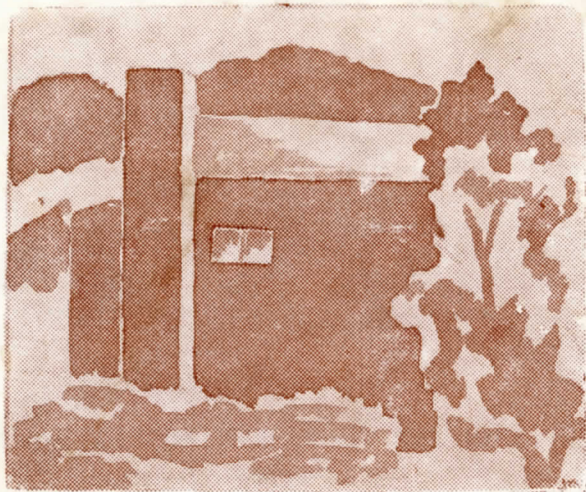


OUTDOORS



BEN RUDD'S

The Official Journal of the
Otago Tramping Club (Inc.)
Dunedin, N.Z.

November, 1958
Volume 8, No. 2

Otago Tramping Club

(Incorporated)



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M. WILSON

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The past year has seen a steady increase in Club activity. Trips are now being reasonably supported, although this was not the case last Queens Birthday and Labour weekend. There may be room for improvement in the locations of these trips. Suggestions are invited.

The current trend of small compact tramping parties is again evident this Christmas as it was last year. The official Club trip holds the record with eight on the trip.

Weather plays a major part in our sport and unfortunately we have had some very poor weather which must in turn reduce our achievements, although it does help in character building. There is nothing better than sitting out a storm for three or four days in a tent for learning to live with others under some hardship. We all look forward to a very 'dry' Christmas and New Year.

The coming year looks very promising and I hope that by the middle of next year our Annual Report will record a very active season's tramping.

With this late issue of 'Outdoors', which can only be blamed on the lack of material from members, I take this opportunity of wishing you a Merry Christmas, a Prosperous New Year, and a very happy tramping holiday.

F.B.M.

2. Letter To The Editor

WITH THE AIM OF IMPROVING OUR SPORT AS SUCH

Dear Sir,

Tramping in Dunedin is a mere vestige of the active sport it is in Wellington. Allowing for differences in population, trampers are more active, and there are more of them in Nelson and Christchurch than in Dunedin. Remembering that we are one of the best placed tramping centres in New Zealand in regard to facilities for our sport, this is all the more surprising.

What then are the people in Dunedin who should be tramping actually doing, why are they doing it, and how can the matter be rectified ?

Different sports satisfy different requirements among people. In general, rowing, athletics, rugby and tramping satisfy the need for physical exercise. Mountaineering, hunting when taken seriously, and yachting are activities of the nerves and mind particularly. Being non-competitive, the need of people who want a social activity, not too strenuous, in some cases not connected with too much responsibility, is met in tramping.

But the largest body of keen sportsmen are people not always young, who feel the need of a physical sport that has to be trained for consistently; one they can work themselves to exhaustion point at regularly.

Wellington tramping clubs, the ones that set the standard for New Zealand, cater for all kinds of people. Mountaineers, and hunters who like to tramp for tramping's sake as well, have similar needs to people of all ages who want a really active physical sport. The people who tramp only for relaxation and social reasons are a separate, equally important, club group. In the Otago Tramp-Club at present only tramping for relaxation is offered to the general public. This means that active membership of the club is halved for a start.

Another fact that I wish to mention is that a stranger to the club rooms on a Friday night is

inclined to spend the evening watching other people talk. This merits the strongest possible criticism. Beginners, whether interested in social tramping, active tramping, or both, should get a proper introduction into the Club. Bushcraft, cooking and the use of map and compass are only three things that should be included in the learners' course.

I am, etc.

P.N.D.

Should members wish to contribute to this correspondence please address letters to The Editor of the Club Monthly Bulletin - keep them brief.
(Ed.)

A TRAMPER'S BALLAD.

They crossed the river at break of day,
Sunburnt and sore were they.
In half an hour they crossed it again;
The air rang loud with cried of pain.

They crossed the river three times three,
Blood flowed free on the matagowrie.
They crossed the river at end of day
And found a Spaniard in their way.

J.M.A.

ALPINE SOLITUDE

Let us climb then, to the heights
Where storm-carved crag and snow summit
kiss the sky
And rock tumbled ridges thrust upwards
from deep places.

Clear crystal melts the snow stream,
The air is pure and calm,
And the eye of heaven watches, silent,
far from the world of man.

J.M.A.

FIRE-FIGHTING AT BEN RUDDS

Sunday, September 21; 2.30 p.m. Enjoying warmth and sunshine at Whare Flat. Afternoon tea coming up and everything fine.

3 p.m. What is that smoke over Flagstaff? Looks like a fire in the snowgrass. Not far from the Club property, but the wind is blowing from the north, so should be no trouble at Ben Rudd's. Surely it won't get as far as the plantations.

3.15. Don't like the look of it. Wind still from the north but fire working back into it and getting closer to the Club area. I can see flames, and it's still working into the longer grass. I'd better go up and see who is there, and if they need a hand.

3.30. At Ben Rudd Hut. No one in sight, but someone has been here today and made a terrible mess. Egg-shells on the floor and every window broken - every bit of glass out, and broken glass on the floor and the ground outside. I can hear flames crackling but nothing to see. I'd brought a large sack with me so hop across and soak it at the waterhole.

3.45. The fire advancing into the wind on a wide front. I tried beating it with the sack, with temporary success only - as soon as I turn to another patch it starts again where I've just been. Would be alright with a team, but can't do much on my own. I tried lighting small fires in the path of the flames so as to stop the progress of the fire, but by the time I've contained it in one sector it's gone past next door and then works back. Two helpers arrive and we try working together - but the blaze is now getting past the rocky patches and into the longer grass. One or two trees burning like torches. Nothing I can suggest to save the hut. Two more helpers arrive and we try again to beat the flames over an area but everything is too dry and no chance of stopping the fire. It's now well in among the pine trees - what a pity to see years of growth going up like this. Down to the hut to have a last

look at it before it goes up in smoke. We take out appliers and the small fittings, and get buckets of water over from the spring. If we had an axe we could cut back the trees nearest the hut and give it a chance. One more chance to stop the blaze before it gets to the hut - we almost got it out before it reached the main manuka stand but it got into a patch of flax and couldn't be dislodged. And then, whoosh! a blaze 40 feet high as the main manuka stand went up. But it is so dry, it goes straight up and the flames die off at once - perhaps we can save the hut yet! We swish water over the walls, inside and out, then stand back to await developments. Within minutes the real danger has passed - the main flame has come and finished, leaving the hut intact, and only small mopping-up operations to do. We put out the minor tongues of fire round about, cut back a few remaining live branches which could cause damage, then stand back. For the moment the danger is over - it could strike back from one or two different directions later, but that's all we can do for just now. So back off down towards the road - and in the meantime half the face of Flagstaff, green and luxuriant two hours ago, is a blackened mass, the sky is choked with smoke and the evening sky is lit a delicate pink. Well, at least our hut is still there, even if we have lost a lot. There's room now for lots of work parties - and for more tree planting.

W.S.G.

ODE TO HERCULEAN EFFORTS

The scene is Green
 The Spring is sprung
 The grass is riz.
 I wonder where the water is ?
 The water's in the Spring,
 And not in the tank ?
 The Tank is sprung a leak -
 The Tank is Shot !
 What rot.....
 Its age is only twenty-five
 Saints alive !

We need a new drum,
 Come, come
 Who's the mug
 Who'll lug
 A tank up to Green.

