

OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 671, March 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.

8 March

Ken Mason will talk about his tramping and mountaineering career spanning ~50 years

15 March

Joan Green will talk on hiking the South Downs Way

22 March

B.Y.O. - show us what you've been up to!

29 March

Phil Ainslie from the University of Otago will talk on high altitude physiology, fitness and acclimatisation. *(A lively, knowledgeable speaker who has won several awards for his innovative research - highly recommended! Ed)*

5 April

No club night - enjoy your Easter break

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**

The first multi-day trip for the year has now been and gone and what a trip it was! It seems that you either get really good or really bad weather over the Waitangi Day period, this year we were lucky to have four glorious days. As you know, the trip planned was the crossing from the West Matukituki to the Rees Valley via Cascade Saddle and Rees Saddle. The climb from the Matukituki valley floor to the 'pylon' at the highest point is around 1300m and is quite a climb for some, especially in hot, still conditions. All participants on the trip performed wonderfully, assisting without question those who needed help. The comradeship shown during the climb humbled me – it is what makes this club a neat place to be. Read on further in this issue for one or two trip reports from this trip.

I know a lot of members, like me, have an affinity with anything to do with the mountains. Over the summer months I have had the opportunity to read 'Legs on Everest' which is Mark Inglis' own account of his success on Everest last year. Additionally I have watched a full documentary on Russell Brice's expedition to Everest, of which Mark was a client (hopefully this will screen in NZ sometime soon). To me, the achievement accomplished by Mark is nothing short of amazing. You will remember at the time of the controversy, which primarily seemed aimed at Inglis, regarding the British climber, David Sharp, who was 'trapped' in the death zone. At the time I felt sorry for Inglis as he was probably the least able to assist, as he himself was struggling with stump damage. After reading the book and watching the documentary I feel even stronger about this, and even more sorry for Inglis. His achievement deserved the fullest credit, yet he was harshly criticised for not assisting. There were many people in the death zone (the final 800m or so) over the 2 days that Sharp was immobilised, including many very strong Sherpas, but none of them could help – it takes all effort to survive yourself, yet alone assist someone who has overnighted in the death zone. I take my hat off to Mark Inglis – to come as far as he has since that Mt. Cook trip of 1982, from the Olympics, to Cook and now Everest is nothing short of inspirational. I recommend both his books to anyone with an interest in both mountaineering and personal achievement.

There is another amazing trip happening a lot closer to home – Aaron Whitehead's traverse of the Southern Alps. As I write this Aaron's latest update had him at Unwin Hut (Mt. Cook) on 8 February. In 43 days Aaron has travelled from Collingwood to Mt. Cook, and he is now heading for Makarora. You can follow his progress at this website (updated by Aaron when possible):

<http://aaronssouthernodyssey.blogspot.com/>

Regards,
Antony Pettinger.

Membership

A very quiet month with no new members or resignations.

But a few members are shifting house:

Grant Burnard to 29B Melmore Tce (still in Cromwell);
Sandra de Vries to 636 North Rd, RD2 Waitati (same phone);
and Greg Panting to 8 Goldie Pl, Rolleston, 03 3472 011;
Barry Atkinson now has cellphone only: 021 0244 8939.
Brenda Cameron, 3 Treetops Dr, Portobello, 4780 424;
Bronwen Strang, 40 Signal Hill Rd, 4731 610.

Ian Sime,
Membership Secretary.



CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPING CLUB 75th ANNIVERSARY Weekend after Easter 2007 (14/15 April 2007)

If you have ever had any involvement with the club
come and help us celebrate

For details see our website <http://www.ctc.org.nz>
or contact Rex or Greta Vink
Ph (03) 352 5329, PO Box 527, Christchurch
email greta-vink@clear.net.nz

Antics

Ever traversed Fiordland in a rubber boat? Ever carried a fridge up Refrigerator Valley? Spent a night in an ice-box with a frozen chicken? These lines from the back cover of “45 Years of Antics” set the scene for an exhilarating journey through the culture of a club whose members have, in many cases, moved on to play key roles in clubs throughout New Zealand, including OTMC.

In the foreword to his “A Trumper’s Journey” last year, Mark Pickering bemoaned the absence of books that concentrated on tramping tales. His own book was a successful attempt to fill the gap, and now it has been joined in a resounding fashion by “45 Years of Antics.”

“Antics” is the annual journal of the Otago University Tramping Club, and the editor of this anthology, Kelvin Lloyd, has clearly had a lot of fun trawling through back issues to compile his collection.

