

# OTMC TRIP REPORTS

## 2017

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Sourced from the 2017 OTMC Bulletins



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**Cover Photo: Heading into Macetown, below Advance Peak (October 22, 2016)**

**ALL PUBLICATION PHOTOS UNLESS NOTED Antony Pettinger**

## MANAPOURI KAYAKING

**November 26-27, 2016**

**Author: Rose Colhoun**

Published in Bulletin 778, February 2017

Foiled again! Once more, the weather in Manapouri was not up to scratch enough for us to go out kayaking. Although the weather and lake looked benign first thing Saturday morning, the sou'wester came up by the time we were ready to go and Jo at the kayak rental place confirmed that it was not suitable for kayaking. She was beginning to feel sorry for me at this stage after my numerous calls and cancellations for kayaking trips, so suggested they take us out in the water taxi instead. Everyone was agreeable and we set out for the Monument in the water taxi. It was rather a lumpy ride across the lake with large white caps and we were pleased not to be battling them in a kayak. Reg dropped us off at the small beach below the Monument and after a little misdirection, we eventually got onto the correct track up the mountain. As we got steadily higher, the route became more exposed until we came to the "chimney". The chimney is a slot in the rocky side of the Monument with a chain to pull yourself up. Once at the top, we enjoyed the almost 360-degree views across the lake, towards Te Anau, Hope Arm, and West Arm.



**Landing below The Monument (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

Back down at the beach, Reg picked us up again and ferried us the short distance to Hope Arm beach. After some lunch in the hut, we bagged ourselves a bunk each before setting out for Back Valley and Lake Rakatu. There were a few windfalls in places, but the track wasn't as

muddy as it has been at other times. A short break at Back Valley hut where we discovered an absent hunter was in residence, then along the track to Lake Rakatu. There were a couple of deep mud holes on this part of the track that we had to sidle around. There is only a small beach and little sun at Lake Rakatu, so it wasn't especially inviting to stay there long, and we headed back to Hope Arm hut for tea.



**View over Lake Manapouri from The Monument (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

On arrival, we found the hut occupants had increased so a few of us set up tents next to the beach. It was a very convivial evening though, chatting with some American tourists, Te Anau locals and Queenstown buskers. We enjoyed a campfire on the beach with entertainment provided by the buskers playing guitar, bongo drums and singing. The next day we set off along the Hope Arm track towards Manapouri. A vote saw us taking a diversion up the Circle Track for a view down to Back Valley and the Monument from another angle. A German backpacker was interested to hear our accounts of the track to Hope Arm and obligingly took some group photos for us. Down the other side of the hill to Pearl Harbour we found a small rowboat waiting to transport us back across the river. So, our adventures were not over as we all took a turn at rowing, some more successfully than others.... It was a memorable way to end a fantastic weekend at Manapouri. Although we still haven't been near a kayak, we all had a great time.

Rose Colhoun for: Rodger Clarkson, Maria Hamelink, James Lang, and Laura Patterson.

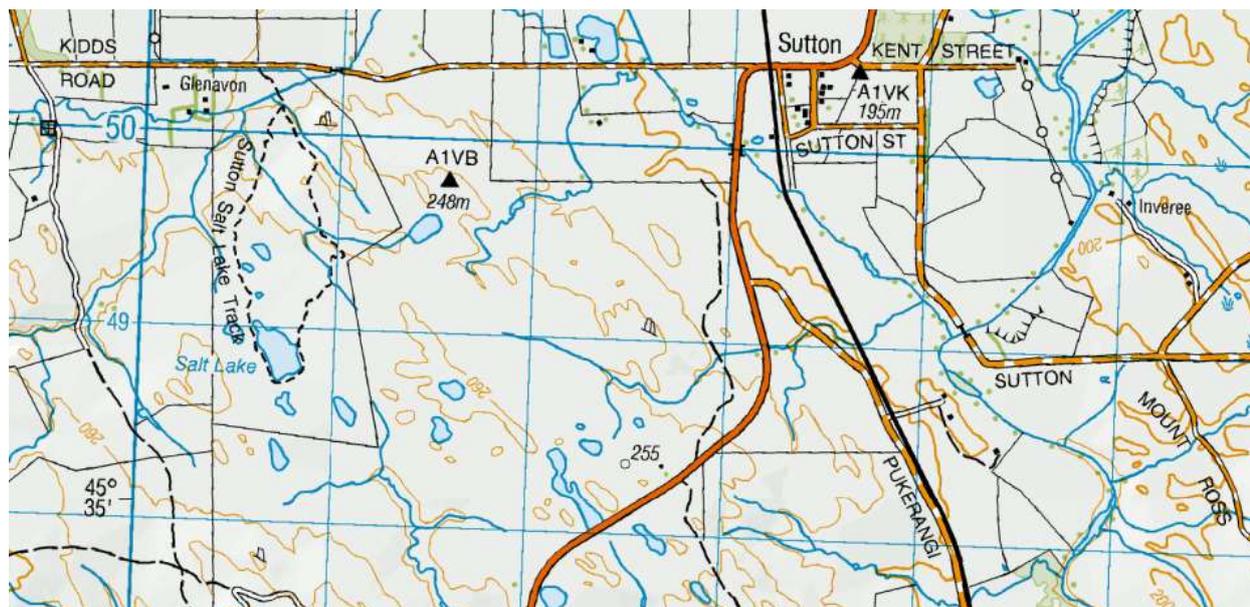
## ALTERNATIVE WAY TO SALT LAKE

**December 4, 2016**

**Author: Lucy Jones**

Published in Bulletin 778, February 2017

Twelve keen trampers left the club rooms and headed up State Highway 87 to my parents' farm. We arrived at the homestead and were met by Ron running his heading dog around a mob of sheep.



We put our gear on and Juliet joined us for the walk. The weather was mild and overcast, not too hot. We walked through the farm paddocks and then down through the hill blocks. Morning tea was had sitting on rocks looking at the view of the Strath Taieri Valley with the Kakanui Mountains in the distance, the Rock and Pillar range to the West and Macraes round to Silver Peaks on the East. People found the rocky tors very interesting and had fun creating images from their shapes or climbing up them to get a different view.

We dropped down about 100 metres to the irrigated paddocks below, crossed the main road and went cross country through more sculptural rock formations to the Salt Lake. This is where we had lunch. It was surprising to find the lake quite full which is unusual for this time of year, but no one was brave enough to get wet.

After walking to the DOC car park, we all went to visit the very informative local Middlemarch Museum. There were many displays of early days on the Rock and Pillars skiing and tramping, history of the rail and early mining in the area and local events.

Lucy Jones for Alan Hanson, Michaela Day, Jane Cloete, Sarah Harvey, David Bunn, Sharen Rutherford, Holly Young, Leone and Peter Loeber, Chris and Charlotte Handley, and Juliet Jones

## WET WAIKOUAITI WANDERINGS

December 18, 2016

Author: Rodger Clarkson

Published in Bulletin 778, February 2017

The day started when 10 dry people wearing dry clothes and carrying dry gear met at Mountain Road at 9:30am. The day ended with 10 wet people wearing wet clothes and carrying wet gear arriving back at the cars at 4pm. This is the story of how this came to pass on a balmy 25C day.

We started down Eucalypt Spur. The track has been recently cleared so travel was easy as we made it down to the south branch of the Waikouaiti River, just below Possum Hut. The plan was to head down the riverbed until we got to the Tunnels/Yellow Hut track and then head back up to the road and back to the cars. Antony's trip description said "one short section will see us wading through waist\* deep water".



Only one way through this section... (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)

We hopped into the shin deep (but glacier fed) water and started down the riverbed. Slowly the feet went numb, which was good as it hid the pain from the stones in my shoes. It wasn't long before we came to a deeper pool so in we all waded... the water creeping up the legs... past the knees...yikes...hitch the shorts up...not far enough, now they're wet too...suck in the

breath...there's the left nad gone...hyperventilate ...followed soon thereafter by the right...concentrate on steady breathing ...and on up to the belly button. Still, good to get the deep section out the way early so we can dry out - "Is that the deep pool you were talking about Antony?" ..."No It's further ahead" came the reply. Oh OK.



**Only one way through this section...Take Two (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

The rocks in the riverbed were slippery and everyone had a few falls along the way. Debbie P must have been hitting the sauce pretty hard as she had trouble keeping on her feet throughout the entire trip. There were regular splashes behind me, I'd turn to look, and Debbie would be immersed in the river. I'd say "hold that pose while I get my camera out" but alas, she was a most uncooperative subject.

We continued down the river going through multiple waist to chest deep sections, each time asking "Is this the deep pool?" but the answer was always "No it's further ahead."

Eventually we came to a murky pool with sheer rock sides. I tentatively climbed in and can now answer a question I've long wondered – Do packs really float? Well, I'm pleased to answer that they do, which was good because my feet weren't finding the bottom. "Is this the deep pool?" ... "Nah, this one only comes up to here on me duck!" We dog paddled, breast stroked and floundered our way across before continuing on our way. There was a small waterfall to go over and another chance to swim across a deep pool, but we were all soaked now, so just enjoyed the fun of it all, like kids playing in a puddle.

We reached the Tunnels track, headed up to Mountain Road and back to the cars, finding a geocache along the way. We arrived back in Dunedin just as a southerly change down-pour started so the trip timing was perfect.



One of the deeper sections (PHOTO: Debbie Pettinger)

Thanks to Antony for leading a different style of trip that proved to be a lot of fun. We should do it again on the winter trip card!

(\* waist obviously belonged to Stephen Adams)

Rodger C for Antony P, Debbie P, Dylan P, Trisha G, Ian W, Michaela D, Peter B, Russell K and Debbie G

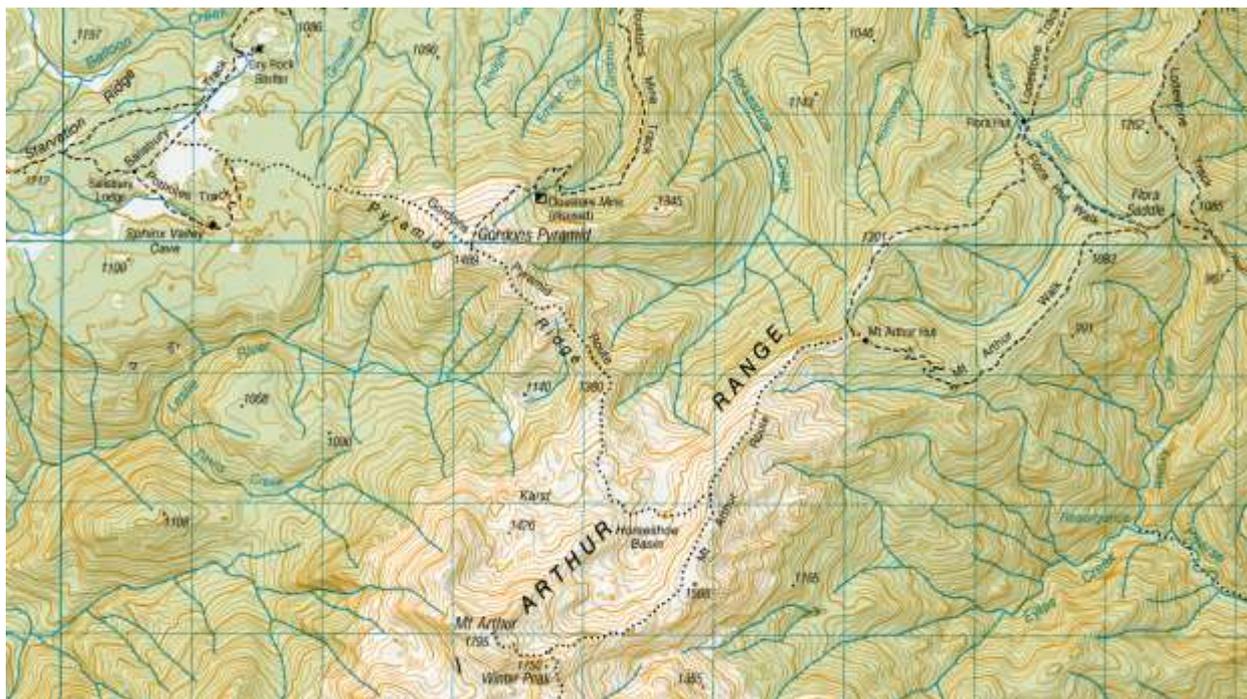
## MT ARTHUR – SALISBURY HUT – FLORA HUT

December 28, 2016 – January 1, 2017, 2017

Author: Sue Williams

Published in Bulletin 778, February 2017

We headed north in high spirits on the 27th of December and made it to the Flora Carpark on the 28th about 5pm and set off for Mt Arthur Hut an hour and a half away. Richard found a four-leaf clover, so that confirmed it was going to be an excellent trip.



In the morning there were clouds scudding past the hut and some rain. We waited a while (which turned out to be the standard deal for the trip), it was a good move as the weather continued to improve. We made it to the top of Mt Arthur with stunning views on the way up, but with complete pea soup on the top. We then headed through Horse-Shoe Basin, over Gordon's Pyramid and final downhill to Salisbury Lodge.

We did a day trip down as far as Splugeon's Shelter, down the Leslie River. The shelter has a roll-up plastic front wall for fine weather. Another night in Salisbury Lodge then we set off checking out the fantastic huts and shelters on the way. The Dry Rock Shelter, Growler Shelter (lunch), Lower Gridiron and Upper Gridiron and finally reaching Flora Hut as the rain set in. We spent some time watching some blue ducks, mum dad and a fluffy duckling. Rather than pitch a fly in the rain we decided to celebrate New Year in Flora Hut. Richard offered to run out to the car park (about 40 minutes) and bring back beer and wine. We had singing, stories and an early night and headed out the next day.

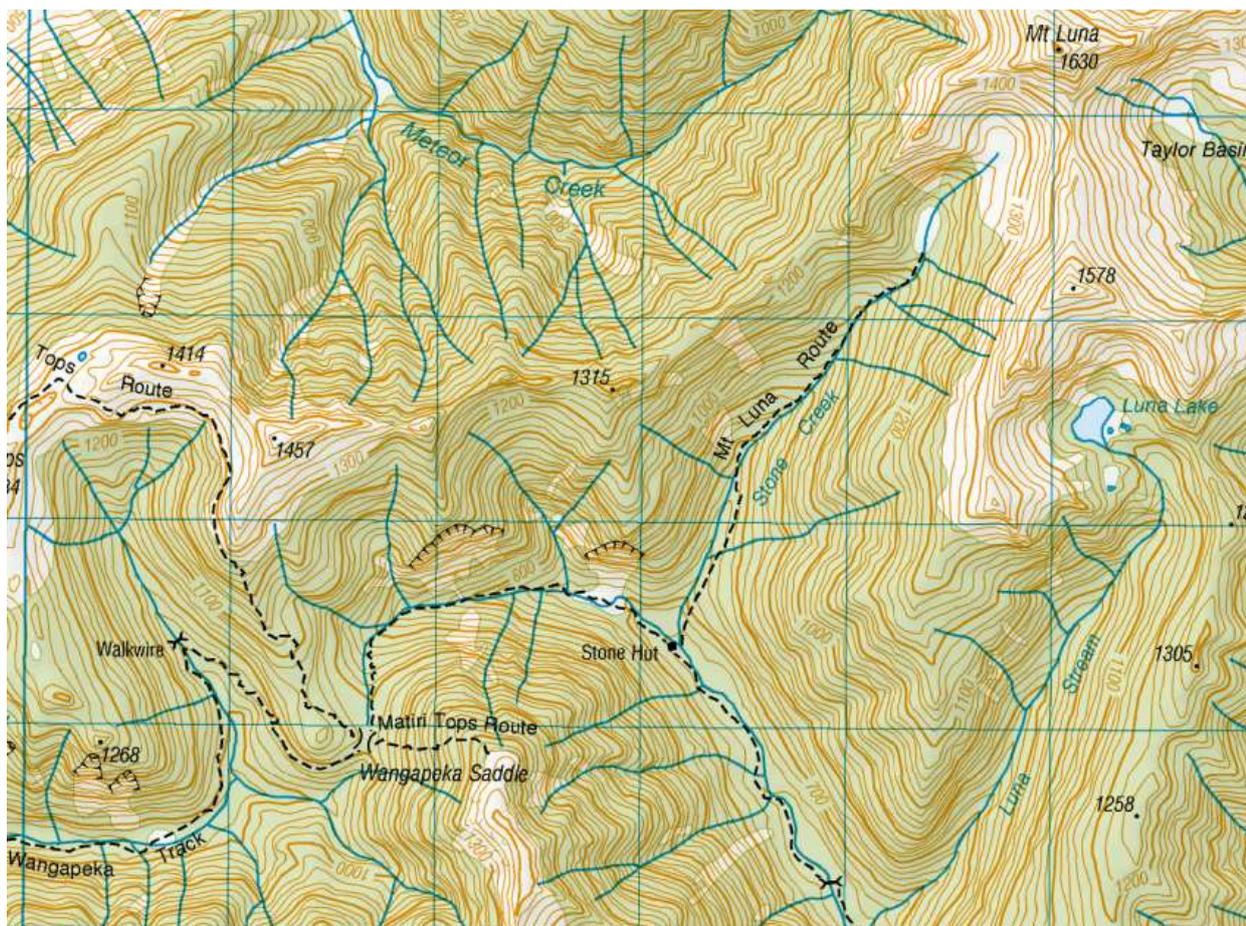
# WANGAPEKA

January 2-5, 2017

Author: Sue Williams

Published in Bulletin 778, February 2017

We re-stocked and headed south on the 2nd for the Wangapeka. We set off after lunch for Kings Hut following the beautiful Wangapeka River.



It was raining the next day, so we waited as the forecast was for clearing weather. We left for Kiwi Hut (after lunch of course) and spent the night in a lovely wee hut at the Kiwi Saddle.

The plan changed for the next day as the weather was a bit foggy and windy, so we decided to go over the Luna tops and down Stone Creek (shorter route in the open). Huey was on our side and the weather improved throughout the day. We spent quite a while relaxing on the saddle near Mt Luna before descending to Stone Hut for the night.

The last day was a long easy walk out from Stone Hut to the road end in fine weather, looking for blue ducks and enjoying the bush.

Sue Williams with Richard and Tracy Pettinger

## SEA TO SUMMIT BUSHBASH

**January 15, 2017**

**Author: Jim Western**

Published in Bulletin 779, March 2017

As it was a Sunday morning, a group of 12 met up outside the club rooms at the extremely civilised hour of 9 am. This trip was so inclusive that it an appeal to several generations from six years of age and upwards and rumoured to attract people from as far as the northern extremities of the province.



**Mihiwaka Summit (PHOTO: Russell Knowles)**

After a short drive to the car park known as "The Green" at Deborah Bay, the trip started by walking up Lewis Street. We met up with Ruth, who had kindly allowed the club to run the trip through some of her own land. Once the resident dog was satisfied, we had joined in the chase the ball game for long enough and the sheep had been fed, it was onwards and upwards to the 'donkey track'. This track was used to cart goods up during the construction of the railway and tunnel some 140 years ago. We were given a short account of the history of the area and where we were headed. Eeyore and his friends had long gone so there was to be no hooved assistance with our ascent. In fact, our leader told us that the donkey track was too gentle a gradient and took us on a more vertical ascent where we could study up close bush lawyer,

ongaonga and gorse along with the more appealing local bush. By my past bush bashing escapades, this was pretty straightforward, and easy to negotiate. We visited the site of the old railway tunnel brick works and again were told a bit about its history.

