

# OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 673, May 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.**

### **3 May**

Bob Cunningham talks about Rogaining - a sport similar to orienteering that is rapidly gaining in popularity

### **10 May**

Heather Dunkley will talk about the Friendship Force - a travel group with a difference

### **17 May**

Marc Schallenberg will talk on Didymo - what it is and what we as trampers can do to avoid spreading it.

### **24 May**

B.Y.O. - bring your recent slides, photos, videos and tales to share

### **31 May**

Queens Birthday - no club night

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](http://www.otmc.co.nz)**

# PRESIDENT'S PRECE

As I write this the colder weather has arrived, with temperatures plummeting over the past couple of days. With the change in the weather comes a distinct change in the clubs weekend trips, and many trips become hut based. This is a reasonable course of action and can include planning some longer days utilising hut accommodation. The winter trip programme reflects this with the majority of the trips from May until September being to destinations with huts. Come October we are back to camping again with trips planned for Mistake Creek and Mt. Titoroa. The trip programme is compiled based on experience gained over recent years with the intention being to run a programme that is both enjoyed and supported by members (and others). Some may question the need to run two weekend trips to the Routeburn, but hopefully they will be quite different. The cross-over certainly looks as if it's addressing a need, with over 30 people signed up three weeks out from the trip. The winter Routeburn often provides an opportunity to appreciate the Routeburn in its true winter splendour, which can be vastly different from early May. I'm sure that both these trips will be successful. It has been a couple of years since the club has ventured to the Waitutu area, which had been a traditional Queens Birthday trip. The last trip here suffered from a keen southerly blowing atop the Hump Range, this year we are hoping for those clear sunny winter days we sometimes get.

I have continued to try out locations that are rarely or never visited by the club, this year's Labour Weekend trip is to Mt. Titoroa via the Borland Burn. With three days there is plenty of opportunity to explore further in this area. In compiling the programme the aim is to come up with a list of trips that appeal to most people and satisfy demand. I'm always open to suggestions for future trips.

Finally, I thank those that have volunteered to lead a weekend trip on the enclosed trip card. The committee have discussed the issue of leadership and have agreed to provide information and support for existing and upcoming trip leaders, although the format has yet to be decided. In the meantime there is plenty of information for day, party and weekend trip leadership available in the download section of the OTMC website.

Antony Pettinger

# Membership

New members we welcome this month, the last two from Bushcraft, are:

Michael Firmin, 19 Tower Ave, 454 4168;

Jasmin Taylor, 5/354 Stuart St, fax 474 0412;

Kirsty Ryder, 18 Sandringham St, 455 8395.

And members who have shifted house:

Sandra de Vries to 78 Spencer St, 454 4516;

Michael Foley & Andrea Todd to 154 Somerville St, 454 4105

Ian Sime, Membership Secretary

## BANFF FILM FESTIVAL ON AGAIN

This year's Banff Mountain Film Festival looks like being the best yet for those interested in high places, according to Dunedin's local Alpine Club organisers.

While there will be the usual high action mountain bike shorts, insane kayaking and heart stopping base jumping, this year there will be lots of climbing at the Festival which will be in Dunedin at the St David St Theatre (Otago University) for one night only, 7.30 pm on Wednesday 16 May.

Each year approximately 30 short films from the Banff Film Festival go on world tour and local clubs select an evening's programme from the films available. While Otago has always been able to put together a great show, there's not always been a wide selection of climbing films to pick from.

This year however organisers says that they've probably left out more than they've put in. This year's climbing pick included excellent first ascents of rock, ice and snow – even icebergs. There were two films of attempts on the same crack, as well as two versions of stunning red rock crack climbing in Utah. Add to that top quality bouldering and a new take on cutting the rope – the final programme selected isn't going to be short on climbing.

Tickets are on sale now for \$15 at Bivouac or at the door on the night if there are any left. The Alpine Club does suggest you buy early – last year was a genuine sellout and it would be a shame if you missed this year's Banff Film Festival.

For further information contact Lindsay Smith, 476 1933 (h) or email Plumtree@ihug.co.nz

# TRAMPING IN NEW ZEALAND

## 40 GREAT NEW ZEALAND TRAMPING TRIPS

**by Shaun Barnett**

*"... to write a guidebook is to poke out a neck as scapegoat".* The opening line from a quote from John Pascoe starts the introduction to this book, but I think the author has little to fear from his audience. It seems a while since the last guidebook that covered the whole country. This new book by well-known author/photographer Shaun Barnett covers the country from the Bay of Islands to Stewart Island. What sets it apart from the many others on the shelves are the 'bird's eye' computer-generated maps. These give a real feel for the lie of the land, something that many people struggle with on a topo map. The maps are complemented by well-chosen photos, mostly by the author, one of New Zealand's top outdoor photographers.

