

# OTMC Bulletin

Bulletin Number 675, July 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.**

### **5 July**

Phil Ainslie from the university of Otago will talk about the effects of high altitude physiology, fitness and acclimatisation.

### **12 July**

Garth Irwin will talk about kayaking around Canada and Alaska

### **19 July**

Pharmacist Paul Larson will discuss what a pharmacy can offer trampers (and travellers)

### **26 July**

BYO - tell us about the trips you've done lately

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

As winter starts to take it's bite it is timely to think about the safety skills we possess as well as the equipment we take with us on our trips into the hills and mountains. A recent edition of Wilderness magazine covered this matter in some detail – I recommend everyone take time to read the articles and brush up on survival skills for tramping. Now is a good time to assess what clothing and equipment we take. There is a balance to be struck between taking sufficient clothing for the intended trip and overloading your pack with unnecessary weight. With today's light-weight mentality prevailing, it is possible to equip yourself with enough warm clothing without overflowing your pack. Although you should be prepared on all trips for getting totally, in winter it can become a much more serious problem. To be able to get into some dry clothing can be a lifesaver. Most of the safety skills mentioned are basic bushcraft skills, like using a packliner and drybags, not wearing cotton or jeans, and ensuring you have a good quality raincoat and wind-proof layer.

There are other skills required that may depend on where you are going. If you are tramping anywhere in winter (or even at other times of the year) you will come across snow sooner or later. Having the knowledge to be able to look after yourself in this environment is something everyone should have. The most basic skills include how to assess and travel across snowslopes, using an iceaxe to self-arrest yourself in case of a fall, and how to use the snow to provide shelter if you are trapped for some reason. While most people who travel in the mountains in winter attend a basic snowcraft course, it is also important to refresh these skills regularly. Another skill that should be practiced regularly is river safety. Recommendations on crossing methods change, with some of the older methods being replaced with new ideas. At the end of the day though, any form of mutual river crossing will invariably be safer than crossing solo. With the ongoing river fatalities in the hills it is important that every trumper is aware of the dangers in crossing New Zealand rivers. The Wilderness magazine article was in the May edition, which is available at club (unless someone else is reading it). As part of the survival issue, there is also an article with OTMC links regarding an accident on the Olivine ice plateau where a member of a tramping group was badly burnt and their tent and sleeping bags destroyed. It in itself is well worth the read. Thankfully the OTMC maintain an exceptional safety record in the hills – please let it continue to be that way.

It's not too long now until the annual meeting of the club, to be held in

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late August. This is when we re-elect the committee, amongst other required matters. The committee over the past few years has been really stable, making the job of running the club a lot easier. However, it seems likely that there will be some current members standing down, creating opportunities for others. The entire management of the club is controlled by a committee comprising President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chief Guide and up to seven committee members. Other roles such as Bulletin Editor, Membership, Day Trips and Gear Hire are allocated to either committee members or to members outside of the committee if necessary. If you are interested in standing for the committee or want to know more about what we do please talk to a current member, or alternatively you are welcome to attend one of our monthly meetings to see what goes on. The next meeting is Monday, July 9, 7.30pm in the clubrooms. Nomination forms will be available both at club and on the website nearer the time.

Antony Pettinger,  
President

## *Membership*

A busy month with 6 people joining, 3 leaving Dunedin and resigning, and 3 shifting house.

The new members we welcome are:

Ann Hicks, 41 Grandview Cres, 473 7910;

Andrew Jarvis, 18 Marshall St, 453 4158;

Lucy Jones, 80J London St, 471 9228;

Wendy-Anne Miller, 23 Silverton St, 454 5999;

Derek Mycock, 26 Mannering St, 454 4700;

Russell Walker, 207 Signal Hill Rd, 473 0257

Those we farewell are:

Faye Brock (to Invercargill);

Hans van Ditmarsch (leaving NZ);

Owen Claridge (to Melbourne)

And the movers are:

Emily Logan to 13 Briar Bank Drive, Wanaka, 443 6896;

Christine Rells to 17 Boundary Rd, Alexandra, 448 9077;

Philip van Zijl to 2/27 Arthur Cres, Taupo, 07 378 8656

# Trip Reports

## Mt. Domet Triple Header

21-22 Jan, 2006

The idea for this trip actually occurred in November 2001 during a successful summit of Mt. Domet. As we had earlier stood on the flanks of Cone and looked across to Mt. Domet we wondered what a traverse of the opposite skyline ridge would be like. Like many trips, it was added to the list of 'one day we'll get there' trips. Fast-forward to summer 2006 and we were on our way. Even though Danseys Pass is only a couple of hours from town, it is still worthwhile getting away on Friday night to make the most of the weekend. 7pm saw us at the road-end, preparing to walk up Otekeieke River to our planned campsite at the prominent junction above Chinamans Hut. This is definately my type of tramping - straight up the river, wet feet assured. We arrived at the campsite without any drama and awaited the other teams. Their arrival was not to be, so we enjoyed a peaceful night under the trusty fly.