It was then over the railway track, next to the mouth of the tunnel and back into the bush following the stream for part of the way, managing to avoid wet feet. We came out of the bush and crossed over the Blueskin Road heading for the rock below our intended destination. Two of the group stayed at this point to admire the harbour views, while the rest of us continued onto the 561-metre trig point on Mihiwaka's summit, which is east of Mt Kettle. From this vantage point we could see great views over to the harbour mouth, peninsula, and surrounding hills, as the fine weather was still holding out.



**View over Port Chalmers, Otago Harbour towards the Otago Peninsula (PHOTO: Russell Knowles)**

We returned pretty much the way we came, apart from following an easy track once we crossed the railway back to the cars. A few spits of rain right at the end didn't really do anything to spoil an enjoyable well-organised day out in the local hills.

Jim Western for Gordon Tocher, Ruth Gold-smith, Helen Reid, Carlo November, Takeru November, Christine Hopkins, Steve Hopkins, Michaela Day, Tony Timperley, Russell Knowles and Debbie Guthrie.

## **BRODERICK PASS**

**February 4-6, 2017**

**Author: Maria Hamelink**

Published in Bulletin 779, March 2017

We all set off from the clubrooms with drivers Mike, Ralph and Richard, stopping at Oamaru for a bite to eat.

After a quick catch up at the gate end, we decided to continue as far as we could along the 4-wheel drive track, the plan was to drive the whole way to Monument hut but this was not to be.

After a short drive we were in a deep patch of water, in fact Mike thought we had made a wrong turn and were actually in the river however on inspection found we were still on the track but the water, up to the door of his high vehicle was flowing like a river over the track. Mike carefully backed up turned around and parked up on some high ground. We then started our walk toward Monument hut, the water was up over our knees already but after 200m we were back on semi dry land. No shuttle service on this trip, though Richard did get a bit further up the track.



Lunch at Huxley Forks (PHOTO: Maria Hamelink)

We arrived at Monument hut around 1.30am and set up our tents on the flats below the hut.

Saturday dawned a light drizzle but mostly windy, we set off up the Hopkins Valley then over the wire bridge to the Huxley River, the walk up the valley was challenging with severe head wind and the river higher than usual, so we used the track in some parts. We arrived at Huxley Forks hut around 11.30 and enjoyed a leisurely lunch in the sun. Then on up the North Branch of the Huxley River, the river was high but still able to boulder hop along the river for most though it was slow going and several big slips meant we had to climb up and over the slips on the track.



**Bivy Rock 40mins upstream from Broderick Hut (PHOTO: Maria Hamelink)**

We arrived at Broderick Hut about 4.30pm, most feeling exhausted due to the wind, terrain and limited sleep. The plan was to continue on toward the pass and camp on the terraces part way up toward the pass however after a quick chat most chose to stay at Broderick Hut for the night. Phillip and I decided to continue on and find a campsite closer to the pass as we were keen to climb up Mt McKenzie the next day. So, after dinner we set off again over the creek and toward the pass. We knew there was to be fierce winds that night and I wasn't keen to camp on the terraces so instead we found a large rock in the valley with a small bivy and cleared a nice wee spot for our bed rolls, no room for a tent. The gusty wind came just as Alex predicted at 3am however by then I had already retreated to the bivy for a less comfortable but sheltered night. It was my first time sleeping in a rock bivy.

We were up at 6am to a bright red sunrise and by 7.30am were on our way grinding up the zig zag track toward Broderick Pass. It took little over 1 ½ hours to get to Broderick Pass for a lovely view both down the Huxley and out over the Landsborough area. We continued up Mt McKenzie, it was a relatively easy climb with large stable scree rock and large patches of

packed snow. After a quick refresher on my snow skills, we headed up the snow using our ice axes, as we neared the top steeper section Philip kindly cut some steps for me then we sidled across to some rocks and climbed the rocks to around 2000 metres. As we were making our way down, we were joined by Alex, then Alex and Philip went back up to the top first climbing up the rocks then onto the snowy top. I found a lovely, sheltered spot a little below, sat in the sun and watched them get smaller and smaller as they neared the top.



**Alex Tups & Philip Somerville heading down from Mt McKenzie (PHOTO: Maria Hamelink)**

Meanwhile a small group went up to Broderick pass and Richard and Eve ventured down the creek a bit further, others in the group had explored the South Huxley track.

After a bite to eat atop Mt McKenzie Philip, Alex and I slowly made our way back down stopping at Broderick hut again before heading back down the river to Huxley Forks hut where we met up with the rest of the group. We arrived just after 7pm so had been tramping for nearly 12hours.

Back at the hut we ate dinner, shared stories of our day then retired for the night.

Monday morning dawned and as expected could see the weather was closing in, some chose to make an early start and headed off back toward Monument Hut, by the time I left the wind was horrific, it was a tail wind but it whipped the gravel up on the river bed stinging our bare legs and almost bowled us over on several occasions, further down the valley the wind has died

down but the rain was on and off. After a quick lunch at Monument Hut we headed down the road for the 2 hour walk to our vehicles. At the point where we left our vehicles the water was still well over the road but in the daylight we found an alternative track to the vehicles so managed to stay reasonably dry.



**Maria traversing steps cut by Philip on the slopes of Mt McKenzie (PHOTO: Maria Hamelink)**

On the way home we stopped off at Omarama and it was like a different world, a very hot, still summer's day, a perfect spot to enjoy an ice cream.

Thank you to Richard for arranging this trip, the drivers and Philip for sharing his snow skills. A great weekend was had by all.

Maria Hamelink for Richard, Ralph, Philip, Mike, Morag, Eve, Trisha, Nas, Rodger. Michael, Gail, John, Alex, Rose, Sue and Keith.

## WEEKEND WANDER OVER BEN RUDD'S

February 4, 2017

Author: Sam Patrick

Published in Bulletin 779, March 2017

I went to Ben Rudd's property over Waitangi weekend. It is looking good with native bush starting to dominate the vista. The excellent growing season this year, with warmish weather and lots of rain, has ensured all plants, wanted or not, have put on a growth spurt. The firebreak track shows a marked change from broom and gorse on our neighbour's property to native species on our property.



The track down to shelter is increasingly shaded by Coprosma, Broadleaf and Manuka. Unfortunately, bush lawyer is also starting to appear. The open areas of the track are host to baby Broom bushes, Himalayan Honeysuckle and the odd Lupin. Maybe the next workday should work on the track to get these before they really get a foothold.

Beech trees, Fuchsia, Raspberries and Red Currants around the shelter are attracting birds with 4 tui, 8 bellbirds and a squadron of wax eyes making themselves seen and heard while I was there. There has been talk of planting some Kowhai around the shelter to help this along. The "hut book" continues to gather positive comments from visitors and it seems half of them bring their dog. One entry had four people and seven dogs ! The names in the book although numerous are just an indication as many more people don't sign the book. I know I forgot to!

As per usual the walk back down the fire-break track involved greeting about ten people out walking with dogs, bikes and kids. The walk in and out takes only an hour, so there is still plenty of daylight for a wander after work during the week. A picnic dinner could be a nice option. I thoroughly recommend it.

If you feel inclined, you could pull out a couple of baby Broom bushes on your way. They are tiny and easily pulled out...unless summer finally arrives and dries the ground to brick.....yeah right.

## **GREEN RIDGE & PULPIT ROCK**

**February 5, 2017**

**Author: Geraldine Kerr**

Published in Bulletin 779, March 2017

The day started off brilliantly with what appeared to be the promise of a Dunedin Stunner. Clear blue skies, sunshine...an absolute rare sight this summer!

However, that did not deter 16 enthusiastic people (including 7 newbies) from filling several cars and setting off to the Silver Peaks (less than 30 minutes north of Dunedin) to take on Green Ridge and Pulpit Rock.

Our journey started from the Mountain Road entrance. Here Tomas pointed to the three peaks in the distance showing us where our ultimate destination lay ahead.

From there we climbed up through the bush and scrubby manuka. Many parts of the walk were above tree line allowing for us to take advantage of the panoramic views and getting some great photos at the same time.



**Pulpit Rock from the north, Silver Peaks Scenic Reserve**

1km in, the track points the way to Swampy Ridge. (Another great walk to save for another day). Our walk, however, continued towards the former Green Hut (approx. 1 hr. in) and Jubilee Hut.

Green Hut has since been torn down and now reduced to sawn-off posts in the ground. However, the clearing provided a great spot to rest and take in the views of the higher peaks in the distance.

From here in our customary single file formation, we continued a short but steep climb. As we neared the summit of Green Hill we were awarded with more gorgeous views in all directions.

From here it was an easier walk to the base of Pulpit Rock, which we eagerly scrambled to the top to take in the 360 degree views that Tomas had earlier promised us.

From the top of Pulpit Rock we were able to see panoramic views of the Taieri, Middlemarch and the coastal areas near Palmerston. Whilst the day was warm, the summit greeted us with a strong cool breeze, strong enough to make our fellow Scots man quickly hold on to his kilt!

We opted to take shelter from the wind amongst the tussock and schist rock just below the summit to eat our lunch and take in the surrounding views.



**The final short climb to Pulpit Rock from the main Silver Peaks route**

Whilst our trip ended at Pulpit Rock, the track continues on to Jubilee Hut (a trip worthy for another time).

As we retraced our steps and made our descent back down the temperature of the day started to become apparent. With the temperature increasing as we continued to descend it was talks of cold beers at the finish that ended up spurring several of us on.

On behalf of the group a big thanks to Tomas for leading the pack and for making it an enjoyable trip. Bring on the next one.

Geraldine Kerr on behalf of Sonia Alexanian, Tony Timperley, Lucy Jones, Michaela Day, Sandy Webb, Gloria Qi, Jill, Carl, Robin Quigg, Alan Hanson, Bill Richardson, Zoe Melrose, Valeska Gose, John Cookson and Tomas Sobek

# MOA FLAT CYCLING

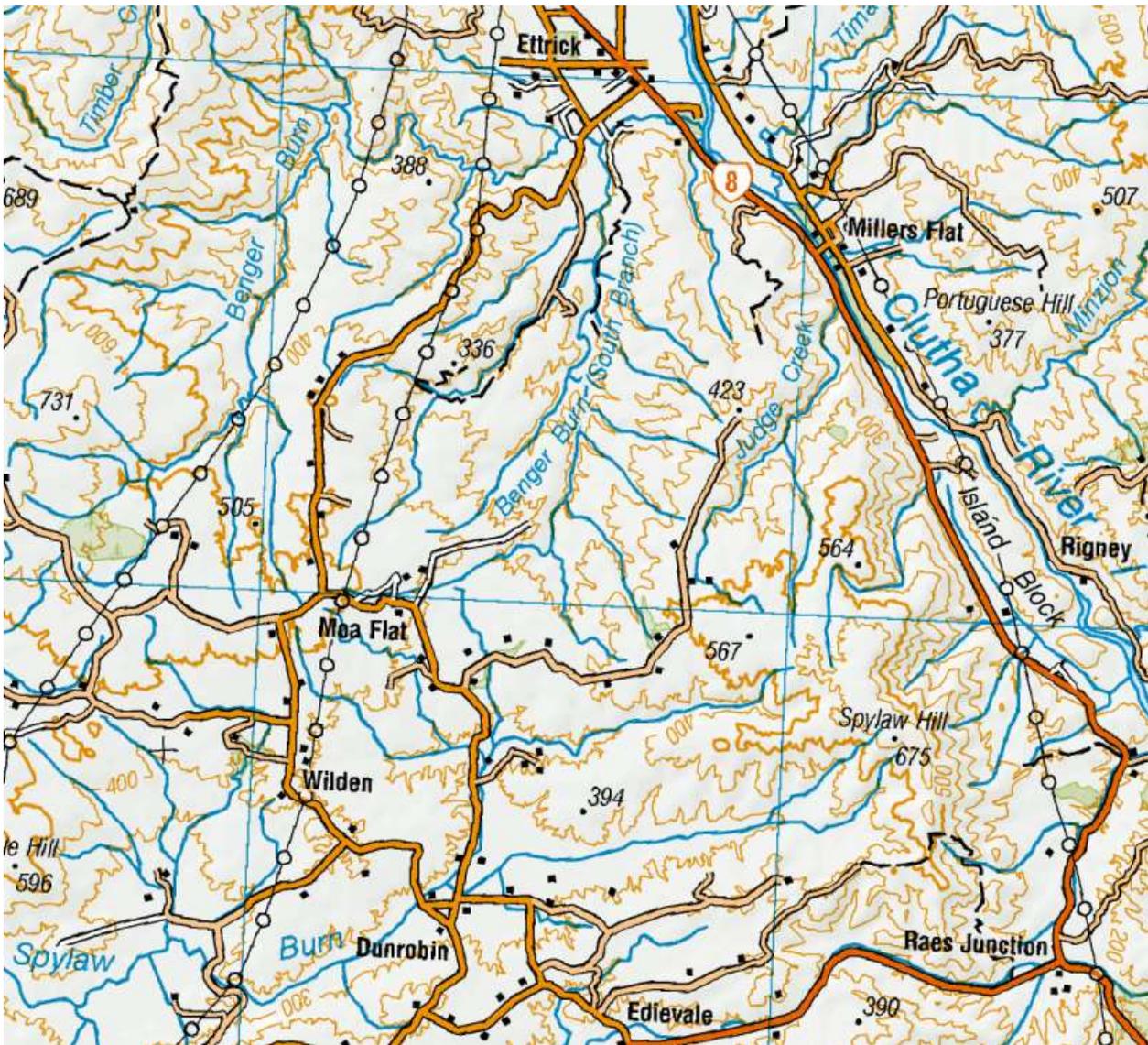
**February 11, 2017**

**Author: Jane Cloete**

Published in Bulletin 779, March 2017

I've done this cycle ride before, but the two who came with me hadn't. I did warn them about one particularly long, and particularly steep, hill but I don't think Greg or Chris realised just how long or how steep!

Greg had a car big enough to take all three of us so we piled in, bikes behind us, but I was dismayed to find thick fog at Lawrence. Would the section of the ride along the Clutha River also be foggy? And cold and damp?



We made a prompt start, leaving Raes Junction at 9.15am and – thank goodness – no fog at all. 20+km along SH8 and we arrived at Ettrick. Filled up our water bottles and then it was on to THE HILL to Moa Flat. Greg soared ahead, with Chris and me plodding on slowly. We found

a sunny bank for lunch, just before the top, and after food we made rapid progress. The top marked halfway in distance but over 80% of the day's climb. A glorious long run down to Moa Flat (the moa sculpture halfway down looks most realistic 'cause it's now peeping out of tall toitoi grass) was followed by an easy 2km across Moa Flat. Just a couple more hills - nothing to what we'd done earlier - and we joined SH90 at Edievale. The last 9km was almost all downhill back to the cars.

The day was completed with an ice cream at Lawrence, so we were back in Dunedin by 3.30pm.

My thanks to Greg and Chris for their cheerfulness and patience. Jane Cloete

## **EAST OF FLAGSTAFF**

**February 12, 2017**

**Author: Alan Hanson**

Published in Bulletin 779, March 2017

An aptly named trip with a leader with excellent navigation and observation skills.

13 of us met up at Booth Road and then set off onwards and upwards on the wide and well-walked Pineapple Track, until Chris decided to just “walk off the track into the bush”. Dutifully we all followed, to find the Old Pineapple track — a very adequate track out of the sun, in the comfort of the bush. A good grunt until we came out in the open to be faced with the ‘new’ Pineapple track. Ugh, out in the hot sun and still going up?

Not so: Chris’s route took us over the “main highway” on to what he called the ‘Short Cut Track’, through the grass to disappear again onto a clear trail through the bush heading towards the Nicols Falls area. Then up a portion of the Nicol’s Creek Loop Track and a turn on to the Pepper Tree Track. About halfway along this track, we stopped for a cuppa and a chance to “declutter” the cling grass from those with hairy legs, who foolishly had neglected to wear gaiters. A silly idea, as the cling grass had not ended.



**Views towards Liberton & Signal Hill from the tracks on the eastern side of Flagstaff**

After this refreshment stop, the well-defined track continued its undulating way until we were back on the Pineapple track, albeit higher than at the last crossing. I was right, the puffing had been because we had still climbed, and we had completed a loop to be higher than before.

However, this was the highest we were to go today because, after a brief walk down the Old Pineapple Track, we all dutifully followed Chris again to depart into what looked like bush, on the south side. This soon opened onto the Totara Track. Chris had done it again. A seemingly unmarked entrance to a track that took us past at least two very large Totara trees and several saplings.

In spite of a belated morning tea stop, we began to think of a lunch stop — here, or continue on and “be home for lunch”? A good decision was to have lunch here. After a suitable time, we continued on down, meeting up with the Davies Track taking us back via McGoun’s Road to Booth Road and our cars.

The trip was really good. Thank you, Chris, and the weather gods for holding off the downpour until the cars were reached.

Alan Hanson for Chris and Charlotte Handley, Geraldine Kerr, Elaine Stevens, Jenni Lynnea and Tom Gibson (visitors from Canada), Lucy Jones, Jeff Smith, Sylvie Leduc, Anne Patterson, Rob McGee and Sandy Webb.

## **AORAKI / MT COOK – ANNETTE PLATEAU**

**February 18-19, 2017**

**Author: Wayne Hodgkinson**

Published in Bulletin 779, March 2017

Some trips are simply begging to be done, and Annette Plateau was one of them. On Saturday morning 18 knobbly kneed trampers (well, maybe not all of them knobbly kneed) emerged from tents and appeared snacking their brekky outside the kitchen area at DOC's White Horse campsite at Mt Cook.



**Leaving Mueller Hut after lunch (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

We'd arrived during Friday in 1 van and 3 cars from all points of the compass.

By 8:30 we were all heading up the steps towards Sealy Tarns and continuing through the murk to Mueller Hut – 3 enjoying the freedom of day tripping, while 15 lugged up their packs. It was interesting how all those booked into the hut seemed to be from overseas. We left Alex (no.19) at the saddle waiting for a clearing in the fog before he could launch himself (by paraglider) into it.

A random thing happened at Mueller Hut when it turned out to be both Sharon and Trisha's birthdays - and that they were both born on the same day! After a drawn-out lunch admiring the mountain landscape and watching thunderous icefalls off Mt Sefton, we headed off towards the Plateau with the fog cleared and hot sun shining, surrounded by majestic mountains. The route starts briefly level with the hut, before following occasional cairns down a snowy slope

and along a rocky ledge. The rock and softening snow alternated all afternoon, providing entertainment for our rapidly tiring bodies as we endeavoured to keep our feet on top. After a steady climb we stopped to set up camp on snow beside rocks near the lower end of the plateau, 3 ½ hrs from Mueller. The vast majority of us were sufficiently worn out to feel a sense of relief. We stamped down and shovelled platforms in the snow, pitched tents and had dinner on the go in no time. Great views all round, Aoraki standing proud, clear sky, warm, no wind. With light winds and possible light shower forecast, we were confident of a quiet night.



