lake Wakatipu, south of the Remarkables ski area. At this stage this trip plans to access the area via Wye Creek, on the Frankton – Kingston road. Options include trips to Lake Hope, or right through to Lake Alta, near the ski resort. There are plenty of high, easily accessible vantage points, including Ben Nevis at 2234m. There are no huts in the area, so some nice summer camping will be required. If you prefer your tramping to be pretty much devoid of bush, then this is the trip for you. The trip list will close on 8 February.

3 – 4 March

Arthurs Pass (All)

Matt Corbett 487-6595

It may have been a long time coming but the OTMC are visiting Arthurs Pass for a weekend in summer. Recent trips to this area have been in the colder months, so here is the perfect opportunity to make the most of the longer daylight hours at this time of the year.

Matt's planned a trip in the Edwards / Hawdon round circuit via Tarn Col and Walker Pass. I would grade this as a reasonably fit trip for this time of year, but in good weather it would be a great trip. Camping will be required, possibly above the bushline.

Of course, there are many other options available; from a repeat of the Cass / Lagoon Saddle trip the club did last September to parts of the Minga / Deception trip. A round trip of Avalanche Peak and back along the road via the Crow River would be nice at this time of year. There is also the opportunity to undertake a couple of day trips, of which there are several to choose from. The trip list will close February 22.

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Bushcraft 2007

The end of February sees the start of the OTMC's annual bushcraft course, a course on tramping safety aimed at beginners and those with some experience. Running the bushcraft course has become a very important and integral part of the OTMC, but it doesn't happen without the efforts of many people. To this end I am asking all members for their help for the 2007 course.

The success of the course depends on a good number of participants – to achieve this we need to advertise the course. The course has a very good reputation as a quality course and good value for money. If you can help advertise the course at your work, your gym, amongst your family and friends etc. it will be greatly appreciated. There was an flyer with the December Bulletin, with more available at the clubrooms. The website also has copies of the flyer, more information on the course plus a downloadable application form.

The course itself needs members to lead parties and assist in other ways. We have had a core of people over the years who continue to volunteer but new blood is always welcome. Particularly I am always looking for assistance with the practical compass course at Tirohanga, as well as party leaders (or co-leaders) for both the Matukituki and the optional trip to the Lake Ohau. Please contact me on 4737924 if you would like to help. Don't forget to get the word out about Bushcraft 2007.

Antony P
Bushcraft 2007 Director

10 March River Safety / Practical Tramping Trip Matukituki Valley (I)

As part of Bushcraft 2007 we are taking the participants to the Matukituki rather than the traditional Silver Peaks. We feel that this will provide a better location, primarily for the river safety aspects of the course, but also introduce them to what most people would call typical tramping New Zealand tramping country.

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Although primarily aimed at the Bushcraft participants, there may be room for some OTMC members. I want to keep the party sizes small so we will need a few leaders / co-leaders. My plan is to introduce the river safety skills near the crossing to the East Matukituki, which will take most of Saturday morning. Parties will then set off in different locations, either in the East or West and camp out for the night. Further river-crossing instruction may take place en-route, but this will depend on instructor/leader ability and the river and weather conditions. Being a bushcraft trip I don't expect the trips to be too strenuous as we want to concentrate on passing our bushcraft skills to the participants.

Contact me if you can help or need more information.

Antony 473 7924

24 – 25 March
Ohau Valleys (Maitland/Temple/Huxley) (All)
Antony Pettinger 474-7924

This trip is the combined OTMC / Bushcraft 2007 trip and is headed for the popular Ohau Valleys. The area has traditionally been used for the optional bushcraft trip due to the range of trips available and the normally drier weather (although we have had some very wet trips here!).

The Maitland is the valley nearest the head of Lake Ohau. A wander up here to the Maitland Hut is wonderful, but a better option is to consider the Maitland / Freehold Creek circuit via the Ohau Range. Great views are had from the 1800m tops and a neat lake (Dumb-bell) to camp beside.

Next up is the Temple. Again either branch is worthy of a visit but the North/South circuit is a special trip. I now concede that the pass between the two is called Gunsight Pass (officially gazetted in 2006) and it is a special place. I always suggest the better direction is north-south as you are climbing the steeper gut on the north side rather than descending. You are also well placed to find a camp-site in the upper south branch which breaks the days up nicely.