The book starts with an intriguing introduction detailing the history of Antics and the genesis of this book. Kelvin was obviously delighted to get a very enthusiastic response from the various authors, many of whom saw their years in OUTC as a major influence on their lives.

The 67 articles have been grouped under headings such as World Domination, Weekend Wombling and Survival in the Snow, with a final section just labelled Antics. The typical age group of a university tramping club means that there are tales of seriously epic trips and of absolutely zany behaviour – sometimes both together. It is difficult to select the stars from such a galaxy, for there were very few articles in this eclectic mix that didn’t do it for me. However, I particularly enjoyed “A Day in the Life of a Sleeper”, a better-than-usual account of a pit-bash, (Linda Mercier, 1968) and “Flight Back to Life”, a tale of avalanche survival by the aptly-pseudonymed ‘A Lucky Bastard’ (2003). The few authors to feature twice, notably Dave Craw from the ’70s and Monica Pausina from the ’90s, deserved that honour. Barry Scott’s Swiftian “A Modest Proposal” (1973), detailing plans for a theme park in the Darrans incorporating all the best bits of the various National Parks, warrants a wide contemporary airing,

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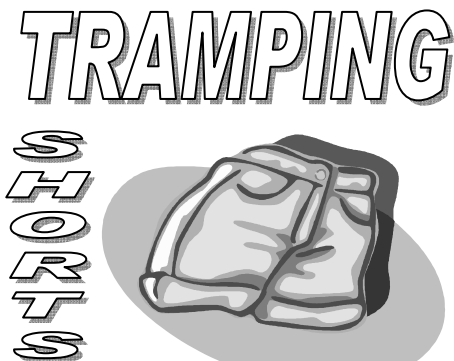
for it is as relevant today as it was then.

The book is nicely presented and well illustrated. Presumably because the original magazines would have had few photographs, some of the older articles have been illustrated with more recent photographs, but this certainly doesn't detract from and possibly enhances the presentation. All that's missing is captions and credits for the cover photos.

When I was a student, I was a bit busy with a certain other club to join OUTC, but I knew quite a lot of OUTC people, so the '80s articles in this book held particular interest for me. However, I firmly believe that it will have great appeal to many trampers, and particularly to those who immersed themselves in the culture of a tramping club in their teens and twenties. NZ Wilderness magazine had a list of 20 top outdoor reads last year. If they reprint the list, they will need to expand it to twenty-one.

Available from OUTC, PO Box 1436 for \$34.95 (\$29.95 to members of FMC-affiliated clubs) plus \$5 p&p 1-2 books or \$10 p&p 3-5 books. Also available in discerning bookshops.

David Barnes



The NZ Geographic Board is the official body which determines place names, and FMC have an as-of-right nomination in the legislation. The present incumbent's term has expired, and a little bird tells me that David Barnes has kindly offered to take up the position. Well done, David, for once again volunteering to represent our club (via FMC) in another area of importance to trampers.

Trip Reports

Cascade to Rees Saddle

3 - 6 February (Waitangi Weekend)

This trip started in earnest on Saturday morning after a restless nights sleep in the shelter at Raspberry Flats Park. The day dawned fine and clear and we set off at a jaunty pace for the two hour tramp to Aspiring Hut, where we met up with our good friend Rod who had flown down from Christchurch and walked into the hut on Friday.

From here the hard work started with a steep and grunty climb up through the bush. The track is well marked and easy to follow. We had hoped to have lunch above the bush line but the climb took longer than we thought, then a nice little clearing appeared just off the track and a few of our fellow OTMCer's invited us to "set a spell". Our hunger got the better of us and we decided to take up the offer and top up the tummies before carrying on.

As usual the bush seemed like it would never end. It was therefore with some relief that we hit the lower scrub and finally snow grass country. While the going was still tough, the views of Mt Aspiring with its cloak of clouds and the Matukituki Valley laid out at one's feet was well worth the effort. (I am claiming it was the views that made me stop regularly, not the lack of fitness and / or steepness of the track!) At almost 5 pm. I crossed a small patch of snow and at last was at the top where a fairly large crowd had gathered. (Obviously they hadn't stopped so often to admire the views.)

Both the map and Moirs describe a pylon located at this point. What a crock. The only structure is a steel tripod that looks nothing like a pylon. I am still looking for the power lines that Anthony explained come across from Mt Aspiring. Yeah, right !!!!. We then made a quick descent to the river flats below the TRIPOD where we set up camp. DoC has very kindly installed a toilet, which is a bit out of place in this magic part of NZ but given the traffic probably a good idea. If anyone from DoC is reading this, the loo is now full....