**Aoraki / Mt Cook becomes visible from Mueller Hut (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

The sound of Peter's voice and Joe's MSR Dragonfly cooker ensured everyone who had been asleep was up well before 7am, to enjoy a colourful sunrise. We brewed up brekky and headed up the plateau, the snow not much firmer than yesterday. After an hour's plod we summited Mt Annette at 2235m. Again, great views all round. Getting a bit monotonous really.

Eventually, we started back down towards camp, with clear skies and monotonous views of ice clad mountains all round. We were soon heading back towards Mueller, retracing our steps from yesterday. Joe managed to discover a secure bum deep hole for one foot only, so secure he couldn't wriggle his way out of it. Rodger rummaged around until he found the right key, and they were soon sliding and clambering over rocks with the rest of us. In no time at all (about 2 hours) we were back at Mueller Hut. More tedious views of ice bound mountains being reduced by occasional booming avalanches, and lunch. A cool breeze appeared accompanied by dark clouds from the south, as we started back down.

The threatened change didn't seem to happen, and we were all back at the vehicles in good time.

A great trip with great company in an awesome place. Thanks everyone, especially Peter, for driving us home!



**Annette Plateau campsite (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

Wayne for the birthday duo Sharon Bretherton & Trisha Geraets, and Joe Skinner, Peter Boeckhout, Rodger Clarkson, Aaron Lewis, Jonas Wiesner, Peju Hose, Nas Shannon, Andrea Hudson, Joe Bretherton, Nathan McCauley, Ian Billingham, Nico Cogan, Ralph Harvey, Gail Mitchel, Maree McRae.

## MAUNGATUA

**March 5, 2017**

**Author: Russell Knowles**

Published in Bulletin 780, April 2017

Another Sunday, another fine sunny day and I looked over to Debbie, "it's the Maungatua trip today?" "Sure is" she replied. After arriving at the club rooms and meeting Tomas I was slightly confused seeing so many people with leaders of the club Antony and Wayne and others there. Must be a popular walk, I thought then I realised it was River crossing day for bush craft. What a beaut day for both trips!



'Rocky outcrop with a view of the Taieri Plains' (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)

So, while our esteemed leaders were to be standing about Outram Glen dipping their toes into the river, 13 hardy walkers tackled the massive hill nearby.

We had been warned it was a steep climb, in parts it was almost down to hands and knees and reminded me of the scramble up to Liverpool Hut in the Matukituki. Once we cleared the bush line the views started to open up all of the Taieri Plain with its neat rows of hedges were specs below us. In the distance Mt Cargill and Swampy didn't look large and imposing like they do from in town. We all stopped to watch a large plane glide silently into Dunedin Airport while having lunch.

At this stage 2 of the group decided to relax with the sunshine and views while the rest of us carried on over the large tussock fields closer to the top. Most of us found it difficult to walk at any speed without slipping and tripping over the terrain, at least tussock is nice to land on if you do fall. We managed to climb to approx. 870 metres, still some distance from the top but

only 30 odd metres in height from the highest point. We were happy with that. A very steep but uneventful descent had us back at the car park around 3.30.



**'Break at a rocky outcrop' (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

Thanks, Tomas, for the great leadership and everyone for the great company

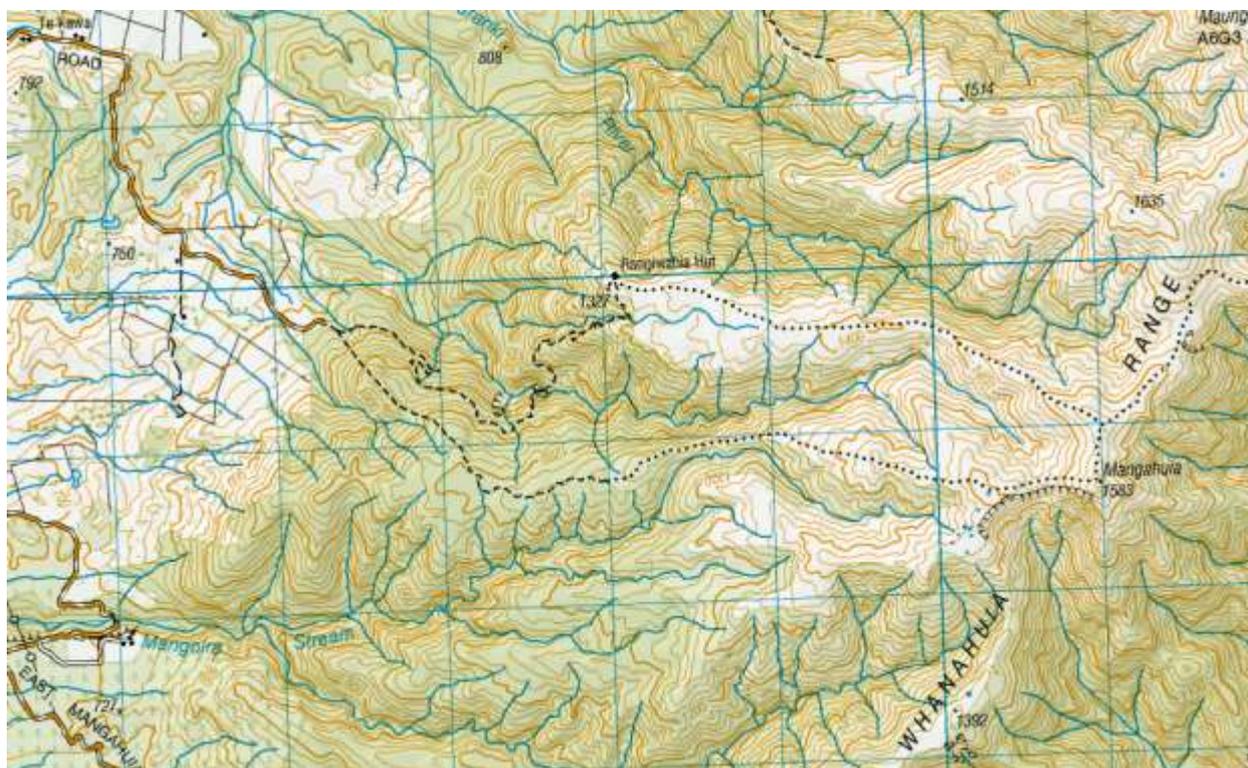
## RANGIWAHIA HUT, RUAHINE FOREST PARK (WITH FMC)

**Date not recorded**

**Author: David Barnes**

Published in Bulletin 780, April 2017

When a bunch of trampers from all around the country have to attend a meeting somewhere like Palmerston North, it makes sense that they actually do some tramping. And so it was that 10 of us from the FMC team went haring out of "Palmie", seeking to escape minutes and motions and head to the hills. Rangiwahia Hut was chosen as somewhere we could get to easily in what was left of the day, fit us all in and provide lots of options for Sunday (and Monday for a few).



As a hut just above bushline that can be reached in a couple of hours without crossing any unbridged rivers, Rangiwahia is an obvious attraction for beginner trampers and families, and for this reason our route was a wide, well graded one. However, we still had to climb 500 metres and it was a warm evening, so it wasn't long before I'd worked up a sweat. The track has recently been re-routed to avoid a large slip. The slip that had been a significant obstacle for trampers since it destroyed the old track over a decade ago. A highlight of the walk is a spectacular arched bridge perched about fifty metres above an unnamed stream. Owen pointed out some large cracks in the ground nearby and suggested that you wouldn't want to be on the bridge in an earthquake. Soon the forest gave way to a band of the ubiquitous leatherwood

that is such a feature of North Island bushlines and then we were in the tussocks for the last few minutes to the hut.

DoC has a booking system at a number of popular Ruahine and Tararua huts that, unlike on the Great Walks, allows unbooked people but gives those who book the certainty of getting a bunk – in theory. We had bookings for nine people, but there were already people occupying eight of the thirteen bunks, and none took the hints that they vacate a few of them. As predicted by many, a booking system without a warden is ineffective unless the booked people are prepared to be very assertive. No-one wants that sort of grief in the hills – a fact that the bunk poachers probably rely on. In the end, Anthony – a local and a frequent visitor to the hut – decided to head home for the night and leave his sleeping mat to ensure there were enough to go round our group.

The thick mist that had descended around the hut in the evening was gone by the time we stirred in the morning, and it was apparent that we were in for a cracker day. Our big group was dispersing. Two with commitments elsewhere headed back the way we'd come. One maximised his opportunity for a day in the hills with an epic loop out to Howlett's Hut and back. Three with an extra day to play with were heading for a night in Triangle Hut, and I was in a group of three going up to Mangahuia and down Deadman's Track.

We were initially glad of the wide track, as the tussocks had had a good soaking overnight and we too would have been soaked if we'd had to push through them. Tussock tops country has to be one of my favourite tramping environments, and I revelled in being in such a place. The ridge climbs gently from the hut at 1327 metres before turning south and crossing over Mangahuia, 1583 metres, the high point of our trip. The unmistakable shapes of Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe dominated the skyline to the northwest while to the north, south and east, ridge after ridge offered this new North Islander the promise of more great tops trips. John's intimate knowledge of the Ruahines meant he could point out lots of features and possible trips.

Deadman's Track follows a ridge that runs parallel to the one we'd climbed. Again, it was at a fairly benign gradient, with the only difficulty being a few muddy patches ambushing us from within the tussocks. Eventually we were back in the bush, which featured some magnificent pahautea or NZ cedar trees. The conversation flowed freely as we steadily lost height. Looking out through a gap in the trees I could see farmland in the distance and was just thinking we might be out in an hour or so when Pat announced "we're here" as the stile that marked the end of the track appeared in view, a couple of hours sooner than expected.

David Barnes

## CLOUD FOREST & ESCARPMENT TRACKS

**April 9, 2017**

**Author: Leonie Loeber**

Published in Bulletin 781, May 2017

It was a beautiful autumn morning when we left the Clubrooms at 9.00. We drove past the competitors in the Three Peak Race, and we hoped that we would not meet them on the tracks. We headed to Sullivans Dam which we arrived at 9.40. There were sections of boardwalk and steps which made the ascent of the first section of the track, the Cloud Forest of Leith, a lot easier. The bush was beautiful and very peaceful – there was very little birdsong. We arrived at the transmission line at 10.30 where we had morning tea. We had spectacular views to the north, the skies were still clear and there was a slight breeze.



**The view from Pigeon Rock, looking across the Escarpment Track towards Leith Saddle to Swampy Summit**

The next part of the track, the Escarpment Track, was a scramble and quite muddy in places. The bush was still beautiful and there was a little bit more bird song. We had lunch at 1.30 at a rocky outcrop with spectacular views of coast and farmland. As we wandered along the Escarpment Track we were thinking about 'how lucky we are' which was sadly appropriate as it turned out, as John Clark aka Fred Dagg passed away on Sunday.

Once we had finished the Escarpment Track, we walked up the A H Reed Track to the TV tower. The track goes through regenerating native bush and over volcanic boulders. Here we were again treated to beautiful 360° degree views of the city and peninsula. From the AH Reed

Track we wandered back down Cowan Road, the Three Peaks Track, through some pine forest, over farm paddocks, and back to the cars at 3.10.

Tony had learnt his 'hook grass lesson' from last time and on Sunday he wore long shorts and high gaiters. A few of us had hook grass, but I don't think it was as bad as what Tony experienced last time he did the walk. Thank you, Tony, for a great walk and to everyone else for your company.

Further information on the Cloud Forests of Leith and the Escarpment Track may be found in Dunedin Tracks and Trails by Antony Hamel and the OTMC pamphlet Dunedin Skyline Walk – Sullivan's Dam to Mt Cargill prepared by Antony Pettinger. (Note: this is available on the OTMC website.)

Leonie Loeber for Tony Timperley, Tomas Sobek, Peter Loeber, Mark Stephenson, Mandy Mok, Lynley Copland, Ash Flintoff, Ken Taylor, Alan Hanson and Sandy Webb.

## **EAST MATUKITUKI (OTAGO ANNIVERSARY)**

**March 18-20, 2027**

**Author: Rodger Clarkson**

Published in Bulletin 781, May 2017

I said in my organisation email that we'd camp Friday night on the right-hand side of the road at Albertown, of course meaning the left. Dave's car went up early and decided to stay on the right, to catch a German poetry evening being delivered at 10:30pm, so in fact I was right all along. The rest of us arrived just before 10, got the tents set up and hopped into bed about 10:20 all set for a good night's sleep...Suddenly a German Poetry reading started with multiple participants (German poetry is more about volume and over speaking each other than quality) A short time later it was accompanied by some background duf duf music. I know all this sounds horrible but actually it was much much worse. Luckily for them the rain started, and things quietened down because the next morning we all discovered that every single one of us was just about to get up and remind them who won the bloody war anyway.



**Aspiring Flats, Turnbull Thomson Falls and the Kitchener Cirque**

Sat morning we all headed to Cameron Flat and met up with the independent members. Trevor had a look at the river crossing and unfortunately with the godsend rain from the night before it was decided it was a bit high to cross safely so it was back in the cars and up to the bridge crossing. We stopped at Glacier Burn and dropped packs. Most of us headed up the glacier burn track but with low cloud around we couldn't see up to the glacier. It was back to the packs for lunch with the cows before heading off. I hadn't been here in over a decade so the

track had a lot more ups and downs than I remember. We came to a nice section of river and before you could say "I love German poetry" Tina had jumped in. The water did look inviting so I had to jump in too and before you knew it everyone else....decided to stay warm and dry.

We headed to Aspiring flat, North Otago Tramping Club had beaten us there and probably got the prime camping spot, but Antony and Debbie had met our first arrivals and indicated a spot near the head of the valley that was dry. Dave came down with terrible cramp as we neared camp, but carrying in all that alcohol was still worth it. (Alcohol: The cause of, and solution to, all of life's problems)



**Turnbull Thomson Falls from the head of Aspiring Flats**

Sunday morning 4 decided to hang round the valley for the day and 19 set off up Rainbow stream. I could see the best way to go on the map so I said to the advance group we should head up the untrue left-hand creek some-where around the 4th, 5th or 6th side creek give or take a creek or two. Simple. Well, you'd think so but apparently not because instead of heading up the nice grassy meadow with wildflowers we headed up a loose rocky steep slippery slope. I haven't had so much fun since the last German poetry evening I tried to sleep through!

At about the halfway point we stopped for lunch in two groups, while admiring the waterfalls turning into rainbows on the surrounding cliffs. The group at the back decided this was a good turnaround point while the group ahead kept going with about 7 getting to the summit, a splendid achievement and one of which you should all be proud. I don't think it's important to name names here, after all we were all there in spirit and at the end of the day that's what counts. (Just ask Bourdillon and Evans...who?)

The summiteers got back around 5:30 and it was time for evening meal. I had a wander round to see what's cooking - and to check out who I'm going to put in my food group next trip I run (Is that an abuse of power?) – The winners will be announced next snow-farm trip, everyone else chop chop - you need to pick up your food game!



**Sisyphus Peak from Wilmot Saddle**

We walked out on the Monday. The rivers had dropped since we came in, so some went back by river crossings, and some stayed on the track. We were back at the cars before we knew it and had a late lunch in Wanaka. All in all another great tramping club trip and a good time had by all and might I add it was expertly led with clear directions given at all times!

Rodger for Antony, Debbie , Trevor, Ross, Morag, Mike, Conler, Nathan, Maria, Sue, Rose, Tina, James, Michael, Andrea, Ralph, John, Peter, Mark, Rob, Sharen, Dave, Maree and Tania

## **TAIERI MILLENNIUM TRACK FROM HENLEY**

**March 26, 2017**

**Author: Tania McMillan**

Published in Bulletin 781, May 2017

An optimistic group of 17 people headed away from the OTMC Clubrooms at 9 am on Sunday, 26 March in what started out as ideal conditions, all hopeful that we would have enough time before the forecast of a wet cooler front was expected to arrive later in the afternoon. It was a good call on Peter's part to start at Henley Bridge end – 'just in case' so we could have a pretty sheltered walk should we get caught out in it.



**John Bull Gully picnic area, lower Taieri River**

We set off along the side of the riverbank on a very well-maintained track and it was pretty much how Ivan Booth remembered it when he worked on it way back in the 1980s with the DOC. The river was so still that it produced the most amazing mirror image of the surrounding bush. Bird song was noticeably lively with chattering tui, two cheeky wood pigeons and fantails accompanying us along a good part of the way.

The track climbed quite steeply in places and provided a really solid work out, being over-cast and a bit cooler was a bit of a blessing!

Morning tea was had in an idyllic setting – we had followed a well signposted track pointing towards John Bull Gully when it opened up to a manicured picnic spot near the water's edge, complete with two picnic tables, an information board and a large tree which provided a bit of

shelter from the light drizzle that had begun to fall. It was so lovely that it was a shame to not have been able to stay longer. A great spot to take your out-of-town friends and family!

The gorgeous canopy of trees and bush sheltered us from the steadily increasing drizzle, so we made our way to the top of the hill, it opened out a little more and there was a brilliant little viewing area that had unobstructed views of Taieri Island and then back up the Taieri River – a perfect place for a lunch break.



**The lower Taieri River from Governors Point, Taieri River Track**

From our vantage point, we could see that the weatherman did indeed do a good job with his forecast and as promised, although a little early, the rain was truly setting in. So we decided that as we'd all had a lovely tramp and were all quite happy to head back while we were all relatively dry and comfortable.

In all, it ended up being just shy of 15kms and no doubt for those that haven't done the whole track from Henley to Taieri Mouth; it will be revisited with much enthusiasm. A fabulous track which was enjoyed by all.

Tania McMillan for Peter (leader) and Leonie Loeber, Ken Taylor, Ivan Booth, Ash Flintoff, Sarah Hayes, Nuria Guerrerd, Greg McMillan, Guy Howat, Lucy Jones, Barbara McCabe, Jane McCabe, Claire Canning, Helen Collins, Carolyn Vincent, Jeff Smith.

## **NORTH OTAGO**

**April 1-2, 2017**

**Author: Jane Cloete**

Published in Bulletin 781, May 2017

Small, Short and Successful!

This tramping weekend had a small number (good, because then I don't have to count beyond 5 and can keep the flock in sight), relatively short distances (longest was about 14km), and I think fairly successful overall.

I was joined in Dunedin by Sarah Hayes and also Eroni Sotutu from the Phys Ed dept at the University. He plays rugby for Southern so I knew that his fitness wouldn't be a problem! We managed to get out of Dunedin by 5.45pm and drove to the Danseys Pass camping ground, arriving at dusk. Sarah and I sorted out cabins and Eroni had his tent up by the time Kathy and Chris got in. I explained the plan of the weekend – my worst fear was not rain, but fog! There is a bit of tricky navigation needed on the Dome Hills and if you can't see ...!