The Huxley has always been a popular valley, although you are road bashing for about 8km. Nevertheless, it is within the scope of most people to get to Huxley Forks, from where you can explore further up the north or south branches. Not far up the north gives good views of Broderick Pass.

There are other options available for the fitter ones, like a Maitland/South Temple crossover or a visit to the Dasler Pinnacles on the Neumann Range. This trip will close on March 15.

OTMC Marathon (FE)

10 February

The details of this trip are in the December Bulletin, so I will just give a quick update. It looks at this stage is if the Mount Allan Forest will be open, so both the full and half options are available this year (and rumour has it they will be logging sometime in 2007 - I don't know what effect that will have on this route in future!). Instead of a triplist at the clubrooms, please contact me if you want to participate, are willing to be at a checkpoint on the route, or if you want to arrange a trip with me beforehand to check out any tricky parts (particularly the Chalkies).

Contact: Roy Ward 473 9518



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	Dave Chambers	454 3857
Committee	Alan Thomson	455 7878
(outside committee)		
Bulletin Editor	Robyn MacKay	488 2420
Conservation/Advocacy	David Barnes	454 4492
SAR Contact	Teresa Wasilewska	477 4987

Contributions (limit of 1000 words) are welcome for the March Bulletin, deadline is 16/2/07, publication 1/3/07. You can submit material by email to "rebell@xtra.co.nz"; or post handwritten/typed copy or a CD to Robyn MacKay, 8 Roy Crescent, Concord, Dunedin. Thanks.

DAYTRIPS

Little-Known Tracks on Flagstaff (E) 27 January

NB:- This is a Saturday trip. For details see the December 2006 Bulletin.
Leader: Bronwen Strang 021 0550 809 (Phone number differs from trip card)

Raceman's Track (E) 28 January

NOTE: 28 Jan & 18 Mar trips have been swapped from the trip card order.
Raceman's Track is one of a network of tracks up the Silverstream. It is a reasonably flat walk up a valley through some rather pleasant bush, and it goes along the remains of a water race that used to be part of the Dunedin water system from the 1880's to the 1960's. We will walk to the top weir and back (about 4-5 hours return). Some parts of the track may be a little bit muddy. Cost \$4.
Leader: Carmel Casey 454 4592

Mt. Watkins (M) 4 February

Meet at the clubrooms at 9 am and drive north on State Highway 1 to Cherry Farm, turning left to go along the Ramrock Rd as far as Bucklands Crossing. We'll drop a car there, then continue a few more kilometres to some yards where we leave the other car(s).

We cross Garden Bush Creek, then the north branch of Waikouaiti River, and bushbash up to a flat ridge which leads to Mt. Watkins, which usually provides great views. We then head southwards down another ridge which takes us back to Bucklands Crossing, and should be home about 4.30 pm

Leader: Bill Wilson 477 2282

Te Papanui; Lammermoors/Lammerlaws Easy tramping + MTB option 11 February

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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, previously at the Otago Museum but now at the Alexandra one, is coming down especially to accompany us. This will give a whole extra dimension to our day.

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

Leader: Ian Sime 453 6185

Post Office Creek (M/F)
18 February

We start at the dam and heading east. It may be more interesting to go to Post Office Creek by following the shore line of Lake Mahinerangi. This is only a theory so be prepared to crawl through gorse or do some swimming. We can always take to the forestry roads if it all gets to much for us. Carpool cost \$10.

Leader Antony Hamel 453-5240

Chalkies / Powder Creek
(with a twist!) (M)
25 February

The Chalkies area on the edge of the Silverpeaks offers bush-covered slopes, tussock on the tops and possibly a little pine forest thrown in. This is 'with a twist', so be prepared for something a little different than the usual Chalkies loop. \$4.

Leader: Ran Turner 473 8652

Taieri Ridge / Crater Lake (M)
4 March

This trip involves a drive up to Middlemarch with a walk from the southern end of Taieri Ridge, up over The Sisters, and coming down off the ridge to the remains of a volcanic crater. The views from the ridge are extensive, and the crater is quite impressive when viewed from above. We'll leave the clubrooms sharp at 9am and should be back by about 6.30pm. Transport cost \$12.

Leader: Alan Thomson 455 7878