The trips canvas a veritable smorgasbord of fairly well-known routes, and generally feature well-marked tracks and huts. Apart from the Great Walks, trips at this end of the country include the Rees-Dart, Greenstone-Caples and Gillespie Pass. The descriptions are succinct, but detailed enough to get you through if you've got a bit of experience, or to whet your appetite if you don't. I find with guidebooks that a good test is to see how it stacks up on a trip that you've only done once. Two trips I've recently done in the North island get a mention, and I felt that the book and a topo map would have got me around them quite nicely.

For OTMC members, the book's main use will be as an intro to trips north of our normal range. Looking for a trip in Buller or the Bay of Plenty, Northland or North Canterbury, Westland or Wellington? There will be something in here to tempt you. A very useful addition to your library.

David Barnes

# Trip Reports

## *East Matukituki Bushcraft River Crossing*

*9-11 March*

Tramping in my home country, Czech Republic, is not what you call tramping here. As a Czech trampler you would probably wear some old army clothes, perhaps your father's ones. Also you are likely to play a crappy guitar by the campfire during nights and sleep under the sky or in rock bivvies. And if you get too wet on a rainy day you might sleep in bus stop shelters, railway stations, or simply jump on the next train and go home. I did that as a teenager. Later we were hiking in mountains - Carpathians, Alps, and Pyrenees. Sometimes for a week, sometimes more than a month. But when I came to New Zealand my friends warned me - tramping here has specific risks. So I found OTMC, unfortunately a few



weeks too late for last year's bushcraft course. And I was waiting patiently for the next one, occasionally going for a day or weekend trip inbetween.

Finally it was here including the most exciting part – river safety weekend. We started straight on Saturday morning.

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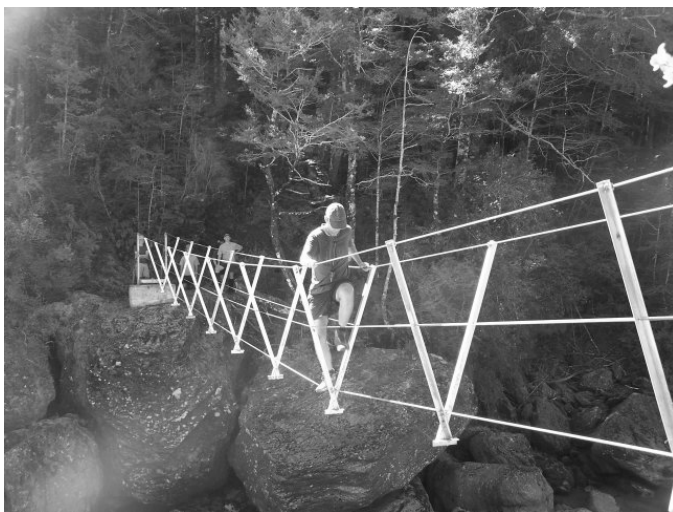
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By the time we crossed Matukituki River our feet were properly wet and they stayed that way until the end of the trip. The track up the valley and further to Kitchener Flats is interesting, none of those highways. At some point even a bit of bush-bashing. But it wasn't that much fun and we replaced the bush-bashing with more river crossing. Isn't it what you call freedom? The day was sunny and warm, so why not. And as the vast majority of the group was moving slowly, some of us enjoyed a few extras including the Rainbow Valley.

We also learned an obvious piece of wisdom: make sure everybody understands what to do if the group splits. It turned out that a small side trip while waiting for the rest of the group can be more exciting then planned. It was a course anyway, right?

The trip finished with some more river crossing in deeper and faster water as well as a backpack floatation exercise. Everybody was tired but you could see many grins, especially in this last part. And Anthony? As far as I know this was his last bushcraft course. And can you imagine that he fell in the river, walking through water just above his knees? A few of us know the details but we will keep it secret.