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Because we had four days to complete a three day trip our group decided to spend our second day in the tops. After all it had been such an effort to get up there, so why rush to get back down into a valley? So, after a very nice sleep in, we explored the head of the valley and then followed the marked route to Cascade Saddle itself where we had a long lunch and took the usual photographs. After lunch we dropped down from the saddle about 20-30 minutes to where we found a great little campsite on a plateau overlooking the Dart Glacier. After pitching our fly we spent a great afternoon exploring around the glacier and getting some close up photos. I managed to find what I think are the remains of an old hut used by the Otago University to originally measure the glacier movement. If anyone has knowledge of this hut I'd be interested to see the details on the club's email list.

Day three saw us start at 8 am and begin the descent past the glacier terminal, then follow the Dart River down to Dart Hut, which took us about three hours. It was just before the hut that we caught up with a group of "valley dwellers" and joined them for a quick smoko. We didn't visit the hut but from the distance it looked to be quite comfortable and seems to be well used, judging by the number of trampers we encountered. Many were walking up to Cascade Saddle as a day trip from the hut. The track up Snowy Creek towards the saddle is relatively easy but starts and finishes with a bit of climb. After a late lunch on a knob above the saddle we commenced an easy descent down to Shelter Rock Hut. Most of the OTMC parties decided to camp on the river flats just above the hut, however we opted to continue on for a further 1-2 km where there is a very nice clearing to camp. The weather was warm and balmy after a very hot day so we decided to sleep out under the beech trees.

Day four was another stunner weather-wise with an easy, but long and boring, tramp down the Rees Valley, past 25 Mile Hut and Kea Basin, to where the vans were waiting for us at the car park. Much of the trip down was spent playing games (like "I Spy") and telling long yarns with weak punch lines.

Special thanks must go to Chris and Cory Burton who drove up especially to move the vans from Raspberry Flat around to the Rees Car Park, and to Anne Burton for organising. Their efforts made the whole trip possible.

Greg Powell for Rod Dixon, Debbie Pettinger and Anthony Pettinger

Aramoana / Heyward Point Day Tramp

21 January

Six trampers left the OTMC clubrooms at 9 am and proceeded out to Aramoana. There we were met by Gordon Tocher, tramp leader, who took us to the Aramoana Domain Hall and showed us an aerial photograph of the tramping route, outlined all of the safety aspects of the tramp, gave us time for a toilet and drink refill if needed, then we were off!!

Starting from the signpost at Heyward Point walkway near the entrance to the Aramoana township, we walked past the remains of a collapsed cave formed from a previous old shoreline, then ascended up the steep hill, approx 230metres. Gordon pointed out the features and history of the landscape, including the Aramoana shelter belt, the Spit, the Mole, beaches and lots more. We decided not to take the track along the cliff because of the winds, but instead diverted through the farmers paddock. When the ridge provided us some protection from the wind we returned back to the track, which was now through long grass and regenerating bush, with fantails and nesting seagulls on the cliffs. Leading down to Heyward Point we avoided a large group of shags and a sealion. The weather had improved and the site offered magnificent views of Kaikai Beach, Murdering Beach, Long Beach, Potato Point, Blue Skin Bay and a view of the curved sea horizon. During lunch there Gordon showed us historical and geological photographs of Aramoana.

After lunch we tramped back up the hill then along the track, gathering a few wild mushrooms along the way, to the top of the Port Otago Quarry. From here a container ship was seen leaving the harbour. After John and Gordon rescued a sheep from the bushes we walked down the grass track to the road and through the Arboretum in front of the shelter belt, and then to the domain, arriving back around 3 pm.

It was an informative and interesting tramp with a taste of wildlife adventure. Brilliant!!

Michael Firmin

Lammermoor Biodiversity Trip

11 February

They said we wouldn't get tested on this, and the botanically and zoologically oriented people on the trip would probably remember more than me but here goes.

This was a unique trip for the club: a bit like a field-trip version of the talk that Brian gave at the club last year. Brian Patrick is a moth and butterfly expert, formerly with the Otago Museum and now at the new Alexandra Museum. Ian Sime organised him to give us a guided tour of the flora and fauna of the Lammermoor Range, the bulk of which became Te Papanui Conservation Park in 2003. It's a huge expanse of tall tussock grassland, gently folded into Otago, south and west of the Rock and Pillar Range (see 1:50,00 topomap H43).