We left the camp at 8.30am and drove up to Dome Hills station. The road was in fairly good condition, the yards weren't muddy, nor the ruts too deep! And blessings of blessings there was NO fog at the road end, though it covered the Waitaki Valley way below us. And no wind. And no rain forecast! There was high cloud all day but it wasn't cold and I think that the uphill sections would have been tiring if the sun had been shining brightly. On with the packs and a good hour of walking along a farm track took us nearly to the top. Then it was off track for 2½ hours. Well, not quite off track: the topomap indicates a track and indeed it was visible in places, but much of it was just plodding downhill on or near a ridge. Always keeping off the righthand side of the ridge 'cause the drop off that side is terrifyingly steep!

We found one gate down and off its hinges, so we managed to sort-of get it upright and secure. Still didn't look quite right but at least stock couldn't find the gap!

Finally got to the bottom of Dome Hill by about 11.45am but we didn't linger long over our food, as the cattle were also interested in us. From the lunch spot, we could see the track back up to the top where the cars were – steep and long! What we couldn't see from where we sat for lunch was just around the corner. We found out 5 minutes later: a very large bull who was taking great care of his cows! Had to skirt around the corner of the paddock, instead of taking the straight track, and then nip quickly through a fence before he could notice!

In the event, the road up didn't take as long as it looked, before a couple of km on a contoured track (we passed Balmoral Forest on the way) to return to the cars.

A good meal in the camp – some kids were toasting marshmallows on an open fire too, so that was fun. A good night's sleep and daylight saving ended.

Sunday, we didn't get an extra sleep-in, in spite of the end of daylight saving! We left the camp at 7.30am! (8.30 new time). I'd threatened a 90minute road walk before the track proper, but in the end we did a car shuffle up to the Livingstone Cemetery where the track began. I knew

beforehand where the track started, but not where it finished, so we were really just doing an exploration!

The start is well marked with a slightly faded orange marker arrow. It then goes down a fence-line and firebreak. At the bottom of the firebreak it is NOT clearly marked at the point where a right-hand turn is needed! Some old scrub had a faded spray paint in orange so I took that to mean a marker, and then more faded spray paint-on-scrub followed.

Eventually the track goes into plantation forest and from then on it IS clearly marked, though we did have the odd difference of opinion about where to go!

It was really useful to have a GPS and also a paper map.

It took about 90+ minutes from start to finish, and we then did a car shuffle to get the car back from the start. Though I think it would be possible to do a round trip either starting and finishing at the Livingstone Cemetery OR starting and finishing at the motor camp. (I think the track is used by motor-cross folk 'cause there were motor-bike tracks in the mud in places).

My thanks to my companions, Sarah, Eroni, Kathy and Chris, for their tolerance, patience and cheerfulness!

Jane Cloete

## **TIN RANGE, STEWART ISLAND**

**December 10-20, 2016**

**Author: Wayne Hodgkinson**

Published in Bulletin 782, June 2017

### **Intro**

Down the south end of Stewart Island, the Tin Range was the site of NZ's only Tin Boom (and Bust), and last chance to see Kakapo in the wild before they were rescued from feral cats and relocated. I'd had the plan of a trip down there burning away for some years. Previous trips to Northwest & Southern Circuits had confirmed Stewart Island as a top place for tramping.



**Kiwi, spotted near Mt Allan (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)**

### **The Plan**

Allowing ourselves 11 days, we planned to water taxi into as close as we could get to Rakeahua Hut, (dependent on high tide), walk up onto Tin Range allowing 2 days to get to Diprose Bay at the bottom of the Tramway track in Pegasus Inlet. Another 2 days towards area of the Gogs, 1 day playing around there, 2 days back, allow 1 pit day (or weather), 2 days to Rakeahua Hut + 1 day to Freds Camp OR maybe 2 days to Doughboy Bay + 2 days to Freshwater Hut. All very flexible! Most people get to Pegasus Inlet by boat.

I had queried DOC about whether hunters might be present around the Pegasus area, and they agreed it was likely. So we were all equipped with high visibility 'don't shoot me' hats.

### **Day 1: Saturday 10 Dec 2016**

Leaving Dunedin 5:45am, Pam drove us to Bluff in good time to check in for ferry 8:55 all ready for tramping.

Away 9:30 on time, bumpy ferry crossing, me and some others feeding the fish (again). Arrive Oban 10:30, walk to Ruggedy Range base opposite DOC, get driven to Golden Bay (\$8 ea), taxi away 11ish choppy water. After a bumpy ride on Paterson Inlet we were dropped off about 2 ½ km past Fred's camp after some careful maneuvering around rocks.

Walking by 12:15, arrived Rakeahua Hut 4:30pm, mostly fine, 2 or 3 showers, some mud, track reasonably dry in most places. Observant Pam saw 3 dead rats on track – DOC poisoning? In pit by 7:30.



Day Six Pit Day – drying out 'don't shoot me hat' (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)

### **Day 2: Sun 11 Dec**

After some overnight rain we got away about 7 in light overcast. 40 min to start of the Table Hill route. Leaving the Southern Circuit track we were pleasantly surprised by the reasonably clear route up through bush and scrub, and open ground. After 2 ¾ hrs we came to a substantial clearing at a creek that I had figured might be a good campsite for night 1 if we had

got closer to Rakeahua Hut from the water taxi. Wet ground. We had a good snack – the creek gave me a funny feeling it was running the wrong way (silly me). Everything seems as it should be on the map now! A well marked route leads off downstream to the right, back into some scrub before following another creek up to the left (just like the map!). Passing an old hut site we continued up through scrub tight in places. Eventually onto open ground, where we were fortunate to see 3 dotterel, and onto Table Hill at 716m about 1:30. In the open between the scrub and Table Hill the route is well marked by poles. By now it was cloudy with showers and wind.

We continued down into a saddle and up onto Blaikies Hill. Coming off Blaikies Hill (the route avoids the actual top), we got ourselves misplaced, first to the left, then the right, the route definitely more vague. Occasional markers in the form of cairns or individual rocks or sticks are stuck into the ground on end and are more scarce.

Eventually found it again. We followed beyond where I thought we would drop to the campsite - up over another knob, until a vague route leading down to the right was found, which became clearer in a creek bed and lead directly to the 'Twin Pools' campsite near the Kopeka River. Arriving about 6:30. 11 ½ hour day. Wet and windy.



Campsite near North Arm of Port Pegasus (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)

**Day 3: Monday 12th Dec**

Rain, occasional sun, then showers. Had Pam's dinner from last night for brekky. We got away about 10:30am during a sunny bit. Crossed the Kopeka and headed up a reasonable route. Saw a kiwi about noon, near saddle before Mt Allen. We had gone too far down off the saddle after our first climb from our camp. Doubled back until we found a cairn marking the route sidling from the saddle. Eventually reached the tarn east of Mt Allen about an hour later. From this area on (southwards) there are good views of knobby landscape mostly to south and east. Showers on and off, route mostly on ridge top or western side. It is very worthwhile spending time searching out route markers, and doubling back when necessary, especially to locate entry points into scrub. Messy scrub on west side of Granite Knob, where we lost the route. Beautiful views at times. Point 637 about 3:40 a great spot, 360 degree views all round – Pegasus Inlet, Gogs, western peaks, Doughboy Bay, all way round to the eastern knobs and coastline. Good cell reception. Followed route down, eventually heading down a stream marked with cairns to a nice campsite arriving around 7pm. Hard tiring 8 hr day.



On Granite Knob (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)

#### **Day 4: Tuesday 13th Dec**

Nice campsite, pretty level, reasonable shelter from wind, floor of branches to keep above the wet ground, and a fireplace. Away 8:45 went past the main 'Dam' campsite, and after 20 minutes arrived at the dam itself, had a bit of a look around and we were on the Tramline! Very pleasant travel for a change. Some interesting features along the way – Dug out areas to side

of track – hut sites? Very prominent carved wood sign indicates start of Surveyors Track – we headed down through nice bush. Steeper travel, looked like the track had been recently cleared. Past pieces of corrugated iron marking an old hut site. Arrived at the bottom before noon to find a DOC sign, lots of features presumably the hotel site (brick chimney base), very good campsites. 2 small narrow inlets. Had a good lunch, left a food stash sealed in 3 x 2L ice-cream containers hanging from a branch, then headed off towards Albion Inlet about 1:30. Started low down but obliged to go higher through bush, then down to a creek / inlet with a red marker on a tree. Back up into the bush, and eventually down to Pegasus Creek – around 2 hours = slow going. After crossing Pegasus Creek we had some fun in the bush and creek beds, working on our bush navigation skills with map & compass. Eventually we headed up a spur to TL of creek draining into Pegasus Creek, and onto a bush saddle north of a scrubby top (we had decided to avoid the scrub!). Down a prominent spur to Albion Creek upstream of the inlet, but still tidal - about 8:30 – late, slow travel. We spent some time hunting around for a campsite, getting dark and steep bush. We found 3 individual 1 person spots quite separate in the bush, 2 in bivvy bags me in fly wrapped around a tree. Straight to bed, snacks. Left my sleeping bag in the pack to keep it dry. Me in all my clothing, Tararua biscuit and olive oil for dinner.



'More Knobs' amongst the Tin Range (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)

**Day 5: Wednesday 14th Dec**

Rain overnight, some heavy. We decided to head back. Late start, brekky and away 11am. We got back up to the saddle in good time apart from losing  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour while we back-tracked to find the camera I had dropped – it was near where I had noticed it missing where I had taken off my parka. From the saddle we had some muddy navigation, the GPS was handy to locate our actual position. Lost my map, but still had an A4 printout. We went round the head of the creek we came up yesterday to edge of scrub, then down NE to gut, then part way down this to the Pegasus Creek tributary where it bends to north, then struck out east to a low bush saddle and continued down to Pegasus Creek, arriving 6:30, 5 hrs from Albion. We clambered down the true right to the falls for a looksee. Pretty cool. Remains of a concrete dam above the falls. Crossed at same place as yesterday, and headed up onto point 86 then headed SE to inlet – beach at low tide. Up a starter trail which petered out, but we continued on to a 'top' then headed south downwards to intersect the Surveyors Track and back to our old campsite. 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours this time from Pegasus Creek – easier to climb high. Today was mostly fine, and warm at times.



Tarn near Mt Allan, Lees Knob in background (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)

### Day 6: Thurs 15th Dec

We declared a Pit Day. Probably overdue. Pam's sleeping bag had got wet the previous night at Albion Creek (leak in bivvy bag).

We had last night's dinner for lunch at 1pm. Sunny and warm, then rain, sun, hail, strong gusting westerly. We got a great fire set up, drying gear and ourselves. At low tide found very good mussels and some rock oysters, put them in the wood embers and they came out with an absolutely delicious smokey flavour. Earlier Phil and I scouted for a route to Diprose Bay getting muddled somewhat when we came across a great track – which turned out to be the Surveyors Track! Just beyond the water supply creek we explored the area of the cat trapping camps (from 1990's Kakapo recovery).



**Night 3 campsite in headwaters of McArthurs Creek, west of the Tin Range (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)**

### **Day 7: Fri 16th Dec**

Heard a grunty roar during the night –thought it must be a deer – umm but don't they usually have their 'roar' around Easter? Later Pam says 'what's that?' I must've been asleep. Then Phil says something about a sea lion standing over him. All I heard was something big crashing through the bush towards the water! We had 2 main meals yesterday, plus lotsa mussels & oysters!

Early morning wet, some heavy rain. We got up about 10:30, occasional showers. Away noonish via the water supply and cat camps, up along spur to east for about ½ hour, then down SE to creek outlet into Diprose Bay after 1 ¼ hr. Not much there. Found an old coracle frame near the inlet. Very limited camping, only in dugout areas to side of Tramway, none at bottom. Walking up the Tramway was very pleasant, even in the rain and cold. Occasional

evidence of wooden sleepers, and rails. Rain showers all day. Passed the track junction to Surveyors Track. We got a bit confused when tramline petered out at a cairn, then Pam remembered there was a dogleg off the tramline (up hill) – should have followed the first set of cairns (I thought they lead up to the ridge tops for access to the old mine shaft at Point 504m. I would have liked to visit the mine shaft but we felt we didn't have the time (and it was raining).

Very happy to arrive at dam, and a few minutes later the main campsite about 6:30 – wet but sheltered. We pitched the fly over some branches on the wet ground and were all in pits by 9pm. Weather cold, wet & windy.



**Dam in McArthurs Creek (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)**

**Day 8: Sat 17th Dec**

Rain overnight. Morning showers and low cloud obscuring the tops. It would be nice to see where we are going today. Clearing? Less rain / drizzle, so got away just before noon. Up valley and climb onto ridge. Phil checked phone reception from Pt 637 and contacted water taxi people for a pickup on the 20th from Fred's Camp. They preferred to hear from us closer to the pickup!

Weather clearish & windy. Great views again at times. Retracing our steps, we this time climbed onto Granite Knob (easy). Found the proper route through scrub to west of knob, and entry point we missed on the way in. Marked it with a new stick. We got to the tarn east of Mt Allen, and after a scout around Pam found a reasonable camp site at the south end (much better than the north end). Everywhere was wet, so we laid down brushwood to try and keep us a bit dryer. Phil had an uncontrollable urge to camp on the island so set himself up over there. Overnight gales with rain showers, Phil joined us around midnight after almost ending up in the drink. Had to get up occasionally to re-anchor the fly. Pam had had a neurotic habit of searching for rocks every campsite on this trip – turned out to be a really good thing.



Track onto Table Hill (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)

**Day 9: Sunday 18th Dec**

Today we were hoping to climb Mt Allen. Very windy all day, rain sometimes very heavy. Afternoon provided some brief sunny bits to dry various parts. Then more wind & rain. Pit day. Couldn't see Mt Allen anyway.

### **Day 10: Monday 19th Dec**

Very windy, occasional rain. Pit day? Occasionally had to retie the fly. Decided we would try to get away if it starts to clear and camp wherever we get to – hopefully in bush on the way down from Table Hill, even a rough one just to pass the night.

There seemed to be a change in the wind, then it provided us with fierce gusts, one of which blew the fly away – so we decided to get out here! Retrieved the fly, extracting it from the tangled broken branches that had been its attachment points, packed while keeping stuff out of the wind's clutches, had a snack and were away quickish around 11am. As we rounded the ridge past the tarn Pam was blown off her feet and bruised her knee. We sidled along to the saddle and down to our old campsite at 'Twin Pools' – it looked wet, slightly sheltered, and not inviting. Continuing upwards we had a very windy walk along the tops in rain, hail, and cloud. Poor visibility, frequent slowmo moments searching for markers, including pulling on twigs to see if they were rooted down (and therefore NOT a route marker), and pulling out maps and compass, occasional GPS. Fingers becoming cumbersome lumps in cold and wet with the usual trouble getting gloves back on. Eventually onto Table Hill again, and down to bush route and very relieved to get to Southern Circuit Track. We continued in heightened spirits to arrive at Rakeahua Hut around 10:15pm, still light enough to not need torches. Very happy to have hut to ourselves again – so with 2 bunks each we spread stuff everywhere to dry. Lots of wet gear, including insides of packs. We felt we had done well today – 10 ½ hours - route-finding was improving!



Track on Table Hill (PHOTO: Wayne Hodgkinson)

### **Day 11: Tuesday 20th Dec**

Phil left around 7:30 to contact Water Taxi from Fred's Camp – hoping for pickup mid-day today. Pam & me a more relaxed start, with the party gear. Away 8am, no hurry. Arrived happily at Fred's Camp 6 hours later, nice day – fine weather with some cloud over tops, some breezes.

Water taxi arrived 20 minutes later! Dropping a woman off for the Southern Circuit and took us away. Furhana had kindly arranged a 3:30 booking for us on the ferry with an anticipated front coming through later. We had a good crossing to Bluff, dropped in on my parents in Invercargill for a coffee, and were home by 9pm.

### **Reflections**

A long, hard trip made harder by the somewhat unfavourable weather. Pam & Phil are great with this sort of stuff! Mind blowing weird knobby granite landscape.

We were helped by DOC's recent clearing of the route from Rakeahua Track to Table Hill (for Dotterel protection), and at the other end (Surveyors and Tramline Tracks – for boat people and historic reasons).

Very important to locate route markers on the tops, especially in poor visibility and finding entry points into scrub, or for drops off the ridge. Once you get used to them, if you haven't seen

one for a while retrace your steps and have a good look. There might of course be some missing!

Bush navigation is different to what we are familiar with. You can't just follow a spur or creek, they go all over the place. Have a good look at the topomap. Broad saddles and tops can be confusing.

Not relying on a bigger tent was very handy for bush camps in Albion Creek.

Long daylight hours a boon (mid-summer compared with autumn) – meant we could start late depending on weather and still get in a good day's work.

Hmmmm, I'd still like a peek in that mineshaft sometime, and maybe the Gogs?

Rakeahua Hut book revealed that over the past 12 months we were the 5th party to head onto the Tin Range, totalling 8 people including us. We were the biggest group, with 3 of the other parties consisting of 1 person, including Brando Yelavich (Wildboy) on 28th Nov.

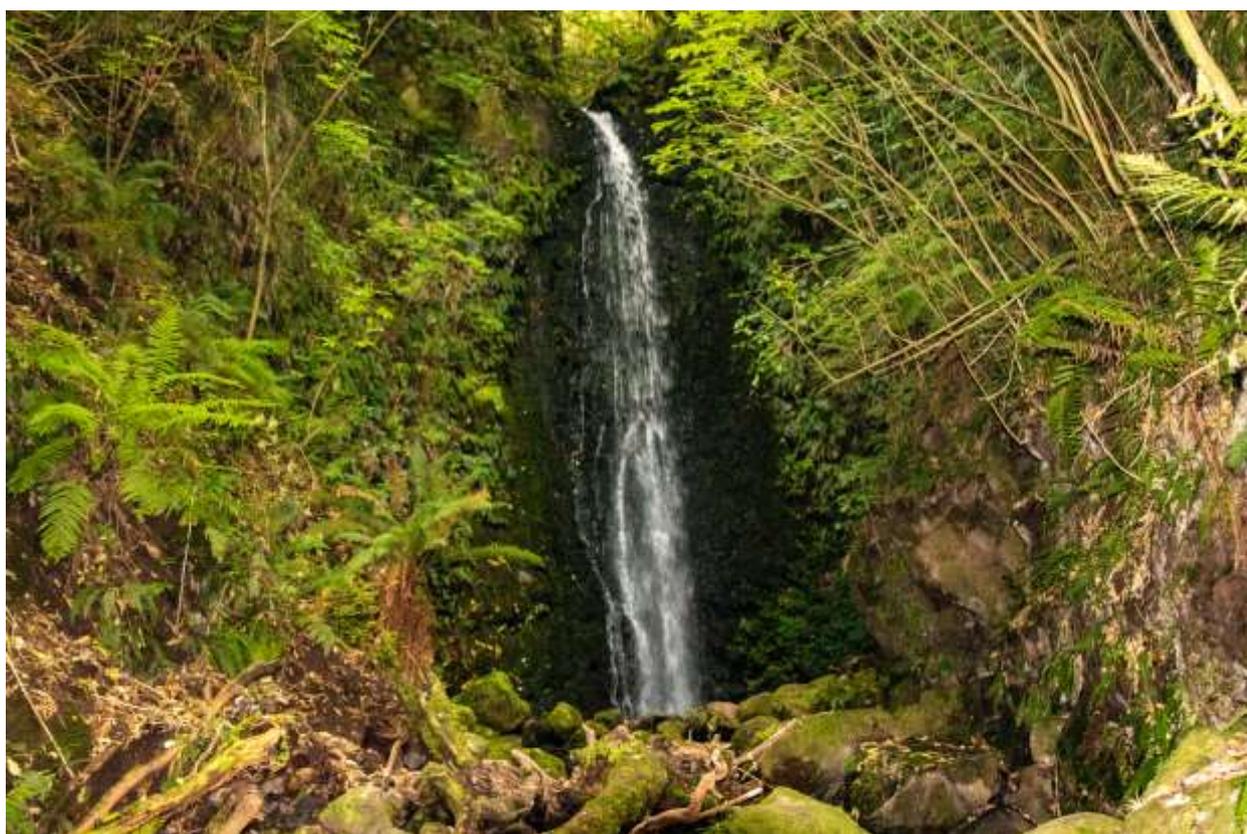
## **NICOLS CREEK TO BEN RUDD'S**

**April 8, 2017**

**Author: Geraldine Kerr**

Published in Bulletin 782, June 2017

Rodger led 4 keen trampers (including one lovely lady who was visiting from Andorra) to the start of the Nicols Creek track in the Leith Valley. The walk to the falls is approx. 15 minutes and is an easy walk-through beautiful bush surroundings. It is also home to Dunedin's glow worms which are best viewed after dusk.