The plan for Saturday was to make a grand traverse of Little Domet (1860m), Domet (1942m), Grayson (1660m) and finally Cone (1583m) before returning to our camp. The day was a perfect North Otago day, promising good views from the tops. As we set out from our camp the other teams arrived. They had missed the large cairn at the otherwise inconspicuous turnoff below the hut and camped in an adjacent tributary. Our first target was Little Mt. Domet and the three parties headed off in varying directions. Most followed the standard route up from the forks, utilising the short length of rope over the one difficult section. The turn-off point from the creek bed is marked by a cairn on the true left, from where you head through scrub to reach the tussock. Upon reaching the rough 4WD track my party followed this to the base of Mt. Domet proper

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and then veered off, more or less heading straight for the saddle between big and little Domet. Climbing Domet and the surrounding hills in summer is fairly straight-forward, it is really just a rock scramble.

With the saddle reached it was time for a breather before the last 200m or so to the top of Little Mt. Domet. The weather was perfect and good views were had of North Otago, most of the Waitaki Valley and right through to Mt. Cook. Domet itself didn't look too far way from here so we decided to lunch at our highest point of the trip. A quick run down some average scree saw us back at the saddle and our packs. Now that we had climbed the 1000m or so from camp it was now just a matter of following the ridge, which proved to be quite simple. The only complaint heard was the intensity of the sun and the complete lack of water on the tops. Hard to please some people!. Before too long we were standing on Mt. Domet, certainly a lot nicer here today than the previous visit. What a great spot for lunch, with panoramic views all around.

We found that the best way to drop off Domet was to descend from the northern side and head westwards to get back on the ridge. This saw us back on easy country, but the sun and water restrictions were starting to kick in. As we passed points 1470 and 1570 cloud started building up to the south. Time was getting on by the time we reached Grayson, and coupled with the lack of water and the build up of cloud we decided to give Cone a miss and head back to our campsite. We descended to the saddle between Grayson and Cone and followed the creek to the junction. In hindsight we were glad we made the decision to abandon Cone as the cloud lowered, particularly over Cone itself. We estimated it would have taken another 2-3 hours to reach Cone from Grayson, given the condition of the party. The view would have been terrible anyway. All in all it had been a great day out.

The rest of the trip was rather uneventful - a nice meander back to the road (a chance to get those feet wet again) and out by lunchtime. A very pleasant couple of hours spent under the trees at the Danseys Pass Hotel completed a very successful first outing for the OTMC in 2006.

Antony P for Ann Burton, Barry Atkinson and Ralph Harvey.

# ABC Cave

I spent a fair amount of my tramping youth in the Silver Peaks. I still do frequent day trips there, and there are few corners that I haven't visited. One thing I hadn't done until recently was spent a night at the rock bivvy called ABC Cave.

An afternoon start at Queen's Birthday Weekend 2007 sees me heading down the Tunnels Track, past the Depression-era mining shafts, before crossing the Waikouaiti River and beginning the steep climb to Yellow Hut. The hut was built in the sixties, and after being blown off the ridge was rescued by the club. Nowadays, the encroachment of forestry has meant it's only an hour from a road and it's seldom used as more than a desperate lunch shelter. By the time this is printed, DoC will have removed it.

Beyond the hut, the track climbs through regenerating manuka. Reserve status, conferred in the eighties, has done much for the ecology of the area, but the *quid pro quo* is the loss of some great views. But quarter of an hour sees me beyond the bush and revelling in the tussock tops on cool, clear day. Another 45 minutes and I'm at the top of Yellow Ridge, with most of today's hard work done. Soon, I'm at the saddle near the Gap, once the best viewpoint in the range, but now desecrated by a bulldozer. Dropping into the catchment that leads to ABC, there's initially no track, but I've been this way many times and I soon pick up the old farm track which I know means that the gathering dusk won't defeat me.

On my first trip here, we investigated various rock overhangs before finding the "right" cave. The sloping floor and the great beech forest campsites nearby meant we weren't tempted to stay there. Now there's a wooden sleeping platform, making the place far more habitable. The cave was named in the sixties by three young rock climbers associated with the club, Alan Smith, Bruce Clark and Colin McKenzie. Tragically, the first two died in separate climbing accidents in the eighties.

I rustle up a feed, then clamber up the hill to watch the stars until dropping

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temperatures force me back to my sleeping bag.