There were five -
 Each one a mug,
 Who said, "I'll lug
 A tank up to Green."

And what a tank !
 A zinc-plated
 Corrugated

Profanated brute.
 Heavy enough to break a person's back
 Too wide to pass with ease along the track -
 So a new track must be made
 With slasher and machete blade
 By this intrepid five
 Who sweated and swore
 And few clothes wore.

The mugs
 Who lugged
 The tank
 O'er hill and bank
 Through tussock and brush
 And bracken and bush
 And of course -
 Gorse.

The way was long and rough
 The mugs were strong and tough (?)
 And soon Hightop was at the rear.
 The bush at Green
 With its larger trees
 Did nought to ease
 The burden they bore
 As they sweated and swore -
 Those silly mugs
 Who lugged
 That thrice accursed tank to Green.

At last a welcome sight was seen
 For they approached the door of Green.
 We're here !
 Let's raise a cheer.
 But that's no good -
 It's time for food.

The tank is there
 The job is done
 Did they have fun ?
 The mugs who lugged
 The Tank to Green.

You don't have to ask it
 I'll tell you -

'Twas a basket !

"CHARLES"

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STALKING A SUNDAY TRIP

"Laing's-McIntyre's -Craiglowan Falls.Kaikorai 9 a.m." was what the programme said, but since I woke up at 9.5 a.m. on the Sunday concerned, I decided on a leisurely breakfast, and then to attempt to overtake the main party by riding and pushing (mostly pushing) my two wheel chariot up to the plantation.

Ready for the fray I left home at ten, arriving at the top of Laing's track about 10.40. Here I was disheartened to find the honourable secretary's four wheel chariot. This meant that the party had driven up in state from Kaikorai instead of sweating up the road; and even allowing for the late arrival of the leader (9.25 I hear it was) I estimated I would be starting at the back of the field, with a handicap of at least an hour.

Nevertheless, I bowled off down the track and in no time reached McIntyre's and thence on round the bull-dozed road. After a quarter hour diversion up the wrong road to give the limit men some sort of a show, I carried on my merry way down the right road and then hopped and slipped up the appropriate creek towards Craiglowan Falls. By now I felt sure I was close on their tails for there were several wet boot prints on the dry rocks and much freshly trampled grass. Knowing that one Jim (a bachelor by trade) was with the party, I was confident they would be spine-bashing or lunching at the Falls. Much was my surprise when on-reaching the said "falls" there was not a sign of anyone.(I heard later that Jim had proposed lunch at McIntyre's but had bowed to majority rule.)

Somewhat non-plussed, I pressed on upwards on what some optimists call a track, with lawyer pulling me down as hard as I pulled up. Hence my eyes and nose told me that the others had gone before me and I didn't feel so bad about the bruises, scratches, torn ears etc. Feeling somewhat less energetic I reached the plantation and easily followed the highway churned up by my predecessors out to the road.

A few yards from the road I heard voices, and thinking they may have stopped at the creek for lunch I scoured the area, but to no avail.

Coming out to the road, who should I see but six bodies and packs plodding their way up the firebreak to Ben Rudds. With my objective well in sight, I was much uplifted and made a healthy pace up behind the "mob" to reach the hut just behind them.

With a considerable amount of restraint I told my sad tale and after a number of sympathetic comments, ("Oh, did you really?") and cynical grins, I sat down and had a quiet lunch. All available tucker consumed, the hon. president then gave a short display of how to cut burnt manuka, and having successfully turned the edge of the axe into a useful saw proceeded to detail others to this dangerous and dirty work, with commands of "Faster ! Faster !"

By the time the workers were covered with black soot from head to foot afternoon tea was called for. After tea, the weary band returned to the road and then home.

In spite of my frustrating chase, the company of the others after travelling solo for so long wasn't so bad and so "Thanks, leader and party for another enjoyable day in the hills."

"Charlie VII"

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GRANDVIEW - 1957

In 1857, J.T. Thomson, the pioneer surveyor, climbed Mt. Grandview near the foot of Lake Hawea, and from the top he saw and named "a glorious shaft of snow and ice - Mt Aspiring." And now 100 years later we were following in his footsteps.

At 6 a.m. we were off - Derek, Dudley and myself. We left the car just off the road and started to climb steeply, but for once quite easily. As we got higher it became obvious that a fair wind was developing, and the sun shone but fitfully through a great bank of cloud. Still, we were able for a while to see Aspiring, also some of the Wilkin Peaks. At 9 o'clock we were on top and were able to enjoy a very extensive panorama.

The plan now was to make a high level crossing from Grandview to the next summit, Breast Peak. This was shown on the map as a long ridge of several miles, swinging east over the Lindis side. As we started the wind began to blow a full gale, and we were glad to get on the lee side of the ridge. But all the way the scenery was very fine - steeply down to Hawea on the left side, and almost as steep were the ridges down to the Lindis on our right. Here and there we could see the Lindis highway, and further across was the Morven Hills homestead. A pull up to the top of Breast Peak, where we did not tarry long - then down to the next saddle. We anticipated quite a scramble down a leading spur, but came unexpectedly on to a well-graded track which led us by easy stages back to Hawea. Here it was blowing a gale and they were surprised that we had been able to get up anything. But it had been a busy, energetic and most interesting scramble all the way. I hope to cover that journey again - on a finer day.

W.S.G.

THE SAD TALE OF JACK AND JILL WHO DIDN'T
OBEY THE RULES AND CAME TO A STICKY END.

Jack and Jill climbed up a hill,
In spite of many pleas.
Why ! They had climbed so many times
When they were overseas !

They filled their packs with stacks and stacks
Of steak and fresh potatie,
Dishes and pans and food in cans
Until their packs grew weighty.

An iron that presses suits and dresses,
Pillows and sheets for bedding;
Films and cameras for panorameras -
Where did they think they were heading ?

Through private land they both had planned
To make their expedition.
They couldn't have knowed the trampers' code -
They hadn't asked permission.

They took no tents - "too much expense !
And why not use a hut ?
There's food when you need an extra feed
And firewood ready cut."

They shifted a flock of feeding stock,
They climbed and bounced the fences,
They lit a fire where the grass was drier,
And frightened sheep out of their senses.

They hadn't a clue on what to do
On other people's premises;
By word or deed they didn't heed
The swift approach of Nemesis.

A mountain stream was a cinch, it would seem -
But we tell it with a shiver -
They hadn't a hope without a rope
And floated down the river.

O, alas and alack for Jill and for Jack !
That couple so knowing and bold.
The moral here lies that they met their demise
BECAUSE THEY WOULDN'T BE TOLD.

"Hilltop."

By catching the bus on Friday night we knew that we would have a good night's sleep at the Shag River. On arrival at the bridge we met Brian Cleugh. After talking for a few minutes we moved off up the valley in the darkness: Liz and Jean, Brian and Chuff and myself. Having moved a fair way up-valley someone asked, "Isn't this as far as we can go?" "No!" came the reply. Soon we stopped at a small flat by the river and so to bed. We were soon sleeping soundly, until a voice boomed "Chivers, is that you, you b.....?" It was Merv bringing up the rest of our party from the truck, also someone was there who had put a carton of honey in her pack and it had spread all through her clothes, so all we got for about an hour was "..... runny honey."

Next morning we were away by 8.30. In our party there were two new boys, Bruce Lum and Lindsay Macdonald. While resting about halfway up the slope we saw Bob's party starting at the bottom. Shortly after we were sitting on the snow on top of the ridge, but a cool wind soon forced us to move on up to the site where the caves were to be dug.