**Nicols Falls, Leith Valley**

After walking the actual track for a bit, we decided to continue the hike to the waterfall via the creek. Travelling up the canyon via the creek was impressive, especially after all the recent rain.

After approaching the foot of the waterfall (The Nicols Creek waterfall is 5m high) we then headed up the hill that connects with the switchback mountain bike track. We carried on up to the start of the Moon Track which is where the track started to become quite boggy, muddy and rather slippery.

We then continued towards the Pineapple track via the Peppertree track. Once we reached the Pineapple Track, we decided we would continue heading towards Ben Rudd's Shelter, where we would stop for lunch.

Whilst the start of Ben Rudd's track is marked by a rock cairn, it was commented that a sign should be erected to let others know about the Ben Rudd Shelter.



**The top of the Moon Track, not far from the Swampy Ridge track**

We followed the track to the Shelter and then stopped to have lunch enjoying the warm sunny day that Dunedin had embraced us with.

After lunch we returned back along the track to the rock cairn only to then notice a nice wooden sign marked with "Shelter" had been erected. Woodland Fairies perhaps do exist!

On the return trip home, we opted to walk back via the Davies Track via the tussocks, gorse and flax. The start of the Davies track was initially hard to find....but we eventually found it.

The clear sunny day allowed for impressive panoramic views of the city, the harbour and the beaches of St Clair and St Kilda. The track was just as muddy, but we continued our descent slipping and sliding the rest of the way down to the start of the Pineapple track and then back along the road to the car.

Overall, it was a very enjoyable day out with great company. A big thank you to our pack leader Rodger. Geraldine Kerr

## ROSELLA RIDGE

**May 21, 2017**

**Author: Tomas Sobek**

Published in Bulletin 783, July 2017

As the day of the trip was approaching, I kept looking up the forecast on different sites. I was curious as to which version would win. As usual, it was the better weather forecast - yes, you should come on my trips more often. And since there was no ice on the road on Sunday morning either, I drove to the clubrooms. Despite the heavy snow the day before, there were already two people waiting and one more came before we took off. Everyone was keen to get cold and wet, so off we went like the three musketeers, I mean all four of us.



**Sign (now removed) at the start of the Rosella Ridge track (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

The road to Green Ridge car park had a bit of snow as we climbed up. However, the drive went pretty uneventful, and we started walking quarter to ten, noticing a high school van parked there as well. The track on Green Ridge was muddy and slippery all the way. A few places where heavy snow bent manuka branches low enough to get in our faces made me think: Rosella Ridge will be really really wet! But hey, that's what we came for. And the day was sunny and the snow all around made the hills look magical. Forget the ice-cold blasts of wind in between.

We passed the high school kids heading for Pulpit Rock. After an obligatory short break at Green Hut site and brief climb towards Pulpit Rock we turned onto Rosella Ridge. First of all, put on full rain gear, not that it kept us dry for that long. I must admit I took a leap of faith that day. Yes, I too was slipping and sliding at times, but that's not what I mean. I kept my camera in my hands. No, not the sliding. The wet melting snow! You won't believe how many

times I shook off a layer of snow from it. But to the manufacturer's credit, it is truly weather proof. Fully soaked and dripping with water and melting snow it survived. The only problem was the lens front element fogging up.



**The party on Green Ridge (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

Shortly after 12 pm we discovered some dry rocks on Little Pulpit Rock, ideal place for lunch. However, I abandoned my plan for a 360 panorama - when I saw how cold the musketeers were and how keen they were to get going again, I didn't feel it appropriate to ask for another 10 minutes in the sunny but breezy scenic spot.

Back on track, slowly descending into taller vegetation. The turn-off to H.A.T.#1, hunter access track, was found easily. Just as we were approaching the valley floor the track started going in a new direction and I noticed windfall where the original track used to be. So, we followed the new cut track. And it was going roughly in the direction we needed to go, just along the slope instead via the valley. So far so good. Then we crossed the stream and started climbing one of those tracks back onto Mountain Road. Or so I thought, until I pulled out my phone and switched on GPS a bit later. Oops! Wrong ridge gents. This particular track is not going to the Mountain Road, but back to Rosella Ridge. Oh, well, let's back-track to the last intersection we saw and try that one. They were all such lovely tracks. Ten minutes later we were heading towards Possum Hut, across the stream and finally up to the road. An extra hour of unplanned joy in paradise. Ken even celebrated our detour with a plunge into the bush below the track,

after performing some fancy dance moves on a slippery root. I didn't see it myself, but I believe it must have been impressive. I saw Ken about 3 metres down the slope, already on his way up. Glad we didn't need to call a chopper.

Great scenery, great company, and a moderate amount of adventure - one of those trips we will all remember.

Tomas Sobek on behalf of Ken Taylor, Peter Boeckhout, and Jamie Lingwood.

## SUNRISE FROM FLAGSTAFF

**June 18, 2017**

**Author: Jane Cloete**

Published in Bulletin 783, July 2017

Nine of us met at the Clubrooms and were away promptly at 7am. I knew that 2 more were meeting at the top of Flagstaff, so 11 was a good number.

But when I finally made it to the top – WOW! 28 at a rough count but possibly more – I'm not very good at counting sheep! Mostly club members and potential members – yes, the walk did 'count' as a trip towards the two trips you need to do before becoming a member – and one extra lady with a business-looking camera.



**Sunrise shot from Flagstaff towards Mt Cargill (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

But the sunrise was certainly good that day. We got there a bit early because I'd said to folk that they had to start walking from the carpark by 7.20am. That was a bit generous but suited my older legs! And it was pleasant to sit around at the top of Flagstaff and catch up on the gossip as the sky became redder and the daylight increased. There was a tiny layer of cloud on the horizon beyond Mihiwaka, so the visible sunrise was a minute or two 'late' after 8.10am.

After sunrise, most of us headed home to get on with the day, but a couple went on for a longer walk and the geocachers went off in search of treasure.

Thank you to all my companions up there that day. Sorry, too many names to write down, but your presence was appreciated, and I hope you all appreciated the sunrise. Have you noticed that the days are now getting longer?!

Jane Cloete

## MT SOMERS

**June 3-5, 2017**

**Author: Peter Boeckhout**

Published in Bulletin 783, July 2017

We left the club rooms on Friday before 6pm, now that shows you the keenness of our tramping group. Picked up 2 trampers from the Waitati shop and drove to our tea stop in Oamaru. We arrived at Mt Somers just before 10:30pm and dropped off Tomas' group and we set up camp at the Woolshed Creek Campsite.

Saturday, we woke up to a crisp morning @ 6:30am and prepared ourselves for breakfast and breaking up camp. Tomas was at the carpark with military precision, right on the dot @ 7:30am as planned, of course we were still enjoying breakfast :-)



**Climbing towards Mt Somers (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

We all started walking at 7:50, with fog and low cloud all around so I stepped up the speed a notch or 2 and got everybody heated up in no time. Along the Miner's track the views were getting better and better, with the ridge towards the highest point giving some nice photo opportunities of the sun peeking through the fog. We arrived at the Woolshed Creek hut in 2 hours, and we were still covered in a blanket of low cloud.

Everybody claimed their bunk according to plan and that turned out to be a good one as upon our return the hut was full. With a half hour rest and preparing our day packs we headed up and onwards to the Saddle. The weather improved with every step we took and when we finally sat down for a rest and admired the view of the saddle and the steep grind up ahead, we were bathing in the full sun. After a half hour we took up the challenge to climb that 350m steep ridge, We all did it in less than 1.5 hours and had a well-deserved lunch break with views

of the valley below. We reached the Summit in perfect weather, full sun all day. We started walking down after we all had soaked up the views. The walk down was still challenging, especially with all the scree and boulders to negotiate. We arrived at the hut around 4:30pm with one "student" daredevil camping outside in a small tent and the hut filled to the brim with students and families. We all moved to one bunk room as the "students" planned a campfire and birthday party at the Caves so they would be coming back late (and they did).

Sunday :- ) we woke up to a total different landscape. Snow!



**Woolshed Creek Hut & the Winterslow Range (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

That was the perfect weekend weather ever, we all got excited about walking in the freezing cold. We took it very easy, and everybody had breakfast in his time with a billy on with boiling water, and got the burner stocked up with kindling and wood for the coming cold night. We all went up to the Bus stop to have a look at the snow views. We were back after 3 hours in time for lunch and the fire was already burning for us when we came back. After a very leisurely lunch time we woke up from our afternoon nap as most of us did not had much sleep due to our overcrowded hut and went on our way to the caves. That was a very interesting walk, slippery as and our boots and socks got very wet. We could not go any further via the riverbed as the openings in the rocks were blocked with debris. We went over a small hill and saw the valley up ahead covered in snow. Beautiful. Some of our group could not resist and a small snowball war broke out, with no casualties on both sides :- ) just some cold hands. We were back after a couple of hours and just in time to join into a crowded hut again, but this time the students were replaced with a whole platoon of wet boots gathered around the wood burner. The next morning one person of the family group found herself with somebody else's boots. Food was cooked, cups of tea were poured, cheese and crackers were passed around and in the end we were all stuffed with food. There were a few card games played, a word game with a timer and funny sound squeezer and a particular facial expression event took place from which

I have not yet seen any pictures published. ?! :-). From the start to the end a very very nice group and a bit of luck with the weather.



**'Heading Out' (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

Monday, we left just before 9am and were at the car park in 1,5hrs. Had a nice lunch in Geraldine and went on our way home in the sunshine.

Peter Boeckhout for Tomas Sobek, Tania McMillan, Sue Williams, Nas Shannon, Trisha Geraets, Leah Silver and Michael Stott.

## PENINSULA WALKS

**May 28, 2017**

**Author: Rose Colhoun**

Published in Bulletin 783, July 2017

The trampers on this trip were not instilled with great confidence in their leader when she was last to turn up at the clubrooms with 3 minutes to spare, then on beginning the walk at Bacon Street in Broad Bay, began heading along the wrong path before being corrected by one of the trampers! However, things went more smoothly after the bumpy start. Instead of taking the track up Smiths Creek where we were initially heading, we changed direction and took the much steeper but more direct route straight up the ridge to Harbour Cone. Fantastic 360° views of Otago Harbour, Papanui Inlet, and Hoopers Inlet.



**The heads of Otago Harbour from Harbour Cone (PHOTO: Rose Colhoun)**

Across farmland to the gully above Stewarts Creek where the tramping crew nervously followed their leader on a dubious looking track through some rather overgrown scrub and down to the Hoopers Inlet track, slip sliding along the way. Then back up the other side on the Nyhon track and onto Sandymount Road. It was a bit of a slog up the road made more challenging by the gusting wind and occasional traffic. We were all a bit peckish by the top so decided to forego the loop around to Lovers Leap and the Chasm and sheltered in amongst the flax for lunch.

A lovely soft run down the sand dunes was followed by a leisurely stroll along Sandfly Bay, honing our photography skills and looking out for wildlife (we only saw one sealion). Another grunt up the other end of Sandfly Bay to Braidwood Road where we dropped down to Boulder Beach. We had a poke around Beattie Cottage which was used to film a children's TV show in

the 70s & 80s (does anyone know what the show was?), then it was the final slog up the very muddy Paradise track to Highcliff Road. Finally, the end was in sight as we dropped down the Greenacres track to our finish at Macandrew Bay. Thanks for a lovely day out on a gloriously sunny Dunedin day.



**Descending to Sandfly Bay (PHOTO: Rose Colhoun)**

Written (with Photos) by Rose Colhoun on behalf of Rodger, Peter H, Peter B, Carolyn, Donna, Allan, Ken, Sharon, Joe and Mark.

## **TAVORA RESERVE**

**June 25, 2017**

**Author: Sharon Bretherton**

Published in Bulletin 784, August 2017

At almost 9.00am sharp - 18 of us loaded ourselves into four cars and off we went. Happy as Larry, cruising north on the highway, no issues whatsoever. Until...

We turned off the highway, just south of Palmerston into Goodwood Road. I won't bore the reader with the details but suffice to say, what should have been a simple two-minute drive down Goodwood Road to the signposted car park, had four cars going in three different directions – do not ask – half an hour later we simultaneously came to our senses and backtracked to the signposted car park. None of us could understand how we all missed it, including three of the drivers who had been there before. At 10.15am, it was finally time to stretch our legs; we walked for 10 minutes to the beach and had morning tea!

We then wandered along the edge of the beach and up onto private farmland with views across the ocean. After a couple of hours of wandering up and over the hills of Matai Farm, we eventually arrived above Pleasant River where we had a pleasant lunch stop, soaking up the sun, overlooking the Estuary.

From here we walked up and over a few more hills, stopping to admire a historic barn on the way, and continued to complete a circuit arriving back at the beach near Bobby's Head.

Our thanks to the owners of Matai Farm who kindly allowed us to trudge over their private land.

Sharon Bretherton on behalf of - Tony 'what a leader' Timperley, Debbie Nicholer, Mark Stephenson, Alan Thomson, Theresia Holt, Tina Anderson, Alan Hanson, Lucy Jones, Sonia Alderman, Joe Bretherton, Janet Barclay, Leonne Loeber, Peter Loeber, Ken Taylor, Rob Seeley, Linda Miles and Simon Lin.

## TAKITIMU'S

July 8-9, 2017

Author: Peter Boeckhout

Published in Bulletin 784, August 2017

We started traveling from the Club rooms just after 6 and were in Gore before 8 but not before we picked up a tramper along the way. From Gore we went on our way to the Lower Princhester hut in a very careful manner, most of the road looked icy and it was minus 3 most of the way. We crashed at the hut around 10:30 and woke up some hunters who as it turned out were not so lucky hunting deer but more lucky with the beer. We woke up to a crispy morning, still freezing with a nice white frost on the breakfast table and soon we got packing and started just before 9.



Trip members at Aparima Hut (PHOTO: Peter Boeckhout)

It was a good 2 hour grunt up to the saddle. And we were followed by 3 very friendly Kea. There was some snow on the saddle and beyond but not too much. Soon we came out of the forest via the Waterloo burn and followed the track to the Becketts hut junction. We decided to go Right and find ourselves a lunch spot in the sun. We went over and down bogs, tricky trenches hidden by tall tussock and through wet forest. The track was in most places well marked but I lost the track once or twice (or was it 7 times..) but luckily the tramper behind me got me back in line. All did their time as leader of the group and my hat off for the first timers who's jumping into the bog or getting wet up to their waist never lost confidence or enthusiasm.

The track took us to an empty hut in over 8.5 hours, got the fire going in no time with everybody collecting firewood and we prepared for a well-deserved rest. Dinner was served. I will not mention any names or they will give this tramper money to be in their future food

group, but the “cheese & crackers” on the menu consisted of: crackers with a very nice kumara and chick-pea dip with roasted sunflower seeds, with a choice of Feta, cream cheese or Blue cheese, topped with roasted homemade medium rare cooked slices of venison and topped with a crisp fresh bunch of red radish micro greens..... well, have I ever, this was the cherry on the proverbial perfect tramping day :-) This has earned a 5 star plus magic rating on the tramping food scale. Very tasty and a perfect start of a tramping dinner. We all agreed to skip the soup course and had a very very plain pasta dish (not sure who cooked that stuff..), next followed with a homemade chocolate brownie, delicious. We all got to our bunks before 8 as we all were dead tired.



**Takitimu Mountains (PHOTO: Peter Boeckhout)**

The next day we all woke up to a crisp morning and had our breakfast and packing done in little over an hour. A quick group photo and off we went into the valley and on our way to Becketts hut. I was amazed how keen our tramping group were, following me straight through stone cold rivers, ankle deep bogs past and an accidentally woken up Bull. The weather was cloudy at first with the sun trying to peak through. We got to Becketts hut in good time. After leaving Becketts hut we bumped into 3 runners with rifles, going about on an exercise for a day. Soon we were walking on top of what is normally a spongy soaking wet boggy landscape now turned into a crisp hard walking surface. But still we had the occasional encounter with over ankle-deep bogs and lots of wet chest deep tussocks. I think I had a close up look at one of them. After some river crossings we sat down for lunch not far from the Becketts Hut junction. We set off for the final push with one of our young trampers leading the pack. Via the Waterloo Burn, over the Princhester Saddle down via the Bog burn we finally came back to our van, and we could change into some dry clothes. A well-deserved Turkish dinner in Gore and home to the club rooms around 8:20pm.

Peter Boeckhout for Joe and Sharon Bretherton, Melissa Trainor, Chris Cowie, Michaela Day, Andrew McConnell.

# HEYWARD POINT

**July 8, 2017**

**Author: Geraldine Kevill**

Published in Bulletin 784, August 2017

This was my very first experience with the OTMC. It was a bright and frosty morning, with temperatures near single figures. 13 people met at the club rooms in South Dunedin. Various walkers offer lifts for those who do not have transport. Gordon, our leader for the tramp took myself Niklas Becker, (no relation to Boris) Ken Taylor, and Michael. Other members had transport, and some went straight to the meeting point in Aramoana.



**View from clifftop track to Heyward Point, looking along Spit Beach to The Mole and Tairaroa Head**

The group started the ascent around 9.30 am. This first part of the walk was a good steady incline, we stopped at intervals to catch our breath and look at the stunning views over the Harbour, where we saw the Spirit of Singapore sail off and the Laust Maersk sail into the harbour. Further up towards the peak we looked down upon Aramoana Reserve which was once the proposed site of New Zealand's second largest aluminum smelter. Along Heyward Point, at the peak, we gazed down at many groups of seals lying on rocks and cliff tops. During the tramp the weather got warm and most of us were able to shed excess clothing. We sat at the top of Heyward Point to have lunch and continued our descent via Te Ngaru Quarry. The highest point reached was 235 meters. It was a wonderful day; Gordon is extremely knowledgeable about the history of the area.