The next day, I'm away not long after the sun is up, as I'm walking all the way to Dunedin. I have to return to the Gap, but opt to wade through long tussocks on the ridge above the cave rather than retrace my steps up the gully. From the Gap, I'm on the central spine of the Silver Peaks, Rocky Ridge, for a couple of hours. The views are extensive, with a long section of coast visible to my left, and the hinterland ranges on the edge of Central Otago away out to my right. A couple of falcons keep an eye on my progress. Halfway along the ridge I encounter the first of the eponymous rock formations. I recognise one as the turnoff to a cave once inhabited by possibly the region's only semi-permanent inhabitant – the 'Hermit' who sort solitude here fifty years ago. I also glimpse the new Jubilee Hut in the valley far below. I have plans to spend a night there later in the month.

At the southern end of Rocky Ridge, I contemplate a ten minute detour to Silver Peak, at 777m the highest point in the range, but the chilly conditions don't fill me with enthusiasm. Instead, I plod past Painted Forest and on towards Pulpit Rock. From there, it's a sharp descent towards the site of Green Hut.

After an early lunch, I push on to Hightop, and leave the main Silver Peaks area. Here, the landforms change from sharp ridges and peaks to broader ridges and rounded flat-top hills. I start the slog up the ridge towards Swampy Summit, a track that's equally popular with mountainbikers as trampers. A biker here is the first person to breach the cocoon of solitude that I've had for the whole trip so far. This is the hill that breaks the spirit of participants approaching the end of the Silver Peaks marathon. The hard surface of the access road across the summit reminds me that I've been on my feet for six hours.

Another forty five minutes of ridge travel and I'm on the Pineapple Track. A knee-jarring drop of 260m to brings me to suburbia but by taking tracks through a bush reserve and along the banks of the Water of Leith I manage to kid myself that I'm still out in the hills. I end my trip at George Street, after some of my best days ever in the Silver Peaks.

David Barnes

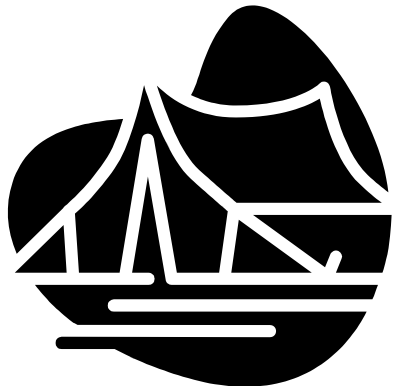
# TripList

## CHIEF GUIDE COMMENT

Trip numbers have fluctuated quite a bit recently. After 37 people went on the Routeburn crossover, the following trip to the Mavora Lakes / Kiwiburn had to be cancelled due to insufficient interest. As I write these notes the Luxmore trip has 14 people ready to go. From a Chief Guide point of view the winter trip programme is much harder to compile than the summer one. I have a reluctance to revisit areas year after year, but it appears that options are limited due to what I perceive to be change in the club over the years. It is now normal to try and plan the winter trips to destinations which have huts available - there are not many trips now that include camping out over these long winter nights. I think it is important to continue to match the trips with the current membership but I will still continue to push for the 'no tracks, no huts' concept in the summer months. I still believe that these sorts of trips should be the underlying principal of tramping clubs. The degree of satisfaction derived from stepping outside one's comfort zone is immense, and it opens up endless opportunities in the hills.

Although it is early days now is a good time to think about where YOU want to tramp over the summer months. I have several ideas I'm keen to see happen, but like I have said before – we are always open to suggestions. In fact, we can even help you lead them! Contact me if you have any ideas or suggestions for possible trips.

Antony Pettinger  
Chief Guide





**28-29 July**  
**Falls Hut (Routeburn Track) (All)**  
**Wolfgang Gerber 453 1155**

On Friday night, some people might want to walk to Flats Hut or some will want to stay at the shelter, the call is yours. The Routeburn is one of the nicest places I have had the pleasure to visit in wintertime. The options available are endless, from Xenicus / Erebus for the climbers, to bushwalks and lots in-between. A popular destination is Harris Saddle, or even up to Conical Hill for wonderful views of the Darren Mountains, Lake McKerrow, Martins Bay and the Tasman sea. The north branch is an option to explore and Emily Pass is also a possibility. If the conditions are right, a wander?! over a frozen Lake Harris will get the adrenaline flowing. So there is plenty to do for everyone.

The theme for Saturday night is “Fancy Dress”, and of course I’ll be having my infamous Annual Quiz, with maybe some easier questions than in the past, and as always there will be prizes for the quiz teams and best dressed. I will be looking for an assistant for the quiz and it’ll be a hard act to follow last year’s Lovely Assistant at Arthurs Pass, eh Barry!!!