A number of test holes were put down to see if the snow was deep enough, and then the cave was started in earnest. First a shaft is driven into the snow for about six or eight feet. This is just space enough for a body to crawl through. Then one digs out over one's head till it is possible to stand up in it, then digs out sideways making sure that the floor level is above that of the tunnel in order to keep in the heat. A second chap comes in and helps to dig out the other side. Once the cave is well on the way a third person can come in to shovel the snow to someone further out whose job it is to keep the entrance clear. We changed round so that one was not left outside all the time. When the cave was finished most of us went to the top of Mt. Kakanui and took in the marvellous view. About 5.30 in the evening we moved into the cave and started tea. The cave was turned into a Turkish bath for some minutes when the pressure cooker was blown - the air vent couldn't cope with

the steam. After an excellent meal we went to bed for a good night's rest.

Early next morning Chuff was up and looking out to see what the weather was like. It was not very good, so back to bed. Soon visitors from other caves started to arrive, so we went visiting and then packed our gear and moved out over the top to the road. Following Bob's foot prints for a while we saw that they were heading in the direction of Mt. Pisgah which lay somewhere in the mist. We left these tracks and went down the ridge to arrive back at the truck to find we were the first there. Eating for lunch all we had left, we hadn't long to wait before others started to arrive. Round a corner in the road Bob's party came into sight. They had gone down the next stream in the mist and had had a bit of fun. After they had their lunch the truck moved off down the road for home, leaving the four of us sitting by the old bridge until the bus arrived; and so ended a very enjoyable snow caving trip.

P.B.

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IGLOO BUILDING

After a successful snow-caving trip to the Kakanui in 1955 it has been my ambition to return and build an igloo. (See "Outdoors" 1956). For the next two years circumstances prevented any attempt being made; but this year, having met up with another who had the same aspirations, the prospects of a successful venture seemed bright. A third member, who was more or less shanghaied into the party, kindly agreed to devote his energy to the building of an igloo rather than the excavation of a snow cave. Our array of hardware consisted of two shovels, two specially made saws, and a machete.

After arriving at the Shag River Bridge at 11 p.m. we tramped the usual two miles or so before bedding down at the accustomed spot. The fact that the frost was a few degrees lighter this year did not make it one whit easier to get up and going in the morning. We slogged up to the saddle and then on up towards the summit of Kakanui seeking suitable snow. About 300 feet below the top we found a sloping patch which looked as though it had possibilities.

A few exploratory excavations confirmed the first impression, so we set to work cutting blocks and levelling off a platform. Due to the shallowness of the snow, the blocks, which were about 18 inches by 12 inches by 4 inches, had to be cut with the shortest dimension vertical. The actual construction was started by arranging blocks in a circle ten feet across. The second row was begun by cutting a wedge out of the first blocks and then continuing to spiral the structure upwards and inwards. It was found that the blocks adhered at unbelievable angles once the sun had left the site and freezing became almost instantaneous. When it came to roofing the structure the classical style was abandoned, the larger blocks were cut and rested horizontally on top of the walls. After plugging the cracks and digging an entrance tunnel under the wall, the snow house was ready for occupation.

The heat from two primuses caused a certain amount of melting, particularly of the cement between the blocks, but once cooking was fin-

ished the holes were easily plugged again. When viewed from the outside, the igloo lit by a single candle emitted a warm, pink glow. Conversely, daylight had a blue tint when seen from within. Next morning cooking operations were conducted outside on the doorstep. The arrival of a couple of unwitting volunteers enabled us to test the building to destruction. For the record, the roof supported two people for a brief period. Time taken in its construction was five hours, one of which was spent excavating the site.

Due to the dearth of snowdrifts suitable for caves, two other parties also had to build snow houses. One was finished in the classical dome shape of the Esquimau igloo. The other was a massive structure about fourteen feet across. Shortage of time and an uncertainty of procedure made it necessary to roof it with a tent which caused it to be compared with an astronomical observatory, or alternatively a convertible automobile.

Altogether the snowcaving trip could be regarded as a successful 'do-it-yourself' igloo building course, because the Club now has eleven members with some practical experience in the craft.

"NANOOK"

C A M E R O N ' S

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Looking forward to breaking new ground, our party of four set off by car from the town of Kaikoura at 9 a.m. early in January. Half an hour's run brought us to the road end, and leaving the car, we shouldered seven day packs and began the slog up the Hapuku Valley.

The valley is entered at sea level, and as its floor is entirely devoid of shade, the combined effects of high humidity and exposed, glaring riverbed brought us sooner than usual to the "why-do-we-do-this" stage. The river itself is narrow and swift and requires care in the choice of a ford if it is running at all high.

Our first landmark was a high waterfall appearing on our left, and we knew that at the second bend past the fall our final crossing must be made, where the valley narrows to a precipitous gorge. A cairn high on the true right bank signposted the entrance to the forest track. However, climbing out of the river occupied us for some time, as the 20 ft. high and almost vertical shingle banks had been so undermined that they threatened to cascade down at a touch.

A blazed trail led up through the bush and over the shoulder of the gorge, but as is customary with many such trails, the blazes petered out and it was 5.45 p.m. before we were once more down among the river boulders. There we ate a welcome meal and bedded down on brushwood to keep our bodies off the ubiquitous stones.

Rising to another brilliant day and the sounds of tree locusts, birds and blow flies, we breakfasted and spent the morning exploring the south branch. In the afternoon we turned our attention to the gorge at the forks and part of the north branch, remarking thoughtfully on the very steep nature of the mountainsides which are densely wooded, except where spectacular landslides have denuded the slopes, rendering them "not negotiable" to trampers. The heat and humidity finally reduced us to immobility and we finished the day by cooling off in the river.

That night, after we were in our bags, a foraging deer in the bush behind our camp approached to within three yards of our prone bodies and was not aware of our presence until, afraid we might be walked on, we flashed a torch in his face!

The next day was cloudy and the atmosphere heavy, inducing a certain lethargy, very different from the exhilarating, tonic air of the inland mountains. A scramble up Mount Stace, followed by a hilarious descent through heavy lush growing among unstable boulders, completed the morning's activities.

The following day we made a second sally up the South Branch, but the sweltering heat beating up from the stones sent us into the bush where we were so impressed by the variety of native trees that we began counting them. We found fifty three in that area.

As our ultimate objective was the ascent of Manakau (8,562 ft) we set out next afternoon, intending to make a high camp that night and complete the climb the following day. Our route lay up the rugged gorge-like north branch where landslides have blocked the valley, making it necessary to negotiate great masses of tumbled boulders - hard work in that muggy heat. The tops had been obscured all day, and as we reached the tongue of bush opposite Stace Saddle, rain began to fall heavily. We decided to make camp and that night tea was eaten standing round the fire in the downpour. Because the ground was sloping and rocky we suspended the tent verandah fashion instead of pitching it, using logs and boulders to keep us from rolling out.

We rose thankfully at 5 a.m. to an indeterminate day. As we were unfamiliar with the local weather signs, we decided to set out for the saddle connecting Mount Stace to the ridge of Manakau by which time the weather would have done something decisive.

A scramble up tussock slopes brought us to the saddle at 7.55 when mist and low cloud swept down from the tops and settled round us. There was

nothing to do but to sit down and await developments. These proved to be unwelcome: the temperature dropped and rain began to fall steadily.

Unwilling to retrace our steps completely, we decided to attempt a round trip back to our base by descending into the valley west of Stace. The rain accompanied us to the foot of the saddle where we contrived a fire of damp wood under the shelter of someone's ground sheet. Once again we stood to eat and then, wet and cold, we set off at a fast clip down valley, making good progress over the river boulders for one and a half hours.

Then our troubles started! We came upon a waterfall flanked by high smooth rock reaching right up into the bush. There was nothing else for it: we must climb over the bluff.