Tomas Sobek



# A Southern Trampler Tastes the Tararuas

*If you stand on Lambton Quay  
On a Friday night then you will see  
In rain and snow the trampers go  
To the Tararua Ranges*

It's almost become a tradition that the March FMC meeting will give me an excuse to get out in the hills in the North Island. 2004 saw me on top of Taranaki while in 2006 we went to on Mt Hikurangi and observed the inside of the island's fifth highest cloud. This year's meeting in Palmerston North meant an opportunity to achieve a long held ambition to tramp in the Tararuas, the home of organised tramping in New Zealand. I was, however, mindful of the John Pascoe quote, "For sheer miserable monotony of contour, rigour of weather, and bleakness of outlook, it is difficult to beat the Tararuas. They are to Wellington trampers what oatmeal is to Scottish people; dull solid fare which gives them staple virtues", and the reputation for only being clear on top on less than half the days each year.

The Tararuas are the backyard of the three tramping clubs that are older than ours – Tararua (1919), Victoria University of Wellington (1921) and Hutt Valley (1923) – and the Tararua club was used as a model when OTMC was founded in 1923.

Local Tararua enthusiast Andrew Lynch volunteered to arrange something. What he didn't quite succeed in arranging was the weather, so the initial plan to approach from the west and visit Maungahuka Hut via the Tararua Peaks wasn't viable. Plan B involved heading up the Atiwhakatu River and Raingauge Spur to Jumbo Hut, then doing a big side trip out to Broken Axe Pinnacles before heading south to Powell Hut.

A really early start from Palmerston North meant we were underway from Holdsworth Lodge by 7.30. The Holdsworth area is popular with picnickers and day-trippers, so the tracks near the road end are big wide gravel ones. There's a junction not far from the road where a kid on a Duke of Edinburgh Award trip that Andrew had led had gone astray. We couldn't see how she'd headed off on an obviously minor track.

Travel up the Atiwhakatu Valley was pleasant and passed quickly. We were soon filling water bottles at Atiwhakatu Hut in preparation for the ascent of Raingauge Spur. The spur is fairly unrelenting, but we tackled it at a conversational pace, hoping to save our energy for the detour to Broken Axe Pinnacles. Finally the bush was replaced with tussock, and two more minutes saw us at Jumbo Hut. It was very windy, and a peek around the corner revealed that not only were we sheltered from the worst

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of the wind but the tops around Mt McGregor and the Pinnacles were completely clagged in. Time for Plan C. This involved an early lunch at the hut, and then a short walk across the tops to Mt Holdsworth and Powell Hut – essentially one of the standard introductory Tararua trips. We headed up onto Jumbo and into the teeth of the gale. I have never encountered wind like it. Every step was a battle to stay upright. Despite that, I was very impressed with what I could see. Tussock ridges have always been special places to me, and this place has lots of them.

Our route to Mt Holdsworth was mercifully clear of the cloud that was obscuring most points to the north and west. It stayed on the ridge crest, generally losing a bit of height before the last push up onto Mt Holdsworth itself. A couple of times we found spots that were largely out of the wind, so rested there a bit longer than was strictly necessary, just enjoying the respite. Andrew pointed out various landmarks that to me had previously just been iconic names – Angle, Hector, Cone, the Waiohine and more.

As we headed down the last hill of the day towards Powell Hut, my smug satisfaction at managing to stay on my feet in the gale was shown to be premature, as I was airborne twice in quick succession.

It was early enough to be finishing the day – the early start and cutting out the side trip had seen to that – and we could easily have finished the circuit that afternoon. But a night in the hills is not something to be passed up, so we had a siesta before Andrew conjured up a good feed. My hutbook entry said “John Pascoe can eat his oatmeal – this is a great place”.

Tuesday dawned very wet, and I resisted suggestions that I shoot up to Mt Holdsworth to experience genuine Tararua bleakness. The track down from the hut is initially steep, but soon becomes a wide track at a comfortable angle, earning its name, Gentle Annie. I’m sure people coming up this way for the first time must curse the steep sting in the tail at the end of the day.

At the Mountain House shelter there were stickers marking the passing of participants in the local hut-bagging/rogaine competition. It seemed to me that they either have a very loose definition of a hut or are desperate for points.

As we approached the roadend, the mystery of the Duke of Edinburgh kid’s wrong turn was solved. A solitary orange triangle on the minor track caught our eye, and had obviously caught hers.

This trip really only provided a taste of the Tararuas, but the scope for lots of non-precipitous tops travel means I’m keen to go back.