Geraldine Kevill for Gordon Tocher, Niklas Becker, Rodger Clarkson, Sonia Alexanian, Meryl Jones, Ken Taylor, Ash Flintoff, Michael Gaffney, Leonie and Peter Loeber, Geraldine Kerr, Lucy Jones

## **OTAGO PENINSULA CYCLING**

**July 8, 2017**

**Author: Jane Cloete**

Published in Bulletin 784, August 2017

Organising this trip seemed fairly easy at first – just count heads of likely starters and then let the “Wheels on Water” people know the numbers. But the numbers fluctuated from 8-13!

The weather early in the day looked horrid – I was down at the market at 8am and it was cold, windy and raining!

But the skies began to clear and eventually 8 cyclists from the tramping club (some were very fit indeed) started at the clubrooms in South Dunedin at 10am. Cold but dry.

Then my next problems began – how to access the cycle tracks from the clubrooms to the Stadium. Two people knew the way, but the trouble was that they both knew different ways! I lost the others completely but managed to get to the harbour cycle track and luckily the others did too, 'cause we all met up OK at St Leonards.

Nothing new in that journey.

The new bit began as we went around to Back Beach to the Boat Ramp and were met by John with his “Wheels on Water” – a water taxi service between Port Chalmers and Portobello!

We managed to get all 8 bikes and all 8 riders onto the boat. The sun was now out, and it was really pretty most interesting as we went around Goat Island and Quarantine Islands to get across the harbour to Portobello.

Off loaded people and bikes - \$8 each which we thought very reasonable – and on to the Penguin Cafe for a snack and coffee.

After lunch, two went on to the Heads, two went back along the High Road past Larnach Castle to get home, and I went with the remainder on the easy way home – along Portobello Rd by the harbour. There is much more cycle track than there used to be! The whole trip is perhaps 35-40km.

Anyway, I thought it was one of the best day rides ever!

My\* thanks to my companion cyclists on the day: Ralph Harvey, Nathan McCauley, Greg Collins, Maria Hamelink, Mark Stephenson, Miki Nomura, and Jo Skinner. \*Jane Cloete

## WINTER KEPLER

**June 24-25, 2017**

**Author: Alex Forbes**

Published in Bulletin 784, August 2017

On Friday night the Tramping Club went to Te Anau to do the winter Kepler. On the way we stopped at Gore to grab some tea. When we got to Te Anau, we stayed at the Lakeview Holiday Park. In the morning we started to get our gear on. We walked for an hour until we got to Brod Bay where we stopped for a wee snack. Then we started walking up the mountain. We walked until we got to the bluffs. Then we got to Luxmore Hut. We put our sleeping bag out, took off our wet clothes, changed into new ones and had lunch. After lunch we went to the caves. We walked down the caves looking at all the stalactites and stalagmites. It was my second time in the caves and I went much further than I had gone before. Then we came to a small crawl space. We started crawling but thought we would get too muddy. So, we turned around and started heading back to the hut. Once we were out of the caves it started to rain.



**Looking across the Kepler area towards Mt Titiroa, with fresh snow (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

The warden was there with her three children. At dinnertime the warden asked for our hut tickets. I didn't have to pay because I was under 18. For tea we had mashed potatoes, lamb and peas. My Dad and I made a starter which was crackers and dip. For dessert we had ginger cake. After tea I listened to the rugby – it was the night of the first Lions test against the All Blacks. We started to do a jigsaw puzzle but then we got bored. Then I started to play a game of cards. After that I went to bed.

The next day I went down to grab some breakfast. Then we started packing up, brushing our teeth and cleaning our dishes – and the hut. There were 32 people in the hut. Once we were all

packed up we noticed that it had snowed overnight. We left the hut around 10:00 am and got back to the van around 12 noon. Then we drove back to Dunedin.

Thank you to Dad for the driving and the food, and for taking me tramping.



**Golden sunrise above Lake Te Anau, from Luxmore Hut (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

Alex Forbes (12 years) for Richard Forbes, Rodger Clarkson, Chris Booker, Gloria Qi, Chris Cowie, Michael Stott, Alex Tups, Gail Mitchell, Ralph Harvey, Maria Hamelink, Chris Pearson, Kathy Woodrow, Helen Jones, Barry Walker, Tomas Sobek, Nic Cogan, Mandie Lungley, Lynley McArley, Jan Hodges, Geraldine Keer, Nathan McCauley, Steven Waghorn, Miki Nomura and Andrew McConnell

## **MACANDREW BAY TO BOULDER BEACH**

**July 16, 2017**

**Author: Alan Hanson**

Published in Bulletin 785, September 2017

Thursday night: warnings of MUD and slippery tracks. Bring leggings and walking poles, potential to be wet weather!

Sunday morning: woke to frost and a clear sunrise.

Departure time to Club rooms: drizzle (cleared the frost) and a light but far from warm southerly.

Club rooms: a handful of people with wet weather gear, hats and gloves.



**Boulder Beach with the namesake boulders**

Forecast: predicted light rain about 10 am and possibly the afternoon also. Suggestion: possible another destination. Answer: No. The five folk checked their mental health, and the full car departed for Macandrew Bay. (At least there would be a coffee shop there).

Boots on, umbrella up and we stepped out up Greenacres Street. Less than half an hour later on the uphill sheltered track the umbrella went down and the exertion had spread warmth to the extremities. Along Highcliff Road the clouds lifted as we made our way to the morning tea stop at Buskin Road. Not too long though, we did not want to cool down too much.

Now the promised mud. Some areas had had stock on it and some areas small lakes. Caution was certainly needed as the top surface was saturated, and the tendency for your boots to skate was real. The bottom at last, past a well maintain little cottage, complete with a rapid number, (Braidwood Road), then the turn off over the newly cleared track to the beach. Yes there they were, THE boulders, all stacked in random fashion at the south end of the beach. Questions were asked how and why this might occur, with no real answer.

From the depths of the useless information department, it was noted that to be a Tombolo (a perfect half-moon crescent sandy beach), it has to be subject to waves from both direction. This was not the case at Boulder Beach. With that useless fact, and a “to prove we were there” photo, (at the start of the northern cliffs), we backtracked to the high tide sand for munchie time. A steady gradient up Paradise Track back to Highcliff Road was not as muddy as feared. Again, a little caution on the downward leg to MacBay, and voilà the car. Thank you, Peter Loeber, (leader), Ken Taylor, Niklas Becker and Andrew McLea, for a great trip. Much better than vegetating on the couch watching TV.

Alan Hanson.

## PHIL COX HUT VIA THE NEW RIVER TRACK

August 6, 2017

Author: Antony Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 785, September 2017

You will have seen Antony Hamel's email promoting the first OTMC trip on a new track from the Possum Hut area to Philip J Cox Memorial Hut via a new track just above the true left of the South Waikouaiti River. A dozen joined Antony H on what was no doubt a great day.

Antony premiered a short video of this inaugural club trip along the new track at an OTMC meeting in August and you can now view it on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/2Q0xRNDURTA>



Opening ceremony of the River Track, at Philip J Cox Memorial Hut (PHOTO: Antony Hamel)

The OTMC would like to acknowledge the work that Arthur Blondell has put in to making this track a reality. A track in this area has been on the radar since the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum was carried out in the Silver Peaks by DoC. That review saw the new Jubilee Hut built, and our old Jube and Yellow Hut removed. At that time, a linking track back from the bottom of Tunnels Track towards Hightop was mentioned as desirable in the future to avoid the locked section of Mountain Road.

Now, thanks mainly to Arthur this track is a reality. Arthur established the route and has done a lot of the work himself, and latterly has been assisted by the Green Hut Track Group. The club day trip down the river in December inadvertently used part of the track (near Rosella Ridge) – in time this will become a well-established track and complete a proper Silver Peaks circuit.

If you missed Antony's trip, it is possible that Jan Burch's day trip on October 15 will use the same track.

So many thanks to Arthur, the Green Hut Track Group and DoC for what is the most important addition to the reserve since Jubilee was replaced 10 years ago – I'm sure it will be well used (and provide some more options for the club's Bushcraft course!)

Report by Antony Pettinger.

## SNOWCAVING 2017

August 5-6, 2017

Author: Richard and Tracy Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 785, September 2017

Twenty-eight people signed up, mainly members. Richard couldn't see many there who had been snowcaving before. Tracy was one who had but prefers to hang back and defer to people like Wayne and Richard. Well, in the days immediately before the trip list closed and afterwards, eight people pulled out. Two with a fairly credible and novel reason: the home with tramping gear in it had been affected by one of the many landslides that accompanied East Otago's recent floods and was unable to be entered. They needed the weekend to clean up and find a new place to live and a snow-cave couldn't be found close enough to Dunedin.



2017 Snowcaving Weekend underway (PHOTO: Jodie Miranda Hill)

We ended up with 4 teams of 5. It was very cold and blustery at the Clubrooms, waiting for stragglers, but soon we were in a cosy Roxburgh tearoom having coffee and hot choc and hearing all about what to expect. Richard forgot to tell us some key facts:

1. Don't be worried about blue light coming through the snow. It is NOT (necessarily) blue sky through a dangerously thin wall.
2. The bench level needs to be above the top of the entrance tunnel.
3. Benches should be level, so nobody slides and piles onto some poor bugger down-slope.
4. You'll slide all over the show if you put a plastic sheet down first. All you need is a closed-cell foam pad to stick to the (level) hardened snow.

All of these bits of experience were gained the hard way, for almost everyone on the trip. Richard learnt something: don't take anything for granted.

We drove up the frozen road as far as we could and Andrew carted most of the packs (and the lazy bum Richard) in a formidable 4X4. He got stuck in snow, so Richard had to dig snow much earlier than anticipated, to help free the vehicle, and so we all caught up anyway quite fast. Then, once Andrew had fetched the rest of the packs, we threw them on and set off across the tundra and icy wastes to the usual gully. Not enough snow?! What? It had been snowing for months, it seemed.

Wayne gave it thumbs down. Richard poked his nose up the gully to the west of the rock bivy and saw a likely site with handy bare vegetation just opposite bathed in plenty of sun. Yay. Enough room, even for 28 if necessary. We took turns to dig into snow and dig into our lunches. Soon, there were lumps flying in all directions creating mighty piles of snow rubble, eventually with bits of mud and vegetation.

Digging followed novel directions, and some didn't like digging upwards – the fools, Richard thought, they'll suffer because some of those benches were in line with the great gaping cold outdoors. Luckily for them, the night proved to be a balmy zero to two degrees.

There were no reports of claustrophobia, drips, sleeplessness, cold, or anything stressful when we awoke to a sunny dawn with clouds drifting in from the west. People were notable still smiling.



2017 Snowcaving Weekend (PHOTO: Jodie Miranda Hill)

Setting off after breakfast for a wander, Richard showed us the idea of a snow-mound that makes use of: packs, a snow fight, snow angels and minimal tunnelling. We think they got the idea – and it could save a life and a lot of curses. The sky remained nice overhead, but with distant clouds and rain on the Dunstons, and a black sky off to the south steadily heading for Dunedin. Richard took us to a mighty wind scoop with room for about sixty in snowcaves. We may need to use that site one day, if snow falls get less, but it might be a trick to find water.

As Richard had told Lynley beforehand, the trip is not a "course". It is a normal tramping trip on which those who have been snow-caving before pass on their knowledge to members and intending members who could benefit from the knowledge. All of us who venture above the snowline really ought to know how to make emergency accommodation, using snow, if we need to. If it were a proper instruction course, those of us who have been snowcaving before could be rewarded in some way to instruct, but that can just get crazy. Some of us just come again and again because we like it and enjoy passing on what could be life-saving information.

This year's trip was blessed with keen, eager and fit people, as well as, as usual, no hut fees (yay!). We enjoyed the womble down the hill and then chocolate or coffee and cake or chips in Roxburgh and a bit of a debrief before getting everyone safely home by 5pm.

Richard and Tracy Pettinger for: Wayne Hodgkinson, Trisha Geraets, Jodie Hill, Lyn-ley Copland, Gail Mitchell, Sharon Bretherton, Joe Bretherton, Carina Osborne, Esti Rubio, Sarah Rosemary, Chris Linsell, Sue Stephenson, Sonja Mitchell, Sue Williams, Andrew McConnell, Robert Van Hale, Rob Cookson, Tina Anderson.

Thanks to Chris, the Brethertons, Andrew (and our-selves) for bringing vehicles.

## **SNOW SKILLS @ THE ROCK AND PILLAR RANGE**

**August 12-13, 2017**

**Author: Wayne Hodgkinson**

Published in Bulletin 785, September 2017

We ended up with quite a big group of 20 people, which was only made practical by the very helpful commitment of our 2 extra instructors Ralph Harvey and Phil Somerville.

Leaving the clubrooms at 8am we had a good drive through Middlemarch, parked 1 car at the Big Hut end and the rest at Leaning Lodge end, where we started walking. The PLAN was to wander up to Leaning Lodge, use it as a day shelter while practising our snow skills before using those skills on the walk across to Big Hut for the night. On Sunday we had the choice of returning to the cars via LL or direct from Big Hut and do the car shuttle thing.



**Practising snow skills (PHOTO: Sue Stephenson)**

It was a nice day until part way up when it started getting very windy, and progressively worse as we gained height. To cut a long story short we took over 4 very trying hours to get everyone up to Leaning Lodge, a trip normally 3 hrs. After a restful lunch we explored a good, sheltered gully with a safe runout above the hut and did our full range of skills – walking with an iceaxe, kicking and cutting steps up and down, and self-arresting down a few well-developed slides to get a feel for an emergency stop from various positions. It was great to see the growing confidence in people who were somewhat tentative at the start. Some of us wandered onto the ridge to find it still very exposed to the wind.

We decided it would be a bit silly to persevere with our planned trip to Big Hut on snow (in spite of having it booked) and crammed into Leaning Lodge for dinner and a snooze. It was a

bit tight but with nobody else there, and everyone in food parties of 4 it worked all right (would have been chaotic with 20 cooks!).

The new plan for Sunday was to do our cramponing practice while taking advantage of overnight frost. Not everyone took part in the day's activities. We got a bit spread out as some were ready while others were still waiting for crampon adjustment (we had some delays on Thursday night trying to sort crampons at the clubrooms). We started on a good slope with a good range of steepness and covered all the options. Some got to practice self-arresting with crampons on, reinforcing the importance of keeping one's feet up.



**Approaching Leaning Lodge (PHOTO: Sue Stephenson)**

The only unfortunate incident occurred when Jodie slipped and slid into a rock, hurting her lower back. The group managed to share all her gear around, including her pack for the return to the cars. It was a relief to hear afterwards that her injuries were limited to a graze and bruising.

A great trip, but possibly indicating use of hard hats might be advised in future. The accident reinforced the need to be always aware of runout, and it would have been easier if everyone was together from the start. Thanks to everyone for your great cooperation throughout, including helping out Jodie, and your willingness to provide a contribution to Big Hut as well as Leaning Lodge.

Wayne for Ralph Harvey, Phil Somerville, Gail Mitchell, Joe & Sharon Bretherton, Sue Williams, Rob Cookson, Tania McMillan, Lynley Copland, Nathan McCauley, Trisha Geraets, Michael Stott, Andrew McConnell, Robert Van Hale, and non members Sophie McCarroll, Chris Linsell, Sue Stephenson, Michael Gaffney and Jodie Hill.

## **BETHUNES GULLY, MT CARGILL & ORGAN PIPES**

**August 20, 2017**

**Author: Sharen Rutherford**

Published in Bulletin 786, October 2017

The weather had not been wowing us in recent days and over the past 4 weeks a number of trips have changed as a result, but then again it is winter.

On this morning woke to the sound of rain and thought quickly about what we would do if the rain didn't ease.



**Roseneath and Otago Harbour from Buttar's Peak**

Got to the club rooms and all the usual suspects were there. I have to comment on two people in particular who appear on a regular basis in the reporting I see on Day Trips. These are Ken Taylor and Alan Hanson who lead the charge on attendance for day trips and it is always a joy to have you in our parties.

On this day we had low cloud and not much chance of a view from Mt Cargill and given the rain in recent days we agreed that we would walk to Mt Cargill and back and not do the side trip of the Organ Pipes.

In total we were 8 people including Andrew McConnell's daughter who had the best seat in the house sitting within a special pack on Dad's back.

Good conversation had by all with a few laughs and stories along the way, then a quick stop at the top and then back down as the rain was on the increase and steady most of the way down.

On behalf of the group – Sharen Rutherford

## BEN RUDD'S WORKDAYS

September 2 & 9, 2017

Author: Tracy Pettinger

Published in Bulletin 777, December 2016

On our first trip there was Richard Pettinger, Bronwyn Strang, Kathy Woodrow and Tracy Pettinger. We knew there was snow on Flagstaff but didn't anticipate how much there was. We met Antony Pettinger at the Bullring car park. He had already been up the Firebreak and down to Ben Rudd's shelter and back and told us stories of more snow.

We went up anyway and it really was beautiful, with no wind at all, just fog drifting around. Where there were open areas we had a go at pulling out small gorse and broom, as the soil was so saturated with all the rain we've had, that the plants came out of the ground easily. We had about an hour of that, but we couldn't actually see the wood for the trees or the gorse from the natives. The tussocks were saturating, and then our hands got very cold – gardening gloves are not very thermal. We ate our cake on the summit of Flagstaff and went home to thaw out.



The following Saturday, the weather was much improved. As was the turnout. There were Richard and Tracy Pettinger, Sam Patrick, Dave and Penny MacArthur, Ken Taylor and Peter Boeckhout.

We had hours of no precipitation, so we had a good go with snipping and treating the stumps with our chemical gel, which requires that it doesn't get rained on for 6 hours after application.

Penny specialised in pulling out the wee gorse and brooms around the skid site and down the track towards the shelter. The lads went off into the tussock above the fire break to inspect the work that has been done lately with the spraying contractor's 100 m hose.

They found that there is still lots to do up there in getting rid of the big gorse patch and isolated broom. The contractor must have run out of hose. But they saw that vast areas where the Club and Trust have been doing painstaking work are clear and very encouraging.

All 7 of us were working from 10am to 3.30pm, with hardly a lunch break. But we stopped for our reward which was chocolate, not cake and a beer that seemed to go down rather well, before heading home.

Someone worked out that over the two days, 52 person hours were completed.

Cheers, Tracy Pettinger.

## **LEITH SADDLE – SWAMPY – BURNS – RUSTLERS RIDGE**

**September 3, 2017**

**Author: Sharen Rutherford**

Published in Bulletin 786, October 2017

Again, the weather had not been wowing us in recent days. On the Friday night prior snow fell on Swampy Summit and there was still a good amount left by Sunday.

Got to the club rooms and all the usual suspects were there.