As we climbed up into the bush we realised with something akin to horror that the steep rock to which the bush clung was extremely unstable, but we kept saying hopefully "We must be nearly over it now," and kept going, but mindful all the time of the cataclysmic landslides of which we had seen evidence the previous day. In spite of parkas we were soon soaked to the skin by the combined attacks of heavy rain and saturated undergrowth. Bush lawyer ripped at exposed skin. Rocks broke loose at a touch. We crawled around precipices hanging on desperately, our packs wrenching at our shoulders. What a picture of misery we must have presented.

After what seemed an interminable nightmare, we spotted a patch of sky and came out on tussock slopes above a sea of swirling mist. Our bluff had proved to be 2,000 feet of Stace itself! But now we were almost as badly off as before, as we had no idea which spur we were on. But at least the ground was solid under our feet.

We began to climb diagonally across what we guessed must be the southwestern shoulder of Stace, calculating that we must strike the well defined deer trail we had cairned a few days previously. At 5.30, amid great rejoicing, we struck the trail just above the cairn. Three hours of daylight left to make base camp, dry clothes and a meal in comfort. And surely we could do it in half that time!

But once again was brought home to us the case with which one chooses the wrong fork in the mist. The trail led us down into the bush, but in a short time we had to admit that we were not on the right track. "To the left," advised someone, and we bore to the left. "No, I'm positive it's to the right," from some one else, while we grew more and more exhausted and discouraged as every turn brought us to the edge of a bluff.

At 7.30, amid sodden shoulder-high fern, dripping trees and loose rock, we called a halt on the "flattest" spot we had seen in hours, and tied the tent verandah-fashion over us to keep off the worst of the rain. As we cleared away rocks in readiness for a bed, we discovered more rocks underneath, so we resigned ourselves to a really uncomfortable night. When we had changed into dry clothes and were in our warm bags munching biscuits and cheese, the outlook seemed brighter however, and we did actually snatch some sleep.

At 5.45 we were up and comparing bruise stories. More biscuits and cheese for breakfast and came the grim business of changing out of warm dry clothes into cold, wet ones. By 7.20 we were renewing our attack on the forest. The mist had cleared and we could obtain occasional glimpses of the valley below. At 8.50, with the aid of a rope, we finally dropped down to the floor of the valley some distance below the waterfall. An uneventful one and a half hours brought us to our base where we were soon happily drying out and drinking gallons of strong, sweet cocoa. We packed up in leisurely fashion (I think we were too stiff and bruised to do otherwise) and three hours later were back at the car.

"Hilltop"

TRAMPING COMMERCIAL

Tough trampers are found, who sleep on the
 While others recline on a lilo. (ground

A roggin of rum is perfect for some
 But a few take a night cap of Milo.
 "Gipsy Girl."

AN ORBELL'S CAVE ATTEMPT

It was during the 1955 Christmas holidays that I first decided to attempt to reach Orbell's Cave. A tent, primus and food for four days helped to make up the 55 lb. pack on my back; and with my dog Monty by my side I set out for Green Hut, $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles from home. Next morning it was an easy one and a half hour hike over the Peaks to Jubilee. I then proceeded down Cave Creek to the Junction of Cave and Christmas Creeks. After a bite of lunch here, Christmas Creek Hut was soon reached.

The following morning breakfast was over early. Taking a last glance around the hut my pack was shouldered and the long slog up Lamb Hill was begun in sunshine.

Heading across the top of the hill two hours later I struck the track which runs south from Ben Doran Huts. Continuing along it in a southerly direction I reached some sheepyards that form a land-mark. I had no map, but this route to the cave had been explained to me twice. So following the creek nearest the yards I went on down the distant side of Lamb Hill. I soon stopped to pick a couple of huge edible mushrooms that grew all around.

The sky had clouded over when my dog and I rested some time later. Below a river rumbled as it tumbled through the gorge. If I had been following the right creek we should have been right on top of Orbell's Cave at this point. Following the river (Three o'clock Stn) a short distance I came to a small waterfall in a creek flowing into the main stream. I stood on a low ridge beside the river and finally was able to look upstream a long distance. I did not know that the Orbell's Cave Creek mouth was among the several that could be seen. I turned and tramped off downstream. I soon came upon my first geese. The big white birds with their broods of young were everywhere along this part of the river. A goose skulking in some bushes

close by caught my eye. Dropping my pack I looked round for something to throw at it. After an unsuccessful chase, the end of the road was soon reached.

The midsummer sun blazed down on a wild and desolate scene. Ahead ran the great bluffed river gorge. Behind me, a cliff blocked the view upstream. Rock and tussock shimmered in the heat. Nothing but the sound of keas and running water. Then suddenly, quite close, a train whistle blew. The Otago Central railway line was just behind the hill across the river.

Slowly I toiled back up the side of Lamb Hill, thoughts of reaching the cave forgotten for the time being. The Lamb Hill yards at last behind me, I was making good time along the Ben Doran track when the mist fell. I had neither map nor compass, but only a fence close by that I knew ran roughly in the right direction. My choice lay between guessing at the right place to turn away from the track I was on and cutting across the hill and down the Silver Peak side, or following the fence over; the latter possibly landing me miles from Christmas Creek Hut.

I chose to follow the fence. On my way over to it a small black pig leapt up from the tussock almost under my feet. As always, my little foxie dog did not give chase. The fence ran straight as a Roman Road, finally landing us below the mist not half a mile from Christmas Creek Hut. Dusk deepened as we made our weary way towards the hut. Thus finished a ten hour walk on Lamb Hill, and the most memorable trip I have done in those parts.

Two years later I reached the cave with the help of a map and spent a night there; and within a month of this occasion returned with an official O.T.C. party.

P.N.D.

2. CANDID COMMENTS CONCERNING THE COMMITTEE
(With apologies to all concerned.)

PROLOGUE

Listen to this little ditty
About our members of Committee;
Some may think it rather witty,
If you don't - it is a pity.

MAIN THEME

Bruce is now our President
He's getting married in the fall;
He'll make a grand housewife for Liz-
His cooking's on the ball.

Gladys our Vice President
Rides a motor scooter;
On it she wears her matador pants
Because she thinks they suit her.

Tony comes from London
At Christmas he learnt fast;
How to cross a river
And how to make food last.

Cliff Anderson our Treasurer
Just loves to smoke his pipe;
He brings it to the Clubrooms, now
By joves, it's getting ripe.

Jean Armfield wears a pony tail
(They say that Samson's hair
Supplied his strength unlimited.)
Does this make things quite clear?

Jim Malcolm found one time, that when
He bent to plant a tree,
His photo in the paper appeared,
For everyone to see.

Gerard comes from Holland,
His appetite he brought;
Include him in your party
Your food will soon be short.

A good man is Bob Cunninghame
Alias 'Slybacon,'
Address him in this way, though
And you'll be soundly shaken.

Peter Barker was made for girls
 And girls for Peter Barker.
 He doesn't flirt in the afternoon,
 He waits till it grows darker.

Selwyn is a natural blonde,
 No peroxide does he use.
 He says it's through tramping outdoors in the
 And washing with scented shampoos. (sun,

EPILOGUE

Bruce Campbell is our Editor
 The power of choice is his.
 We know he's fairly hard to please,
 Let's hope he sanctions this.

ANON.

35th ANNIVERSARY REUNION September 12-14, 1958

This was a great success, and a triumph for the Organising Committee. An informal evening at the Clubrooms on Friday night drew a large crowd who saw slides of past and current club activities, looked through the old albums, and chatted over supper.

The dinner on Saturday night at The Vedic was attended by approx. 120 members and friends. Toasts honoured were - "The Queen." "The Club" - Mr. H.S. Tilly - Mr. B. Moore, Club President. "The Founders" Mr Bill McFarland - Mr. C. Hayward. "Present Members." Mr. Jim Freeman - Mr. Bruce Campbell. Mr. Ralph Markby was in the Chair. Miss Pam Barton's pianoforte items were much appreciated. Later in the evening tramping films were shown by Gavin Clark and dancing and supper completed the evening.