We got there by following the road toward Middlemarch as far as Clark's Junction Hotel, hanging a left, and then following a 4WD road past Rocklands Station and into the park. The road gets more and more rutted as you progress to the "summit" and if you carry on (like the 20-vehicle strong 4WD club that passed us) it will take you all the way to Lawrence. As two of our vehicles were 2WD this was not an option, but our brave / naive drivers went through several mud wallows before calling it quits several kilometres past Ailsa Craig (1132m). (Imagine squeals and whoops and helpful comments in a variety of accents!)

We didn't actually do much walking as Brian had so much information about all the special ecosystems and each step from the car covered several different ones. So we inspected crevices in rocks, peered under tussocks, sank gently into moss-bogs and wandered around tarns. We saw many of the endemic (found only in NZ) insects and plants, many without scientific names yet, and marvelled at the cm-tall shrubs and the complexes of plants that make up cushion plant mats. As the weather was misty with a cold wind there were not many insects but, with the help of butterfly nets and little bottles, made acquaintance with some of the day-flying moths which are Brian's speciality, scorpion flies and tussock butterflies. There are no

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

big walking tracks in the Lammermoors (yet) but it would be a great place to go mountain biking as you could explore all the 4WD tracks and cover more of this fascinating country. There are some cool photos of the Lammermoors by Gilbert van Reenen at <http://www.cleangreen.co.nz/TE%20PAPANUI/>.

Naturally, once we had turned for home, the weather cleared up and we got great views over Te Papanui and the dramatic southern profile of the Rock and Pillar Range. Some of the crew, pleased at not having lost the diff, stopped off at Clark's Junction Hotel for a not-very-well-earned beer on the way back. Thanks Ian and Brian!

Fieke Neuman for Brian Patrick and his crew, Janet Barclay, Leslie Bellis, Lucy Jones, Gavin MacArthur, Robbie Riddet, Fiona Sanggang, Ian Sime, Angelika Treschl.

WANTED: DAYTRIP LEADERS!

It's that time of year when I'm looking for leaders (and trips) for the winter programme. I'm especially interested if you know of some new place that the club hasn't been to for a while or at all, but it's good to mix that with some of the regular (but still excellent) trips. 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. There was a great response for the summer programme, and I'm hoping we can have a really good winter programme too, so please contact me now.

Roy Ward (Day Trip Convenor)

Phone 473-9518, or, royward@physics.otago.ac.nz

TripList

CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

The next trip card is now in preparation, covering the period from May to the end of October. I have some ideas but welcome any suggestions and offers to organise the trips. Concurrently, Roy will be compiling the day-trip programme. You can follow progress on the website under 'Upcoming trip programme'.

The committee discussed the issue of non-member trip fees at our recent meeting and have changed an aspect of this. The non-member surcharge is charged on weekend (or longer) trips and is in place as a contribution towards the cost the OTMC incurs when running trips (excluding transport costs, which are separate). The non-member surcharge applies to postal members as well as non-members of the OTMC. The fee is set at 20% of the current full subscription, currently the surcharge is \$10 per trip.

In the past the surcharge has been refundable upon applying and being accepted as a full member of the OTMC. This has created both confusion and is a hassle for the Treasurer, so the surcharge is now non-refundable. However, the Treasurer has the discretion whether to impose the surcharge, especially if the trip being attended is being used as a qualifying trip. Our aim within the committee is to make things simple for everyone.

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!).

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

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.

6 – 9 April (Easter)
Makarora Area (M-C)
(Contact) Antony Pettinger 473-7924

This trip will depart on Thursday 5th April at 6pm, headed for what I believe to be the best tramping area there is – Makarora. There are many options available, especially with four days available. The trip is graded from moderate up to climbing grades. It looks like the Wilkin / Young circuit via Gillespie Pass is going to be popular. Here are some ideas:

A classic in this area is the Wilkin / Young. I have walked up the Wilkin several times over the years, and recommend taking the jet boat option from Makarora. This removes the need to cross the Makarora (which can be a big river) and gives more time for exploring during the trip.

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

This is what I intend to do: jet boat to Kerin Forks Friday morning, walk up to Siberia and camp in the bush by Gillespie Stream. Maybe explore the head of the valley if there is time. Saturday, head for Crucible Lake – a good day trip. Sunday, up and over Gillespie pass to the South Young and hopefully down to the forks. Monday – a leisurely stroll back to the road.