We made our way to the Leith Saddle car park and headed up to the top of the Saddle and had a quick snack break and a few “selfies”.



**The view northwards from Rustlers Ridge**

The group then walked along the summit to the Burns Track, really fantastic walk through the snow without a breath of wind and although there was some low cloud around we were able to get periods where the cloud lifted enough for us glimpse the views.

Our plan had been to walk down Rustlers Ridge but with the very wet conditions under foot below the snow line we decided to descend via Burns Track.

Another great day!

On behalf of the group – Sharen Rutherford

## **SPRING ROUTEBURN**

**September 2-3, 2017**

**Author: Maria Hamelink**

Published in Bulletin 786, October 2017

Two vehicles left early with the van leaving at 6, stopping at Alexandra for tea before arriving at the car park at Glenorchy end around 11.45. We all walked into Flats Hut aided by an almost full moon arriving at the hut around 1.30am, although Alex I hear made it in record time.

Saturday morning after a short one-hour climb up to Falls Hut we dropped our packs and headed up toward the lake in various small groups. Surprisingly there was no snow until we were level with Lake Harris and definitely no frozen lake as some of us were hoping for.



**Tarn above Falls Hut, with the Humboldt Mountains in the background (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

A big difference from same time last year where there was heaps of snow right from the Falls hut. Tomas, Simon, Victor, Trisha and I continued up the track rising above the lake until the snow became icy and packed on the rocky ledge and we decided not to go any further as we were exercising caution and the saddle was lost in the fog. We headed back down through the snow, leaving the track to head across the tussock to the lake edge where we met some other groups and had lunch. By this time the sun had forced its way through and turned to a lovely sunny day, though there was a cool wind at times. We crossed the outlet and explored the east side of the lake with awesome views out toward valley of the trolls and down the falls. We found a few frozen tarns and some of us tried out our ice-skating skills.

Then we decided to make our way down alongside the falls rather than the track, stopping to pose in front of some awesome waterfalls to the basin below. We then crossed the track and headed up to the tarns on the other side of the track above the falls and a huge rocky view point with awesome panoramic views over to Harris Saddle and down to the flats below.

We headed back to the hut and enjoyed a great Hawaiian themed evening and quiz run by Rodger.



**On the lookout above Routeburn Falls Hut (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

Sunday morning dawned another sunny day, we headed down to Flats hut for a quick bite then off up the North Routeburn, through the bush opening out to a tarn hosting a lovely reflection the mountains beyond. The snowcapped mountains up the valley looked beautiful glistening in the sun.

After a spot of sunbathing, we headed back out to the car park and home.

Thanks to Rodger for organising this “Winter” latterly re-named “Spring” Routeburn trip and Richard for driving the van. Maria Hamelink for Rodger Clarkson, Tony Timperley, Jill McAliece, Ralph Harvey, Simon Lim, Andrew McLean, Mark Stephenson, Richard and Alex Forbes, Tomas Sobek, Sonya Mitchell, Rahina Scott Fyfe, Jim Fyfe, Victor Mittlestadt, Melissa Trainor and Chris Cowie.

## GREEN LAKE

September 16-17, 2017

Author: Rose Colhoun

Published in Bulletin 786, October 2017

After a short drive from Manapouri to Lake Monowai, we were pleased to see no other cars at the beginning of the track to Green Lake, as our group of 10 was going to mostly fill the 12-bunk hut. The sun came and went as we tackled the ups and downs of the Monowai forest. The track was not as muddy as expected, but as we ventured further into the interior, we found some swampy areas to pick our way through. As we got closer to the saddle below Mt Cuthbert, we found some patches of snow, but the small area of the open tops was clear. Amongst the tussocks, it was harder to tell where the worst of the mud was, and three members of the group fell victim to a thigh deep mud hole in the middle of the track.



Green Lake, in front of the hut (PHOTO: Rose Colhoun)

From the saddle, it was a slightly steeper side down along the shores of Green Lake and an hour later we were at the hut, basking in the sunshine once again. Green Lake hut really is sited in a beautiful spot. We were feeling confident that we had the hut to ourselves as we spread out, enjoyed dinner and were just thinking about getting ready for bed when we spotted a line of torchlights along the shoreline of the lake. Someone had earlier joked on the

unlikeliness of this, so we were rather surprised to meet 4 members of the Southland Tramping Club plus an American couple, who had completed the last hour or so of the track in darkness.



**Green Lake Hut the next morning (PHOTO: Rose Colhoun)**

Little sleep was had in the overflowing hut, but a further surprise awaited when we woke up and found the hut surrounded by snow which was still falling steadily. It wasn't white-out conditions though, and it was actually quite pleasant walking through the bush with the quietness of the snow falling. On the other side of the pass, most of us remembered the deep mud hole, except for one person who may have been mocking the people who fell in the day before..... karma. The snow turned to sleety rain as we continued lower, and it was much colder. However, the return trip was faster, and we were soon back at the cars ready for a warming hot drink at Manapouri before the trip back to Dunedin.

Text and Photos by Rose Colhoun on behalf of: Joe and Sharon Bretherton, Andrew McLean, Sarah Chisnall, Gail Miller, Carolyn Vincent, Michael Stott, Andrea Hudson, Nathan McCauley. Thanks for the great company on a lovely trip.

## BLUE MOUNTAINS

September 23-24, 2017

Author: Rodger Clarkson

Published in Bulletin 786, October 2017

With a drizzly forecast for Saturday we decided to leave town late on Saturday and make Sunday the day we'd do the traverse of the Blue Mountains. We arrived at Blacks Gully by 7pm and set up camp with 3 people having a hut each and 5 of us in tents. Saturday night was a Potluck Dinner and everyone went overboard. After pigging out on starters and mains (Goulash, Nachos, Wraps, etc, etc with a tippie of whisky and wine to wash it down) we decided we needed a break before dessert (Doughnuts with ice cream and caramel sauce).



View over the Kelso / Heriot area from the Blue Mountains (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)

We settled down for a few rounds of Bananagrams (a type of competitive individual speed scrabble). After a few rounds of showing off my lack of mastery of the English language I finally won a round (Talent always shines through in the end) ...but then some bright spark pointed out there's no e in scalpe - I never asked for a spell check! Curse this English language with its nonexistent silent e's. About 11 pm we felt we had room for dessert but then with Daylight saving time adjustment it was after midnight when we hit the sack – without knowing the election result.

Everybody slept soundly apart from Tania who suspected there was a mouse in the hut, Maria who found herself in the middle of a game of spotlight at an inconvenient moment, and those

of us in tents who set up camp too close to the burbling stream. (Why is it you never notice the river noise until you hop in the tent and turn the lights out)

Because of the long day Jan wanted to be away early but there were leftovers to consume (smoked salmon cream cheese, camembert, capsicum and cashew dip on toasted pita bread anyone...well alright then). There were the amusement ground attractions to play on, the wobbly whirly thing, the slidy wobbly thing and the roundybouty wibbly wobbly whirly thing. Its good to know H&S hasn't yet discovered some of the back blocks of NZ.



**You don't see many of these anymore – at Black Gully camp (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

The route we were supposed to take was 14km and 6hrs on the sign. We set off at 9:20 and at 9:21 walked right past the track we should have taken. A leisurely trip up the hill and crossing over to the intended track saw us arrive at the junction at 1pm where the sign said 12km and 5 hrs to go to Whiskey Gully. There were spectacular views all around from the Takitimus to Maungatua. We had phone coverage and found out the election results. Perhaps the trip was an omen to the election starting from Blacks gully up to the Blue Mountains, maybe the trip should have been Green Lake to the Red Hills, now that would be one hell of a weekend trip! A combination of time and blowing a stiff NW a decision was made to head down to Blacks Gully to complete the Blacks Gully loop.

Jan is going to run the trip again on the 1st Weekend in December. It will be a good trip and definitely no wrong turns this time - but if she cracks the whip a bit more in the morning to get a slovenly, overfed bunch of trampers into shape please forgive her!

Rodger C for Jan B, Maria C, Simon L, Andrew M, Cailyn M, Tania M, Mark S

## TUNNELS TRACK TO POSSUM HUT

**October 15, 2017**

**Author: Tomas Sobek**

Published in Bulletin 787, November 2017

Leader: Jan Burch

Trip rating: Medium

Start 10:00 am, finish 3:30 pm.

Distance walked: 9.65 km.

Time walking: 3 hours 30 minutes

Average speed: 2.8 km/h.

Climbs 939 metres, descends 914 metres.

Lowest altitude 168 metres and highest 455 metres above sea level.



**Crossing one of the side creeks on the River Track (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

I have started using my GPS a bit more, as you can probably tell. Originally my primary motivation was to be able to easily geo-tag my photos. But the uses seem to be evolving. Looking at the statistics from this trip it really surprised me that we actually walked only three and half hours. The rest were stops. But those stops were very important. We walked along the freshly cut River Track with the man who spent 5 years of his life cutting it. Arthur gave us a long list of insightful interludes at various places along the track, pointing in directions of other

tracks as they intersect or merge his one. Old water race, new benching he just cut literally last time, plans for improvements in spots he is not quite satisfied with, explanations why the track is following particular line. Next time we should be recording such occasions a bit better, it would be an interesting story to capture. And all those plans he has for future improvements and other tracks in the area - it would be certainly an evolving story to tell.



**Short rest on a small clearing along the River Track (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

But for now, at least our group could enjoy it and firsthand. Together with a fairly decent amount of ups and downs and a splash of water in places. All in all, a great way to spend your Sunday.

Tomas Sobek for Sharen Rutherford, Ken Taylor, Alan Hanson, Ash Flintoff, Sandy Webb, Holly Yang, Kirsten Bebell, Karen O'Neill, Jan Burch (leader) and most importantly, Arthur Blondell (who created the track).

## UNEXPLORED SILVER PEAKS

**October 8, 2017**

**Author: Richard Pettinger**

Published in Bulletin 787, November 2017

Where had six people not explored? It would appear that no one had been to the source of Nicols Falls. Leith Valley here we come, to find a small warning sign on the high side of the creek stating the constructed bike trail was being used that day for mountain bike competitions!

No problem. WE would not be using that track.



**Dunedin City from the Pylon Track (above Morrisons Burn)**

A short way up the Glow Worm / Waterfall track, a sign indicated Glow Worms-Waterfall. We needed "Waterfall". Let's go that way, but a short way up, ...boring...so to make matters interesting we decided to go bush and sidle up to where the falls should be, and so came out just where the regular track gave us a view of the waterfall. Crossing the creek, we continued to gain height until higher than that, (biggest), fall was, and then began cutting back through the bush to re-find the creek, and then boulder hop to the next smaller fall. Again, a steep foot and hand-hold required bash around the side, and hopefully to the top. Vertical and horizontal progress was slow, but eventually we came back to the stream for more boulder hopping and scrambling through and along the creek. A small gorge had opened out and despite some individual attempts to get past, the only option looked like a very deep wade. This was decided

to be not an option, so we again tried to go off track on this the true left side to continue the attempt to reach the head of the creek.

Going up we touched on one of the zig (zag?) corners of the mountain bike track, so we bush bashed straight up to again find a possible encounter with the bike riders, (the bike track). At this stage we were not far from a lunchtime site, (a table was promised). We carefully continued to what turned out to be the uphill/downhill start/finish line for the mountain bikers, only to find them already in residence. Never mind it was entertaining to watch the seemingly wave after wave of bikers arrive, have a breather, then take off, like demons were pursuing them, for their downhill time trial.

Lunch over someone said they had not been down the Transmission Line track for many years, so after continuing up Moonlight/Moon track, (take you pick), to the ridge track, on to Transmission, down to the end of the vehicle track (photo and botany lesson and collection stop), down to the Morrisons Burn vehicle track, some big trees, and five minute walk to the weir intake, (a first for many), cars then home.

Thank you: Richard Pettinger (leader), for Tracy Pettinger, Simon Lin, Ken Taylor, Mark Stevenson, and Alan Hanson (scribe).

## **SILVER PEAKS – GORSE PRUNING AT THE GAP**

**August 19-20, 2017**

**Author: Peter Boeckhout**

Published in Bulletin 787, November 2017

We started from the Mt Road car park, and we were at the Jubilee hut in under 3 hours. After a leisurely lunch we packed our day packs, loppers, gloves, poison gel and slashers and walked to The Gap. We made a plan of attack and started cutting, slashing, and painting like mad man. There was good progress made in the middle part of The Gap and soon we started making some photos to capture the difference from one hour ago. We spent a good 3.5 hours at The Gap area and still there was a lot of gorse that could have been eradicated if we had a couple more trampers who had the same view of what state gorse should be in. We made our way back to the hut and while we were at it every little and big gorse bush, we encountered on the way back got the same treatment as their cousins at The Gap. We arrived back at Jubilee hut after almost 5.5 hours, and we started cooking our well-deserved dinner.

Next day was overcast, raining and cold. We walked back to Mt Road car park in 2 hours and 50 minutes. But not before we had looked at what Robert thought were sprayed spots at the other side of the creek opposite Jubilee hut. And yes, there was dead gorse but most of the other plants around it were dead too.

All in all a good productive weekend, just a pity we did not have anybody else with the same passion for gorse cutting. Maybe next year.

Peter Boeckhout for Robert van Hale.

## GRAHAMS BUSH TO MT CARGILL

September 24, 2017

Author: Peter Boeckhout

Published in Bulletin 787, November 2017

10 keen trampers started at the road end from Sawyers Bay. It was a steady climb up to Mt Cargill road. Along the way we encountered 3 traps with a couple of nice fat rats inside. All thanks to the Halo project. After a small break beside Mt Cargill Road, we moved on and visited the Organ Pipes, Butters Peak and Mt Cargill all in that order. Butters Peak is spelled with an A in most references including Antony Hamel's tracks and trails and my Topo GPS app, but the sign clearly is written with an E as in Butters Peak... not sure who can maybe clarify this? There was a strong breeze, so we moved on towards Mt Cargill. Had a short look around and settled a bit lower out of the wind for lunch. We were not alone on the tracks; many others enjoyed the views that day. We made our way back the same way and arrived at the cars around 2:30pm.



**Butters Peak (the correct spelling!)**

Peter Boeckhout for Ken Taylor, Kate Williams, Alan Hanson, Geraldine Kerr, Lucy Jones, David Armstrong, Karen O'Neill, Kira Lazaro and Sue Rhodes.

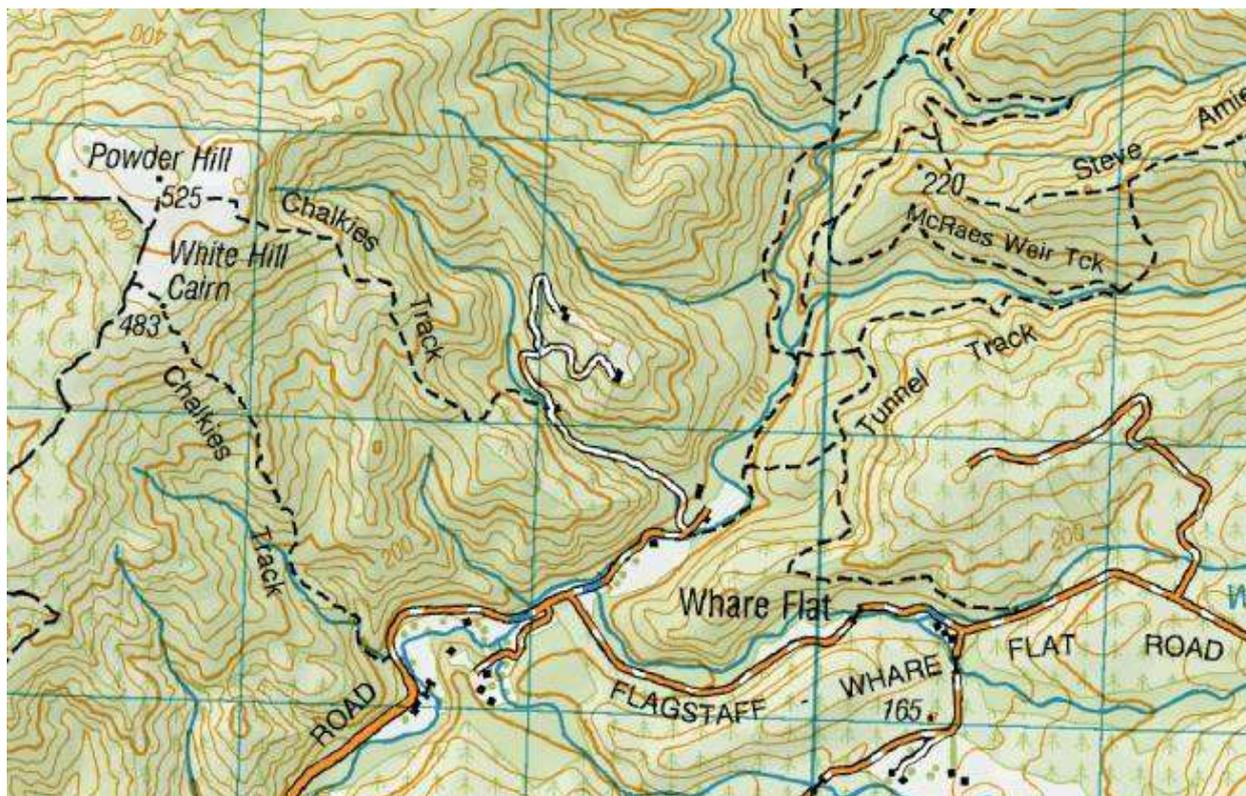
## CHALKIES TRACK TO POWDER HILL

October 1, 2017

Author: Ken Taylor

Published in Bulletin 787, November 2017

A beautiful spring morning, sunshine, no wind when we left the clubrooms at 9.00. On arrival we met up with the others who drove directly there. Once everybody was ready, we walked up the Silverstream valley, crossed the bridge and then down the road to the start of the Chalkies track.



The first part of the climb is up a rough road; once off that up a clay road and then into the bush. A steady climb up until about 20mins from the chalk faces we stopped for morning tea. We then carried on to the chalk faces which have recently collapsed a bit, admired the view and carried on to the top.

There Tomas and Peter wanted to bush bash a bit to join up with the downward track, so Ken and Holly followed and caught up with the main group shortly after. Continued down the hill until we came out of the bush onto a flat clearing where we had lunch enjoying the sunshine.

Continued down the road until the bottom where we decided to carry on tramping along the Racemans and McRaes tracks. It wasn't long before we came to a very slippery boardwalk after which we crossed McRaes stream and a short climb up to the water race which we followed until we turned left, and back down to the Silverstream, crossed over and headed downstream on the Powder Creek track passing the Powder Ridge track.

Along the way there were boggy patches and near the end we crossed over an old weir and then soon after on the road to the carpark, having to cross a ford which made sure everybody had wet feet and clean boots.

Thanks to Sharon Rutherford for leading the tramp and Tomas for helping on the 2nd part.

Ken Taylor for Peter Boeckhout, Ash Flintoff, Sandy Webb, Jane Cloete, Lucy Jones, Esther Abeln, Holly Yang, Alan Hanson, Tomas Sobek.