At Ben Rudd's on Sunday 80 members and their families enjoyed a picnic day in spite of dull weather. We hope the large number of cars seen at the fire-break were not a sign of decadence, but only of prosperity of the older members.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

It was dusk as I emerged from the manuka and arrived at Green Peak Hut after a quick tramp over from Burns. There was no apparent sign of life in the hut, which seemed odd for a Saturday evening. Before I could ponder further on this puzzle, a threatening voice called through the broken window, "Don't move, or you're a dead man!" And then I saw to my horror that a small pistol with a sinister black muzzle was being aimed at me. I paused, hoping I did not look too terrified and waited for further instructions. Suddenly the owner of the threatening voice fired at my eyes.

There I was, rolling on the ground, blinded in the most undignified manner possible. My tormentor had fired a water pistol loaded with ammonia. The only sound to be heard for the next twenty minutes was of my own groans and the thump of my pack as I rolled over.

I got to my feet, thoroughly exhausted, and staggered to the hut door only to find it guarded by two ferocious pig dogs, snarling, and with their hackles bristling with anger. Keeping a close watch on the dogs, I cautiously stooped down for a manuka branch which I threw wildly towards the grease pit. The dog's attention thus diverted for a moment, I darted into the hut. This sudden entrance had caught my tormentor off guard. It was pitch black inside the hut and I did not know how many people might be there. Taking courage, I introduced myself, "I'm a member of the Otago Tramping Club," I said, and waited to hear the effect. "Jean, you old pal, then why in Heaven's name didn't you say so before?" retorted a voice which I knew only too well. "I'm the Committee Member on duty this weekend to see that non-members don't use the hut without paying. Have you got plenty of tucker? I'm starving and there's no one else here to bludge from!"

J.M.A.

In Australia many kinds of wallabies, or small kangaroos are found. Four of these; the swamp wallaby, the black striped wallaby, the dama wallaby, and the black tailed wallaby have been introduced into New Zealand. It seems that, as happened with many other introductions, this country has developed its own breed of wallaby from this raw material. The different kinds have interbred, grown longer, thicker fur and generally altered to suit their environment.

Wallabies have been liberated on Kawau and Rangitoto Islands (near Auckland), near Rotorua, and on the Hunter Hills, South Canterbury. Wodzicki in his book "Introduced Mammals of New Zealand" reported that wallabies were very rare, and probably dying out, near Rotorua (1947). Yet, while up in Marlborough recently I met a deer culler from the North Island. He said he had caught many wallabies in the Rotorua area and that they were very common up there now.

A short time ago a mate and I went hunting in the range of hills behind Waimate. On this trip I learned a great deal about the animals, from observation and from friendly farmers.

It seems that since the first introduction in the seventies of last century wallabies have steadily spread right throughout the Hunter Hills from the outskirts of Waimate to Fairlie near Lake Tekapo. They have reached Timaru in the north and have crossed the Waitaki River in the south. Over most of this country an estimated count of 250 wallabies per 200 acres is not excessive. Although they can easily jump them, wallabies prefer to climb through fences, thus soon pulling them to pieces. The numbers of sheep run on the hills could be tripled if there were no wallabies.

I remember the final hundred feet of the descent from Studholme Hut (alt. 3,500 feet) to the Waihao River. All around the ridges showed as much gravel and bare earth as tussock. Patches of scrub on the steep gully sides showed a much frequented appearance—countless wallabies had prevented the bushes from growing down to ground level. In their running

about under the scrub ~~oil~~iling they had caused all the topsoil to erode away, leaving loose gravel exposed.

From the gravel gut on our left three wallabies bounded almost straight up the opposite hillside as we passed. Rounding the hill, we looked down on a small area of matagouri scrub beside the Waihao River. From all around at least ten wallabies bounded for cover, another five went up the hill behind.

Wallabies are at their most active during the last half hour before dusk. Less so early in the morning than deer, they usually remain under cover during the heat of the day. At dusk in wallaby country they can be in all directions standing upright, little narrow chests and small fore-paws above the tussock; liquid eyes watching, long ears listening to the intruders' movements.

Government cullers have hunted wallabies quite a few winters in the past, the last being more than two years ago. Four .303 rounds were allowed per kill against only three for red deer. Thousands of wallabies were taken each season. The farmers owning land in the area have formed a committee to enquire into the possibility of poisoning the land in blocks with 1080. This would mean that stock could not be put back onto poisoned areas for two years afterwards. The Government wanted to do this, but some farmers involved doubted that the trouble and expense were worth it. I understand that a recent newspaper report stated that agreement had been reached. Local attempts at control include driving wallabies with dogs, and also fire. In the first case a pack of trained dogs is released at the bottom of a bush filled gully. The barking dogs work up towards the head of the gully driving their quarry ahead of them. Hunters armed with shotguns, .303 rifles, or high power .22's grouped around the head of the gully shoot at the oncoming wallabies. A gully produces several hundred wallabies usually. Alternatively the tussock is set on fire to drive the

animals towards the hunters.

I have read that the wallaby can be rather dangerous to hunt. They are supposed to disembowel dogs, and even a hunter if he gets in front of a big marsupial's powerful hind legs. The rule of pig hunting "never get below your quarry on a hillside," seems to apply in this case also. A .303 bullet anywhere in the body, in my experience makes a wallaby completely harmless. The lighter .22 bullet would be a different story. Wallaby meat is "very like hare, but stronger." It cannot be fried, but needs hours of boiling to soften it. I have not tried the famed wallaby tail soup. I know of no sale for wallaby skins in New Zealand. This is unusual, considering New Zealand pelts are better and thicker than Australian ones. This is also true of our opossums. The N.Z. hybrid wallaby occurs in several different colours. The usual dull greys or browns make them almost impossible to pick out against most natural backgrounds. As these shy animals "freeze" when disturbed, it is possible to walk for long periods through wallaby country without apparently seeing one beast. As they are very difficult to hit when moving, wallaby hunting is made easy only by the large number of animals in a small area.

It is a rule that a wild animal introduced into a foreign country tends to gradually increase, up to a certain point. Then when the number of animals exceeds the food available to them, the population becomes unstable and finally drops to a reasonable level. The rabbit, one of the first deliberate introductions to this country has a history that tends to bear this out. At present red deer incidence seems to be at a peak in many parts of the country. The Hunter Hills area seems to have more wallabies than the land can support indefinitely. But the wallabies are spreading out quickly now to new areas. I do not think it improbable that they will be eventually found right through both islands of New Zealand. Harder to exterminate than rabbits, both high and low country farmers may yet have to meet the most difficult pest of all.

HOME THOUGHTS FROM A WARD
(DUNEDIN PUBLIC HOSPITAL)

Will Walker was a tramper bold,
 On any peak he'd stand.
 But a specialist took off his legs
 So he threw in his hand.

And he wh'ed conquered Silver Peak,
 A trip that's oft repeated;
 Little thought that he'd lie low
 By a surgeon now 'de-feeted.'

To gain a standing in the Club
 He did three trips, initial.
 But now alas, I'm sad to say
 His footing's artificial.

Yet, though he lived a tramper's life
 I pray you, do not mourn;
 For soon he'll start his life anew
 And by a chair be 'borne.'

R.A.

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JOHNNY CAKE *

It'll aye tak' ye lang tae bake
 A really first-class Johnny cake.
 Ye read about it in an Aussie ootback story;
 Ye sing a bit about the lass called
 (Annie Laurie.