*Away, away with billy and pack,  
A-rollicking down the mountain track  
We’ll all get lost and never come back  
In the Tararua Ranges*

David Barnes



# TripList

## CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

**May 19 - 20**

**Mavora Lakes (Kiwi Burn) (All)**

**Ray McAliece 455 6740**

The Kiwi Burn flows into the Mararoa River below the smaller South Mavora Lake and provides an easy valley to visit for trampers. If you access the valley from the swingbridge over the Mararoa River you only have about a three km walk to Kiwi Burn Hut. Alternatively you could head north-west from the swingbridge and head to the upper Kiwi Burn and thence downstream to the hut. By using these two routes a very easy two day round trip can be had. A variation can be had by crossing the bridge immediately below South Mavora Lake and following the Mararoa downstream to the confluence with the Kiwi Burn.

Once at Kiwi Burn Hut it is possible to follow the burn to the head and then cross to the Whitestone, a pleasant trip. Another round trip is possible by crossing a very, very low pass just upstream of Kiwi Burn Hut and crossing to the Whitestone, then following the Whitestone up past Limestone Hill to a campsite near the track that leads back to Kiwi Burn, which is then used to complete the trip. This option would require permission from the Whitestone landowner.

An option of crossing the lower section of the Livingstone Mountains via Mt. Cerberus would normally be included here, but conditions in May may well preclude this.

This trip will close May 10.

**June 2 - 4**

**Hump Ridge / Port Craig (M-FE)**

**Matt Corbett 487 6595**

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The Waitutu area has become a sort of traditional trip for the club to do during Queens Birthday. The two main options on this trip are either a circuit of Hump Ridge and down to Port Craig, or an in and out trip to Port Craig itself.

The trip to Hump Ridge is the tougher option but can offer some amazing views out over Te Waewae Bay towards Stewart Island. (On the other hand, the weather can be the pits, so prepare for both!). If you plan to use the Hump Ridge hut (Okaka) officially you are meant to book beforehand, although the hut fee is half price. There is a DoC hut at Port Craig.

A trip to Port Craig offers the opportunity to explore the history of the area. Saw-milling was the reason Port Craig was established and there is still a lot to see, including the highest wooden viaduct at Percyburn.

This trip will close May 24.

### **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 June Bulletin, deadline is 18/05/07, publication 31/05/07. 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

## **Akatore to Taieri Beach (E/M)**

**6 May**

This is a low-tide tramp along the coast south of Taieri Mouth, beginning at Akatore and coming back to Taieri Beach. It's isolation, attractive beaches and rocky sections give it a special charm. If the weather is southerly it is very exposed, so come prepared. Because it involves either a car or bike shuffle (former preferred!) I am keen to hear before the day from those planning to come. Trip cost \$8.

Leader: Bronwen Strang 473 1610

## **Possum Hut / Eucalypt Spur (M)**

**13 May**

In this Silver Peaks trip, we go to Possum Hut, then climb a steep bush-clad ridge that takes us to the Green Hut site. After a side trip to Pulpit Rock, we go down Green Ridge, then descend Eucalypt Spur (also known as Bluegum Ridge) to get back to our starting point.

This trip is mostly in bush, with some very good views at the top. Although it is not very far in terms of distance, there are a few hundred metres of climb/descent. Trip cost \$6.

Leader Roy Ward 473 9518

## **Woodside Glen/Lees Creek (M)**

**20 May**

This is an explore of the north end of the Maungatuas. We start at Woodside Glen and climb up above the bushline into the tussocks of the Maun-

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gatua, complete with it's grand views of the Taieri Plain and beyond. Here we sidle round into the top parts of Lee Creek ( don't confuse this with Lee Stream) and into some bush and lovely rocky pools before climbing up to some rocky outcrops. Be prepared for the weather and off track exploring.

Contact Ran Turner 473 8652

## **Possum Busters (E-M)**

### **27 May**

We meet at the clubrooms at 9 am and proceed to the bullring carpark. From there we follow the firebreak road to Ben Rudd reserve, down Jim Freeman track and then along Possum Busters track. We then climb up to Swampy Summit and return to the bullring via Flagstaff. It should be a good day so come along and enjoy the views. Transport cost \$3.

Leader: Gavin MacArthur 455 0027



# **FOR SALE**

## ***LIGHTWEIGHT***

NIKON F80 Film single lens reflex camera. Excellent condition with Nikon 28-100mm and 70-300mm lenses. This a top of the line lightweight camera ideal for a tramping photography enthusiast. Offers.

## ***FAIRYDOWN 40L BACKPACK(Little Beaut)***

Excellent Condition with small harness. Offers.

Phone Ran Turner 4738652 or 0272482005