On Sunday, Lake Sylvan track is a pleasant walk, as is the Double Barrel track, or even up to Sugarloaf Pass for the fitter ones.

As always, transport leaves the clubrooms at 6 pm on Friday night and on Sunday at 4 pm from the shelter. Hut passes are required or a \$10 cost per night for the huts to be paid to DoC, at any branch. As the fuel (coal) in the hut is very low please bring a small bag (a big handful) of coal. To make Ann the treasurer’s job easier, please pay your trip fee to her by the 26<sup>th</sup> July. Check out the display at the club or just give me a ring.

The trip list closes on 19<sup>th</sup> July.

**4 – 5 August (I) \*\*\***  
**Basic Snowcraft Course**  
**Matt Corbett 487 6595**

**\*\*\* NOTE: This weekend is weather and snow dependant so the date listed may change to suit conditions.**

This weekend is designed for people who are interested in getting above the

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bushline in winter. The main skills to be covered are walking on snow (especially slopes) and the use of an iceaxe and crampons. Although the need to use crampons on most 'tramping' trips is minimal, the ability to be able to use an iceaxe proficiently is vital. In the event of an unplanned slide the iceaxe will most likely be the only thing that can stop you. This weekend will teach the correct use of an iceaxe, and will include many slides down a safe snow slope, allowing you to practice stopping yourself before you slide over the pseudo bluff at the bottom of the hill. Whilst some important skills are covered during the weekend it is also great fun. An older set of parka and overtrou are recommended if possible, invariably there is always someone who comes home with some nice rips to display.

If there are more participants interested than we can handle safely, priority will be given to OTMC members. Come along to club or contact Matt for more information.

### 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 August Bulletin, deadline is 13/07/07, publication 26/07/07. 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

## **Yellow and Hermites Ridges (M)**

**1 July**

Drive via Double Hill to the gate on Mountain Road and walk a short distance to the Tunnels Track. Down this, then up Yellow Ridge, turning South to go up Rocky Ridge. From this drop down an old track to Hermitage Ridge and sidle down the north face. Join another old track through very pretty beech forest down to the Waikouaiti South Branch River, then straight up a very steep 4WD track to rejoin the Mountain Road and cars. We should finish 3.30 -4.00 pm. The walk is a very pretty one through bush and with great views from the upper ridges. There are a couple of steep climbs, but these are fairly short. Trip cost \$6

Leader: Bill Wilson 477 2282

## **Stone Hill and Purehurehu Point (M)**

**8 July**

Here is a chance to blow off the mid winter cobwebs, with a walk up a nice steep hill, rewarded by magnificent views at the top. We will ascend from the harbourside at Waipuna Bay through farmland to Stone Hill. On a clear day there are magical views up the harbour, so bring your camera.. Then a comfortable amble down to Purehurehu Point for lunch and a walk along one of the beaches if desired. The return journey will be over a similar route. Contact me prior if you want to take the option of driving to Stone Hill and avoiding the climb.

Leader: Gordon Tocher 472 7440

## **Skyline Track (Mt. Cargill Section) (M)**

**15 July**

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We will be walking the Mount Cargill ("Cloud Forests of Leith" and "Escarpment") section of the Skyline track. This runs between Leith Saddle and the top of Mount Cargill, and is unique for something so close to Dunedin in that it is designed to take the most interesting route, giving a similar back country or 'tactile' experience to what you might get on a more isolated track. Some sections have been boardwalked, but adequate footwear is essential, gaiters a good idea. Trip cost \$3, contact Roy Ward (473 9518) for more details.

Leader: Kathryn Jeyes 455 2473

**Navigation / GPS (combined)**  
**22 July**

This day trip is intended as an introduction to the benefits (and limitations!) of GPS systems. We will have a brief theoretical session in the Clubrooms, and then go out into the field for an exercise with the Garmin sets used locally. Bring a Dunedin map, compass if you have one, lunch and enthusiasm! It would be useful to have some idea of numbers (so we can get enough sets to use).

Contact: Teresa Wasilewska 477 4987

**Catlins Waterfalls (Very Easy!)**  
**29 July (Wet or fine!)**

We drive to Balclutha, then follow the old main road to Romahapa, where we join the Southern Scenic Route to Owaka. Barr's Falls, very close to Owaka, are only a few minutes from the road. To get to the Purakaunui Falls, the most photographed ones, we go down a side road. Then a longish drive to Maclean Falls, the most spectacular, with the whole Tautuku River crashing into a pool. On the way back to Owaka are the Matai Falls. If there is time and inclination, we can return via Kaka Point for an ice cream, with the breakers at our feet.

Leader: Ian Sime 453 6185