Intae a billy fast ye fling
 Of guid white fluer a handfu';
 Stir in water as ye sing
 Until ye hae the can fu';
 Roll the dough upon the floor
 As noney a curse ye utter,
 For in your haste ye hae forgot
 Tae add a spoon o' butter.

Twist the dough aroond the stick,
 And hold it o'er the fire.
 Alas - tae black - the dough is burnt,
 Ye should hae held it higher.
 Transfer the mixture to a tin,
 And fry it for a minute.
 The cake, it doesn'a taste tae bad,
 For a' the stuff that's in it.

* (as demonstrated by I.B., Elcho
 Hut, Christmas Eve, 1957.)

ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

The 1958 Photographic Competition, held in November drew a large number of entries, many of of a high standard. Dr. Aitken's comments were most helpful and next year's standard should be higher still. Results: All colour transparencies:

<u>Alpine Section</u>	<u>Landscape</u>	<u>General</u>
1st. R.G.Cunninghame	1st. B. Moore	1st. G. McDonald
2nd. D. McNamara	2nd. J. Chivers	2nd. Miss F. Parkhill
3rd. R.G.Cunninghame	3rd. J. Chivers	3rd. G. Kampjes

WEEKEND TRIPS IN THE HOMER VALLEY

Four times in the past two years swift weekend trips to the area near the Homer Saddle have been made by members of the Club. The object has been to do some climbing in the vicinity of the Homer Hut; a hut which offers the twofold advantages of access by road and proximity to a number of peaks. The trips were all made in the months of February and March and met with varying degrees of success.

The first trip made this year was from a Saturday morning start resulting in our arriving at the Homer Hut at about 5 p.m. after having negotiated a slip on the way. At 4 a.m. we awoke to the roar of steady rain on the roof, so a leisurely breakfast was followed by a drive back to Dunedin. Achievement - NIL !

Three weeks later we made another trip leaving town at 6 p.m. on Friday night. We arrived at 1 a.m. Saturday in pouring rain and stumbled through the river bed to the hut. Next morning dawned sunny but fresh snow had fallen to within a couple of hundred feet of the hut. Climbing being out for the day we turned to hiking and walked halfway down to Milford Sound before accepting a lift in a gravel truck. After a day as tourists we caught a bus back up to the tunnel. With the night, clouds arrived again and next morning the snowline was several hundred feet BELOW the hut. Climbing being even more definitely out, we built a snowman and returned to town.

In contrast to these two unsuccessful trips, those in 1957 were much more fruitful. Both times we drove over on the Friday night in perfect weather and enjoyed fine days on the tops. On one occasion we set out to climb Mt. Talbot which looms directly above the Hut. Our route, however, was from Gertrude Saddle on the other side. After being blocked by a schrund from access to the rock we settled for a traverse from Gertrude Saddle to Talbot's Ladder via Traverse Pass.

Two weeks prior to this we had made our first sortie into the district. On the Saturday a party of six of us had climbed Barrier in perfect weather via Gertrude Saddle and along the ridge.

After a long drive and three hours' sleep this was quite strenuous enough. On the Sunday two of us scrambled up Homer Saddle and on to Talbot's Ladder to the summit of McPherson. We were down at the road again by 11.30 a.m. and after a quick lunch left again for the city.

For crafty weekends of this nature the two essentials are a car, and a good weather forecast.

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JIM FREEMAN - PROPRIETOR

From our camp in the head of the Hopkins Valley the weather looked anything but encouraging. With thick nor'west clouds streaming down the Divide, "Hughie" was obviously preparing to "send it down." However, we still had about seven days' food left, so we decided to stay put for a few days. We were working on the assumption that there would be an improvement in a day or two, and that climbing programmes could then be continued. How wrong this proved to be !

The three of us: John, Geoff and myself, made a quick climb on to Tragedy Col with the intention of climbing Prudence Peak, but the strong wind and thickening rain drove us back to the valley. It was raining heavily when we returned to camp, so we crawled into a convenient rock bivvy to dry out as best we could. The bivvy slept three people with a certain amount of discomfort. The floor closely resembled a rocky river bed, while parts of the walls formed admirable waterfalls. You either got your feet wet, or your head wet, or both; while your back soon protested about the uneven floor. Keen arguments on who had the most uncomfortable spot soon developed, and have continued ever since. So far, no definite conclusions have been reached, and further investigations will be made next February. With a cunning arrangement of plates and billy lids most of the drips were deflected so that we were only splashed during meals. The deflection system had one drawback - occasionally a plate would slip out and empty a fair bit of water onto the unfortunate person below. John did not think so, but Geoff and I thought this was most amusing.

The rain continued for five days. Although it sometimes slackened to a steady drizzle, there were no signs of a real break in the weather. The river was flowing high and dirty, while the waterfalls thundering down the bluffs had made many of the minor tributaries impassable. The time was passed sleeping, reading and eating. Our reading matter consisted of one Reader's Digest, an Agatha Christie and Ernest Hemingway's "Fiesta." The first two we

soon exhausted, including all the advertisements in the "Digest," while with "Fiesta" it was the other way round. Somehow Paris cafes, restaurants, bedrooms, Spanish bullfights, festivals etcetera just did not fit in with a rock bivvy in pouring rain. Lunch (a mug of Oxo plus a slice of unleavened bread spread with butter, cheese, honey, dates,) would just be over when the first thing you came across in "Fiesta" would be a meal of "chicken, creamed potatoes, green peas," together with all the trimmings. Well, it wasn't fair, was it?

Towards the end of our stay, Geoff had the misfortune to run out of tobacco which is fairly tough as any smoker will agree. Tussock was tried as a substitute, but the tobacco growers need fear no competition from this source. Apart from the unpleasant taste, a lighted match had to be held under the end of the "cigarette" to keep it burning - well you either burn your fingers or your nose. Try it and see!

Another little incident occurred on the first rainy night. The tent was pitched on a small patch of grass in front of the bivvy and John thought that this would be more comfortable. It was, but he was back with Geoff and me after about three hours. We were woken with "Move over you f.....s, the tent has blown down!" as a wet figure crawled back into our wind-resistant residence.

During Saturday night the rain stopped and the streams dropped considerably, so that on Sunday morning we made a five hour dash back to the Elco Hut. Mattresses, a warm fire, and other mod-con's made it seem like Five Star Plus. That afternoon rain set in again and continued for two more days before the weather cleared.

There are still some mountains we want to climb, while the Landsborough lies just over the Divide; so we are going back next February. At this stage we are making no rash statements about the weather prospects.

R.G.C.

AUNTY GWEN'S COOKING CORNERASHCAKES

Take a lot of water and add to it a lot of coarse stone-ground Indian maize and about a quarter of a lot of salt. Mix WELL together, knead into the form of a flat cake and let it stand awhile - not on its edge, but the other way. Rake away a place among the embers, lay it there, and cover it an inch deep with hot ashes. When it is done remove it; blow off all the ashes but one layer, butter that one and eat.

N.B. No household should ever be without this talisman. It has been noticed that tramps never return for another ash-cake.

(Mark Twain in "A Tramp Abroad.")
 . (sent in by 'Gipsy Girl')

CAMPFIRE SCONE

When a good camp-fire has died down to glowing coals, tip the ashes off a red-hot stone from near the centre of the fire, and dab some butter on the stone. Take a well-floured portion of ordinary scone mixture of a suitable size and place on stone. When the underside is brown, turn scone over to cook the other side. Spread scone with butter and eat hot.....delicious !

(sent in, with sample, by 'Chook')

CULINARY PROVERBS

A stew boiled
 Is a stew spoiled.

Offal
 Ain't awful.

To bring a friendship to a halt,
 Cook the porridge without salt.