Head to Makarora Hut at the head of the Makarora Valley. There is an option for fitter parties to head over to the Hunter and then head back over the Main Divide to the Wills River (an awesome trip)

Climb up to Brewster Biv and explore the area (possibly make an attempt on Mt Brewster)

Visit Cameron's Hut in the Cameron Valley, or the Wills Valley. A 2 day to the Wills doesn't do it justice 4 days will see you to the head and return,

Or a trip to the Fish and Blue valleys.

The head of the Wilkin offers places like Lake Diana and Lucidus Lake (again a jet boat to Kerin Forks is recommended)

Tiel Creek – Siberia – Wilkin. This valley is very rarely visited which adds greatly to its charm. Not many tracks, but easy to follow terrain (it just takes a while to get through).

Trip list closes on 29 March.

21 - 22 April
Mt Somers
Terry Casey 454 4592

The Mt Somers trip was last undertaken by the OTMC in May 2003, and from all counts was a very enjoyable trip.

Mt Somers in mid-Canterbury features rugged bush, open sub-alpine tussock lands, historic coalmines, impressive volcanic formations and deep canyons. Mt Somers Conservation Area is in the foothill ranges of the

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

Southern Alps, inland mid-Canterbury. The closest towns are Staveley village, and Mt Somers Township. The bulk of the mid Canterbury area is composed of greywacke but Mount Somers is composed of extensive volcanic formations of andersite. Common exotic and native birds are found throughout the area. Of particular interest is the New Zealand falcon/kārearea which nests on Mount Somers.

There are two huts on the Mount Somers Walkway. The Woolshed Creek Hut sleeps 26 (built in 2006) and the Pinnacles Hut sleeps 19. Both have mattresses and running water, trampers need to carry their own cookers. Backcountry hut tickets should be bought in advance from Department of Conservation. Map reference: Methven K36

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 April Bulletin, deadline is 16/03/07, publication 29/03/07. 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

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

Classic Silverpeaks Circuit (F)

11 March

This trip is a longer one, so expect to walk most of the day, out by maybe 6pm (but bring a headlamp). It is a wonderful circuit of the Silverpeaks, from Hightop to the top of Silverpeaks, down to Jubilee Hut (is it still there?), up to the Gap via ABC Cave, back along Rocky Ridge to the top of the Silverpeaks again, and back to Hightop. Traditionally it is done clockwise, but if a southerly is blowing, anti-clockwise is much better. Let me know if you are interested.

Leader: Ross Davies 472 7704 or 027 611 4977.

Mystery Bike Ride (All)

18 March

We will be leaving from the clubs rooms at 9am. I will decide the route depending on the biking ability of the people who turn up on the day.

Leader: Matt Corbett, 487 6595

Last Chance to visit Yellow Hut? (M)

March 25

Yellow Hut is on DoC's schedule for removal, in a move somewhat inexplicably, in my opinion, linked to the replacement of Jubilee Hut. So this may be one of your last chances to see it standing. (Roy's trip the following weekend will proba-

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

bly mean my trip title is not strictly accurate, unless the DoC boys whip the hut out during that week). We'll do one of the best M grade trips in the Peaks, starting at Hightop and travelling along Green, Rocky and Yellow Ridges to the hut, then dropping down to the Waikouaiti River and up the short sharp grunt that is the Tunnels Track. It's a dry trip, so pack a big water bottle.

Leader: David Barnes 454 4492

**Central Otago Wine Trail (Mk 02)
Saturday 31 March**

Bus leaves at 8.00am. Back at 8.00pm approx

Visit some of the beautiful vineyards in our scenic Central Otago. From Bannockburn to Alexandra will be the areas covered. Bring own lunch and nibbles and tea will be in Alexandra. A 12 seater will be booked and it's "first in first served". The trip list will close on 22 March or when the van is full, so get in early for this one.

Trip cost will be \$30 approx but will be finalised closer to the time. Any questions see me at club night or phone me 453 1155 (h), 477 7443 (w).

Wolfgang

P.S. Congratulations to Robyn and Andrew MacKay on the safe arrival of Tara.

**Three Ridges (Yellow / Rocky / Rosella) (F)
1 April**

This trip goes through some of the best parts of the Silverpeaks, starting with Yellow Ridge, along Rocky Ridge, down Rosella Ridge (which has some really great views), then back up the firebreak to the cars.

It's a long day, and daylight saving will have finished by then, so be sure to bring a torch. Also the last part, Rosella Ridge, is not very well tracked, so there is a small amount of bush bashing. Most of the walk is along very exposed tops, so it may be shortened if the weather is inclement.

Leader: Roy Ward 473 9518