HUXLEY - TEMPLE ROUNDABOUT

After having suffered three successive nor'westers over a period of fourteen days which brought their usual spate of mist, heavy rain and flooded rivers; we left the Elcho Hut in the Hopkins Valley with high hopes of eight fine days of climbing, tramping and sun-bathing in and around the Huxley River system.

As we made our easy way with light hearts and packs down valley to the confluence of the Huxley and Hopkins Rivers, the clouds rolled back somewhat under the warmth of the afternoon sun and the party, (Bob, Geoff and myself) was treated to its first taste of sunshine for more than a week. That night we camped at the Huxley Forks near a deer culler's bivvy wishfully hoping that the weather would continue to clear.

It was not to be, however. For when we struggled from our sleeping bags at dawn next morning, the valley was shrouded in mist to below bush-line. We spent the morning alternately plodding and boulder-hopping up the east bank of the North Huxley in depressing conditions. After three hours we reached the end of the bush and made camp on a high terrace above the river at a point we judged to be more or less below Broderick's Pass. Hoping the mist went up as we climbed, we decided to walk to the Pass. For once it obeyed our wishes and in less than a couple of hours we were on the Divide a few hundred yards south of the Pass.

The mist had by now almost completely disappeared and after a brief bite we headed for the summit of Mount McKenzie which lies just to the north. By the time we had reached the summit the sun was low in the sky, and after admiring and photographing the great Landsborough Valley with its heavily glaciated head, we beat a hurried retreat to reach our camp just before dark. We slept heavily that night.

We woke next morning to sunshine on the tent and a clear blue sky - what a pleasant change. A lazy breakfast, and we packed off down valley about mid-day. We chose the west bank this time in the deluded state of mind that the travelling might be easier. However, there were just steeper banks, and bigger and more numerous boulders to entice us on. The only amusing event (for two of us anyway) occurred when one member of the party, trusting to Providence, lept boldly onto an unstable boulder close to the river. For his pains he was flicked smartly into about four feet of ice-cold water. Although not lucky enough to see the splash, we spent a few enjoyable minutes watching the victim systematically wringing out his clothing. (Luckily we were out of earshot, but there was a blue haze in the air for some time.) Needless to say, we had a long lunchtime at the Forks drying out sleeping bag, clothes, tobacco etc. We were somewhat surprised when a Dominion aircraft swept silently in from the South Branch and dropped several parachutes of supplies near the cullers' bivvy just across the river. That afternoon we spent a frustrating two hours finding and losing the "clear blazed trail" above the South Huxley Gorge, eventually camping a short distance above the top of the gorge at dusk.

With every sign of a nor'wester, we said goodbye to the sun and next morning moved up the South Huxley Flats and thence to a low saddle with the Ahuriri. The wind now was violent and cold and after shivering down our lunch we sidled quickly southwards to another saddle leading to the head of the South Temple, a reverse of the traverse made by the club trip in Easter 1955. Doubtless all who were on that trip will remember the interesting patch of subalpine scrub at the head of this valley. Although by using deer trails on the true left bank we were able to avoid the worst section with a light scratching; lower down towards the beech the river level prevented us from splashing down the stream-bed, and so at a slow rate of knots we fought up and down, along and around until eventually, tired and hungry, we reached the relative freedom of the beech as the first drops of rain began to fall.

After a heavy night's rain the clear-flowing Temple Stream turned to a yellow raging torrent in which boulders could be heard rolling ominously. We pressed on down valley in a not too optimistic frame of mind, but having crossed by a fallen tree the only tributary which might have caused trouble the sun came out for a few hours and we reached the road and Temple Bridge after a quick journey. The only point of interest was an almost vertical climb up a 200 ft. bluff in the lower reaches.

That night and the whole of the next day we spent snugly in our tent while the wind and rain tried their worst. On Monday morning, with fresh snow below bush-line we walked out in some of the coldest conditions I have experienced to Huxley Gorge Station. From there we travelled by Land Rover back to Lake Ohau Lodge.

Back at the Lodge we were treated to hot showers, fresh food, and the outspoken admiration of a party of tourists which was no mean compensation for only two days of fine weather in three weeks.

J.R.C.

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DAY TRIP TO JUBILEE HUT
NOVEMBER 1957

The trip programme said "Rollinson's, Green Hut, Red Hut, Evansdale. Kaikorai 5 a.m." The excuse given for the five o'clock start was that it left plenty of time for lazing in the sun during the middle of the day - well, we shall see about that !

Having been at Jubilee the weekend before and spent a somewhat disturbed night with an army of rats, I decided to go right through to the hut to lay some rat poison. Geoff and I turned up with the rest of the mob and eventually set off from Kaikorai at about 5.30 a.m. It was decided to forgo the luxury of a taxi, either to save money or to prove we were tough - I'm not sure which. A few hundred yards past Ashburn Hall, Geoff, Jean Gladys and I looked round to find an empty road behind us and so we assumed the rest had gone up the Aeroplane Track.

We carried on at a good steady pace and were soon having a rest at the stream at the bottom of Rollinson's - still no sign of the rest. We kept looking back all the way up the track, but by the time the saddle was reached they were still not to be seen. A short stop on the saddle in a cold, biting wind; then on to Green Hut at a fast pace. We got to the hut at about ten o'clock and received a welcome cup of tea from a party in residence; then decided to wait round for the rest. When there was still no sign of the leader and her charges at about eleven o'clock, the four of us decided to go on to Jubilee.

After battling against a howling gale all the way up to Silver Peak, where we had a few words with a party struggling up with weekend packs, we then set off at a fast pace for the hut. When the hut had been vacated by about a dozen scouts we moved in and had lunch. Some rat poison was laid (it proved very effective) before leaving the hut just before two o'clock.

The strong southerly was still blowing, but it was now at our backs as we hurried up the ridge to

The Gap, where we had a short rest, then down to Polite. Here some swift calculations showed that we would have to hurry if we were to catch the train which we thought left Evansdale at half past six. Down in the Waikouaiti Valley we were out of the wind which made it a very hot grind up the valley and then up the spur to the woolshed. I've been up that spur quite a few times, but no matter what the weather has been during the rest of the trip, the sun always comes out and the wind drops for those few hundred feet. At the woolshed Jean and Geoff decided to head for the road to 'hitch' into town while Gladys and I headed down into the Evansdale valley. From memory it took us something less than ten minutes from the woolshed to the valley floor.

We romped down the track most of the way, except for one short skirmish with burnt gorse on a steep bank and reached the forks at about a quarter to six. This gave us ample time to catch the train so we stopped for a short rest and meal. We carried on at a much reduced pace, had a drink at the store, then headed over to the railway station. Here we met two or three of the main party. They had decided to go up the Bridle Track (?) becoming well and truly enmeshed in gorse in their progress. After a two hour battle they had managed to reach Ben Rudds about three and a half hours after leaving Kaikorai - no wonder we had not seen them.

The train eventually arrived at a quarter to seven so we had arrived with plenty of time to spare. Geoff and Jean arrived in Evansdale as the train was pulling out but were given a ride a few minutes later. Geoff and I eventually travelled back back to Maori Hill in the same bus from town.

By the way - we are still waiting for that laze in the sun which we did not get - partly because we didn't have time, and the weather was not the best. However, there are some more early starts this year - so here's hoping.

R.G.C.

EASTER AT THE HOMER

It all began when we found that the extra container of petrol, which was to be our reserve supply on this long trip to the Homer, had not been placed in our rental truck. O.T.C. trips are noteworthy for their punctuality - however this one did start only an hour and a half late, and then we were on our way.

Then, sometime after leaving Gore we discovered we had taken the wrong road and had to retrace our way back to Gore. The next thing that happened was that we found ourselves on the road to Kingston and not Te Anau; and in turning the truck, we landed in a ditch. However, most trappers are quite experienced at pushing trucks and other kinds of vehicles around the countryside, so we proved then and there that this occasion would be no exception.

Last, but not least, the truck did run out of petrol; but only within a couple of miles of our destination, the Alpine Club Huts at the Homer. And to cap it all, someone remembered that the filler was somewhere in the back of the truck, probably under the packs, neatly piled at the end. What a struggle! Packs and people everywhere, and in the end the filler was recovered.

At 5 a.m. we reached our destination. What a wonderful feeling - falling into a sleeping back in a comfortable bunk.

However, it was a different story for the boys who were on the Alpine Club Instruction Course, for it was a perfect climbing day and they had to cook their breakfasts immediately and be on their way. "No sleep for the weary" they declared, but a day like the one that was breaking was too good to miss. Most of the instructors had arrived earlier during the night and were quite refreshed by their sleep - the lucky people. I can vaguely remember voices, hearing the rattle of plates and billies, and then silence. The next thing I knew it was midday, and what a wonderfully sunny day. It was just too good a day to be lying in our bags, so we set off for a stroll up to Gertrude Saddle.

Not having been in this area before, I cannot say I was not delighted with the view from this saddle. Milford Sound was shimmering in the sun, Mt. Talbot was on our left, white against a blue sky, with rocky bluffs falling away steeply to the densely wooded valley of the Gulliver which joins up with the main Cleddau Valley. After the usual sustaining bite of chocolate, and some photographs, we noticed some small black specks moving slowly down the snow-fields on Mt. Talbot. It was the instruction course members returning. This made us realise that it was time we were on our way back to the huts for tea.

Next morning we left the huts fairly early and made our way to the Homer Tunnel. There was no traffic on the road as yet, and the sun was still behind the peaks surrounding the valley, and even although we were warmly clad, the coldness of winter seemed to surround us. At the tunnel we left the valley floor and climbed towards the Homer Saddle. By this time the sun was upon us and we had to take off some of our woollen clothing, or else we would have melted! At the Saddle there was quite a breeze, and also mist which had piled up on the other side on its way in from the coast. There you could stand on the Main Divide; but if you wish to go further towards Milford taking this route used by the first who ventured into this area, you must climb Talbot's Ladder, a fairly sharp rock ridge to the right. To those who had been up it before, and were not seeing it for the first time as I was, it must have been comparatively easy. But with the mist swirling about, and steep drops on either side, it appeared quite eerie. The Instruction Course who had stood up well to their full day the day before on no sleep, carried on to climb Mt. Macpherson, the summit of which is just beyond Talbot's Ladder. I have often wondered since seeing this route how the tourists ever managed to survive the trip to Milford and back in the days before the Homer Tunnel.

The next day, wonder of wonders, was fine also, so this time our destination was Student's Peak. I had heard previously that the only way to get on to this peak was via a rata bush at its base. What will happen when the rata bush disintegrates through over-use, and one can no longer climb onto its branches to get up and over that tricky piece of rock?

The higher we climbed, the hotter the sun seemed to get - and the hotter we seemed to get. At last there was the top in sight, and several of us were that hot that we didn't even put longs on to go through the final snow slopes. From the summit of Student's Peak everything round about seemed to be higher than we ourselves were. However, that did not deter us from taking photos, and eating chocolate.

Next morning the fine spell of weather broke, and there was quite a lot of mist about, so we all packed into the truck for a jaunt to Milford Sound. Of course, the mist hid most of our view when we did arrive there, but we did get some good photos of the hotel. We even pretended for a short time that we were tourists and paid a visit to the Bowen Falls along a recently formed track which had been opened up. There some of us again tried to take some photographs through the mist and spray.

Back at the huts that night we cooked our last meals and did some packing in anticipation of our trip back to Dunedin next day. That is always the worst part of a trip - preparing to go back, to leave the vastness of the outdoors in order to return to the noise, rush and bustle of a city, and to have to look at symmetrical buildings after gazing on jagged mountain peaks, and to have to be squashed like a sardine in a bus, when one has been just a mere speck in the hills and valleys of the back country.

O.T.C. CLASSIFIED ADVTS

(Charges 3d. per word -refunded if no replies)

SITUATIONS VACANT

GIRL or young woman wanted to cook for wealthy tramper; live in; work easy; food supplied; not far to work. Apply personally to Green Hut, or write personally to Box 77777.

LOST AND FOUND

FOUND - Pyramid Hut, in tramper's pack, four blown sausages.

LOST- Pyramid Hut, one appetite for sausages.

FOUND - near Silver Peak. Hut painted green, containing two families mice. two tables, two forms, no hut fees, no wood and three trampers. Owner please retrieve.

FOR SALE

ONE pair toe-peepers, size 8, nails and clinkers, only done 2,000 walking hours. Tidy condition. Also one pack, ideal for not-so-energetic tramper. No bottom, very light. For these two bargains apply my place. (No address given. Ed.)

One President, good for anything, suitable power-house. Excellent condition, only used one year. Apply Jealous Member.

TENDERS

Tenders are invited for alterations to and the installation of electric range and dishwasher with 1/- meters fitted at Green Peak Hut. All applications to arrive in time for work to be completed before next Club trip to area. Apply Next Door.

AMUSEMENTS

1959 BARN DANCE

BARN DANCE 1959

Details later.

1959 CHRISTMAS PARTY 1959

Details later.

EDITORIAL

In presenting this new number of "Outdoors" to our tramping readers we make no apology for the contents. They are what could be begged or wrung from a most reluctant body of people - yourselves. During the year a highly successful reunion was held and much interest was shown in the early days of the Club. When the foundation members and early stalwarts are no longer able to join with us on such occasions, we will have to fall back on the written word to refresh our memories of the beginnings of organised tramping in Otago. It is only by making each "Outdoors" a full record of Club activities in both the tramping and the social sphere that future historians will be able to give a balanced account of club events and changing attitudes to tramping.

What happened when the Club went to Te Wae Wae Bay? Who disgraced himself so much that the trip to must be forgotten as soon as possible? Was no one impressed favourably or otherwise with the Annual Barn Dance, the Club Picnic, or the Reunion itself? Half a page of facts without padding would have been welcomed by The Editor, enjoyed by our readers, and set in print for the future.

Nevertheless, we hope you have enjoyed the contents as they are, and have by now made firm resolutions to write up your next big tramping occasion for "Outdoors" 1959.

B.W.C.

The Book of the Year—

THE CROSSING OF ANTARCTICA

By Sir VIVIAN FUCHS and SIR EDMUND HILLARY

This is the story of the great adventure which thrilled the world. It is the complete story told by the leaders of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition and the New Zealand support party. A unique collection of photographs capture in almost unbelievable colours the superb beauty of the Antarctic scene. **Price: 36/-.**

Otago Centennial History—

NORTHERN APPROACHES

By C. W. S. MOORE

A history of Waitati, Seacliff, Waikouaiti, Palmerston, Dunback, Moeraki, Hampden, Waianakarua and surrounding districts. This is the seventeenth and last of the official series published by the Otago Centennial Committee. It is a valuable addition to the story of Otago. 268 pages with 21 pages of historic photographs. **Price: 25/-.**

The Gift for Rugby Fans—

HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND RUGBY FOOTBALL, Volume 2
1946-1957

By A. C. SWAN

Whenever Rugby men want to settle an argument this is the book they'll reach for. Special features include—Brothers on the Field, Complete Records of Ranfurly and Seddon Shield Matches, Representative Lists for New Zealand, N.Z. Varsity, N.Z. Maoris, N.Z. Combined Services and Multiple Representative Lists brought up to date, etc. Over 500 pages, 99 pages of photographs. Publishing date November, 1958. **Price: 32/6.**

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