## **TAIERI MILLENNIUM TRACK**

**August 13, 2017**

**Author: Ash Flintoff**

Published in Bulletin 787, November 2017

An optimistic group of 7 people headed away in cloudy but ideal conditions.

We left the carpark at Taieri about 9.45 and walked along beside the Taieri River for about 20 minutes, then it was on up the hill to the seat at the top and this was our morning tea stop with great views up the Taieri River to Henley in one direction and Taieri Mouth in the other.

Once we left it was all downhill to the very pleasant John Bull Gully for a photo or 2 but as it was only 11.30, we decided to forge on to another picnic stop that was near the Henley end and sure enough about 45 minutes later we were there.



**Taieri River from Governors Point (PHOTO: Debbie Pettinger)**

Lunch was beside the Taieri River which was high and a dirty colour but was a nice, secluded place to stop. After lunch it was back the same way we came through native bush to not so native pine and gorse bush near the summit of where we had a short stop for a drink and to admire the view of Dunedin's coast where we could see all the way to Harakeke Point on the

Sandymount coast. Then it was back downhill through more native bush to the bottom and the boardwalk which brought us back down to the river again.

A short walk had us back at the car about 3.00 pm. This was a fabulous track which was enjoyed by this small group of keen trampers. Ash Flintoff for Leonie Loeber (leader), Peter Loeber, Ken Taylor, Lucy Jones, Steph McLaughlin and Mark Ferguson.

## ALPS TO OCEAN (LABOUR WEEKEND 2017)

October 21-23, 2017

Author: Rodger Clarkson

Published in Bulletin 788, December 2017

*A Personal Diary of the Alps to Ocean Labour Weekend trip (by R. Clarkson esq.)*

Dear Diary

A2O Day 1: Man, that was a long drive up last night. It's amazing how many different ideas there were to put the bikes on the trailer but front wheels off seemed to work. Must have been 1am before we were setting up camp. I see this trip's popular with the ladies. Haven't seen sandflies this bad since Lake Rotoroa. Now first things first, where's the longdrop – there isn't one, oh well better go find a bush and dig a hole...why thank you Mr Rabbit, saved me a bit of work there, I think its unoccupied, but not for long!



Southern Alps as seen from the Alps to Ocean track (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)

There's drama. Tina's lost a nut, her front nut to be precise, and a bike without a front nut is about as much use as a unicycle with an awkward seating arrangement. Still at least she didn't lose her biscuit. Bit of wind cycling up to Tasman point but what a pleasure coming back to camp with the wind from behind. Thinking of behinds so far so good. Back to the campsite and is it my imagination or is that rabbit glaring at me?

Stumbled across a conversation amongst the ladies about bike seat design and how a hole in the seat took pressure off the front bum. Interesting. Actually, come to think of it my gel seats got a hole in it and my manginas feeling pretty good.

Time to cycle down the side of the lake while Kathy drives the Van with Carolyn and Tina on board in search of a nut in Twizel. Chris had cycled away much earlier so the van caught up with Chris down the lake. There's drama. All I can say is that greater love hath no man that he should give up his nut for another and that Tina was most grateful to receive Chris's nut. The van continued towards Twizel without drama... or so they thought.



**Aoraki / Mt Cook from Lake Pukaki (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

Ahh cycling with the wind at your back is easy, hmmm looks like rain to the south...wind change dammit, 50km of head wind to go, woohoo. Nice lunch at the side of the lake and then time to get back on the bike....hmmm, there's something going on 'down there', a certain amount of discomfort and the bumps and corrugations aren't helping. Somewhere along the way Rose noticed a tyre at the side of the road. Man, imagine losing a tyre up here in the middle of nowhere, glad it isn't ours.

Finally, we've arrived at the bottom of the lake and met up with the van which had been into Twizel, dropped Chris and Carolyn off and come back. Think I'll have a turn at driving as a bit of a rest. Tina, now all nudded up, was chomping at the bit to cycle and off she races. Now where's that van key? There's drama. Tina must still have the van key. While Maria gives chase think I'll sit down by the lake and take in the scenery. God this is a beautiful country. Maria comes back after half an hour and off I drive to the next meeting spot at the Salmon shop on

the other side of the lake. The cyclists arrive. Ralph looks at the trailer, then looks at the other side, then comes back to the first side. There's drama. Now I'm not very technically minded but apparently, according to Ralph, every axle should have a tyre at the end of it and one of ours didn't. Is this a problem, I ask, Ralph just looks at me. Note to self: Probably time I brushed up on the road code.



**On the Alps To Ocean Trail (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

I think I'll be the one to tell Maria about the trailer as requires a bit of tact and has to be done just so. Job well done; Donald would be proud. Maria calls out the AA and waits for the trailer to be towed, while I drive the van into Twizel and the rest cycle. A couple of hours later the trailer and Maria are in Twizel too and apparently it's going to be really helpful if we could find the tyre. We thought the best place to start looking was the pub, but after a couple of hours searching there was no sign of it. Mandie and Maria stay a little longer just to be doubly sure.

A2O Day 2: Five of us go in the van back up the side of the lake looking for this errant tyre. Close to Braemar station Rose spots it, oh hooray . Driving back to Twizel Maria called the Garage. There's drama. The Garage asks a question about the tyre and Maria replies with something like "I'm a woman and therefore don't know". There's howls of protest from the militant feminists on board. I'm thinking of asking if any of the 'girls can do anything' brigade actually knows the answer, but I think this might be a good time to stay silent. Thankfully the garage could cut new grooves in the axle and reattach the tyre and everything was good again by 11am. Chris catches a bus back to Dunedin so he can go bike shopping on Monday.

Back on the bike and there's definitely something going on down there. Did someone sneak into my tent and insert a rubiks cube while I slept? Still stiff upper lip and all that, just carry on. The winds changed westerly and blowing a sideonish headwind. Blown off road a couple of times. That looks like Carolyn's bike on the ute that just passed me...that's cheating! (Why didn't I think of hitching)

On to our next campsite at Lake Middleton. Think I'll have a quick dip in the lake along with a few of the others. All dry again and clean clothes on. Time to be sociable, wonder what the ladies are talking about over there... a conversation on the pros and cons of various bra brands. Interesting. Note to self: Actually, the moobs have been getting a bit bouncy on the bumps, must see if there's some form of support device available, needs to be masculine though.



**Riding alongside the hydro canals between Pukaki and Ohau (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

Fantastic meal, Karen's self-saucing chocolate pud cooked from scratch was an unexpected treat. Off to bed. Woken up - my god, what was that howl of pain and anguish coming from Ralphs tent in the middle of the night. Is that person with the rubiks cube fetish at it again? Remains a mystery as he's got no memory of it the next morning.

A2O Day 3: Team talk before heading off. There's melodrama. Some biscuits have gone missing and I broke my favourite jandals of 20 years, but no one's offering me a shoulder to cry on. Cruel. Hopped on the bikes and set off. Note to self: Make an appointment with proctologist when I'm back home.

I must admit I was dubious about Simon's 10 speed over the semi rough track, but he handled it well. Bit of rain around but not too bad really. The uphill wasn't too steep so managed to ride

all the way up and then a big downhill to Omarama. Met a particularly angry magpie so we jousted about 7 times but we both kept just missing.

Day 4. Back at home and reflecting back, what a great trip. Sure, there were some problems but focusing on the positives, 75% of the trailer wheels stayed on for the entire trip, that's a solid B+ at Uni, and an even more impressive 91% of bikes were not run over by the van, and my back bums feeling a lot better. Why did I volunteer to write the trip report, better get on with it now. Note to self: Must remember not to come across as a sexist pig and also remember to thank Maria for admirably coping with whatever drama the trip threw her way....Writers block again eh Rodge.

## **HAKATERE AREA (LAKE CLEARWATER & MT CAMERON)**

**October 21-23, 2017**

**Author: Jane Cloete**

Published in Bulletin 786, October 2017

There was a cycling trip this weekend, but I wanted to have a look at the Hakatere Conservation Park. This is inland from Mt Somers, a bit far to go for a 2-day weekend, so the 3-day weekend in October seemed to be ideal. Just 3 of us went: Tomas Sobek was heading for the Cameron Hut, whilst Lucy and I were to do Day Trips.

A 3-hour drive took us to Grumpy's Holiday Park just beyond Geraldine. We stayed in a cabin but there's plenty of room for tents. I didn't want to drive up the Clearwater Road in the dark! Saturday morning was an hour's drive to drop Tomas at the foot of the Mt Cameron track, then Lucy and I went round to Lake Clearwater.

First: a look at the campsite. (I'd decided beforehand that I didn't want to use a tent – strong winds and possible rain – so I'd booked in at the Mt Somers Holiday Park). Quite a few campervans etc. and the small tent area was a bit boggy. The 'recreation room' was locked so the evenings might have been a bit miserable confined to tents! But then Lucy and I set out to tackle Mt Guy, 1400m. An easy lake-edge walk took us to the bottom of the track but from then on it was up & up & up! You know how when you go uphill, there are usually a few flattish bits? Not on Mt Guy: it is relentlessly up! Lucy managed to encourage me to get up  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way, but then I gave up – too steep and also a bit slippery with loose scree. And cold in the wind. We went back down, and then drove to Mt Sunday, a bit further along the road. Mt Sunday is easy-peasy and a tourist spot (parts of Lord of the Rings were filmed there). Great views. 14+km walking that day, and then Lucy and I drove back to Mt Somers.

Sunday: Lucy and I headed out to Lake Emily. If you are going there, don't take the mountain biking route as it is 3 times the distance of the tramping route. Lake Emily was a disappointment (too swampy to get near) but we got onto a ridge and looked out onto a valley. We couldn't quite see it, but the Manuka Hut is at the end, and it seems to me that it would be a good spot for a 2-day weekend tramp. Possibly a 2-car swap-keys-at-the-hut sort of a trip. Lucy and I were buffeted by wind all morning – seemed just as bad on the return journey - but we found some sheltered tussock for lunch. Of interest during this walk: quite a few other trampers (some doing the Te Araroa trail) and also one man with his dog! The area is a conservation park but the track crosses a sheep station and dogs are not allowed. We saw other trampers telling him off but he seemed totally unconcerned by their words!

After lunch, a stop at Lake Heron (small camping area there) with a very short walk (did I mention that the wind was strong and cold?) before Lucy and I went to the Mt Cameron track. We took our water bottles and headed up the track. Fairly good track for the first 5km which is as far as we went. Tomas says that nearing the hut the track is not so well marked and care is needed. Back to the car: 15.5km walking for Lucy and me that day. Tomas was down by about

4pm – he'd got to the Cameron Hut and had even gone higher up to the glacier – and we all returned to Mt Somers for the night. Monday morning, we headed for home, stopping for a 2hour walk near the Orari Gorge. The McLeod Stream walk is very muddy! And therefore very slippery! And it was drizzling too so we were glad to get back to the car drive home.



**Cameron Hut and Valley (PHOTO: Tomas Sobek)**

My thanks to my companions Lucy Jones and Tomas Sobek.

## **BEN RUDD'S WORKPARTY**

**October 28, 2017**

**Author: Not recorded**

Published in Bulletin 788, December 2017

We were thrilled to have received top quality equipment: loppers, saws, gloves, herbicide and a big backpack sprayer. These things were donated to us by the QEII trust – Weedbusters. We all met at the Bull Ring and Robin Thomas handed over all the shiny new equipment.



**Volunteers removing broom at the Ben Rudd's former skid site**

We were now equipped for the Work Party Day. A large crowd gathered at the Bull Ring on a beautiful sunny day. We all headed up the fire-break track. Alan brought his 4WD, with the gear, a couple of workers and very importantly the cake on board. Once we arrived everyone grabbed their weapons of choice and disappeared into the tussocks. Much of the area needs no work with just the occasional broom or gorse poking up.

Lunchtime saw us all having some birthday cake courtesy of Bronwen. Some recruits left and some more arrived and some of us made a concerted effort against one large patch of gorse. With that knocked off, so did we. Back to the skid site to relax in the sun, drink the beer, eat the cake. Life is good!

A big thank you to everyone who came up; 18 in total. Some for many hours and some for as much as they could spare. It all counts.

## GREEN – ROCKY – YELLOW RIDGES

October 29, 2017

Author: Alan Hanson

Published in Bulletin 788, December 2017

Tomas Sobek was a trip planner and fine weather coordinator but was unfortunately indisposed on the day. However, a capable “stand-in” was found in Antony Pettinger, who aptly kept the following under control. James Lang, Mark Stephenson, Dave Bunn, Tim Russell, Ken Taylor, Lucy Jug, Andrew McConnell, Louise O’Callaghan, Kira Lazero, Alan Hanson [scribe].



Looking north along Rocky Ridge towards The Gap and Mt Watkin

The usual start was made at the Semple Road car park, after having ferried cars to the end the Tunnels Track. A break for morning tea, in glorious sunshine, at the Green Hut site, then up to Pulpit rock. The views were magnificent, but Blueskin Bay was under fog.

A promise of a lunch stop at “the trig” (767m) spurred us on, with no intention of a side trip to the Painted Forest. The turn-off to the trig saw a deterioration of the track to the trig, with the promised lunch and photo stop. It was a bit of a scrabble back to the Rocky Ridge track, and then good time was made, passing the drop down to the Hermits Cave, after which the track became a little more overgrown with short scrub, but still good, albeit some ups and downs, (why the construction team did not “cut & fill” to reduce the down then climb up sections one does not know).

The view of “the Gap” had loomed up. We were at the junction of the Yellow Ridge track, (our route down). The undulating continued, but good time was made to the Philip J. Cox Memorial Hut, where clematis was in full bloom. After the old Yellow Hut site only the dreaded rope nearer the South Branch of the Waikouaiti River and the climb back to the Mountain Road were to come. Both successfully sorted and with a short car shuffle, homeward bound.



**View south along Rocky Ridge, looking towards pt 767m and Silver Peak**

Great trip, some great views, and thank you all. Alan Hanson.

## **KAYAKING – TAIERI MOUTH TO HENLEY**

**November 5, 2017**

**Author: Sue Williams**

Published in Bulletin 788, December 2017

I dusted off my kayak and met up with Rodger and Geraldine near the Henley bridge. We headed down to the carpark at the start of the Millenium Track and got ready to set off. Rodger and Geraldine each had inflatable kayaks to blow up. However, it was very quick and by the time I had my plastic kayak down to the water, they were ready to go.



**Kayaking on the lower Taieri River (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

The river was very quiet, with plenty of spoonbill's fishing in the shallows. We were quickly down to the Taieri Mouth bridge. I went down and had a look at the fishing boats and then we set off for the return trip.

Slightly more effort was required as the tide was still going out. Rodger and I spent a bit of time trying to get spoonbill photos and we stopped for an early lunch at Bull Creek. There were a few more boats around by now, water-skiing and fishing. The weather prediction came true, and we were pelted with hail for a while, followed up with a dose of rain. We pressed on and we were back to the car's early in the afternoon.

Sue Williams for Rodger and Geraldine

## MCKELLAR TOPS

November 11-12, 20-17

Author: Ian Billinghamurst

Published in Bulletin 788, December 2017

A full van and several cars brought 19 keen trampers over to the Milford road's huge Cascade Creek camp site on Friday evening, and a pleasant night was spent camped under the trees.

We awoke to blue skies (and a little bit of mist), and it wasn't long before we were convoying up to the Divide, where at the car park a curious Kea gave the rubber window seals of the rental van a taste test before moving on to other parked cars. We were soon heading up the Routeburn to Howden hut, and along the way I dropped pack to shoot up Key Summit to check out the snow conditions on the McKellar Tops. The snow looked patchy on the flanks of Peak 1449 and so I decided we would stick to the original plan of traversing the ridge line.



Lunch at McKellar Saddle (PHOTO: Rose Colhoun)

Reuniting at Howden hut, we headed down the Greenstone to the junction of the Caples track, and then climbed the Caples onto sunny McKellar Saddle for lunch. Soon we were across the saddle and left the track to visit the unnamed lake at the head of the Caples River. After a quick look at the lake we headed west, climbing up onto the main tarn dotted ridge line north of McKellar Saddle. At about 1100m we left the ridge and sidled northwards along a series of tussocky ledges and ridges, passing tarns and scenic camp sites, with a magnificent view along

the Greenstone to Lake Howden and beyond to the Livingstone and Darran Mountains. From the northwest ridge of Peak 1449 we swung northeast through some snowy scrub before descending down onto the open rolling tops which stretch beyond Pass Creek. North of 1449 there was a decent covering of snow on the tussock, but it was soft and rapidly melting in the warm sun, so it was straight forward travel across the tops and down to the large snow free tarn beside Point 1085. Here, at the southern end of the large tarn and surrounded by numerous smaller tarns, we made camp, and filled in the sunny evening by climbing Point 1085 for 360-degree views, and cooking tea, a highlight of which being Michael's flatbread pizzas!



**Mt Christina, Greenstone Valley & Lake Howden (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

Sunday dawned overcast with misty cloud blowing through our campsite, so we packed in a hurry and were soon heading north past the southern tributary of Pass Creek. We dropped down into the eastern tributary and creek bashed up the northern tributary to a point where we could climb out of the stream and onto the open tops. It was then up and up onto Point 1197 where the photographers got to interrupt a Kea's morning routine and we could admire the view down the Hollyford. Descending northwards down tussock slopes we soon pushed through a short, thick, belt of alpine scrub before descending down through the bush to the Routeburn Track. Having not descended off the tops this way before, it was a relief that the descent was bluff-free and quite straight forward. We popped up to Earland Falls which was only 5 minutes up the track from where we had emerged from the bush, and then dropped down the Routeburn to have lunch back at Howden hut. A couple of folk went up Key Summit on the walk out but most of us were content with what we had seen from the tops.

The last bit of excitement for the trip was wondering whether the van would make it back to Te Anau. On the trip in on Friday the fuel light had come on after we had gone through Te Anau. It was the longest 65km I have ever been on, but we did it, pulling into the forecourt of the Caltex in Te Anau probably running on nothing but fumes! Whew!



**Mt Christina and the Darran Mountains from the McKellar Tops (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

A big thanks to everyone who came along on my first go at leading a club trip, and a big thank you to Peter and Michael for driving the van.

Ian Billinghamurst for Greg Slui, Trisha Geraets, Murray Hyslop, Peter Boeckhout, Tania McMillan, Andrew McConnell, Rose Colhoun, Tina Anderson, Michael Stott, Maria Hamelink, Andrea Hudson, Nathan McCauley, Rodger Clarkson, Michaela Day (*rest of the names were cut off?*)

## KEA BASIN

**November 25-26, 2017**

**Author: Richard & Alex Forbes**

Published in Bulletin 788, December 2017

The trip to Kea Basin didn't have quite the auspicious start we were hoping for after Andrew accidentally hit Michael with his car arriving at the clubrooms but fortunately no lasting damage resulted, and we were away at the usual time before arriving at the Muddy Creek Road end at 2330.

Everyone was packed and ready to roll by 0800 on a brilliant, clear Saturday morning. We made our way along the valley floor (crossing a knee-deep Rees River) dodging boggy sections and electric fences and reaching the start of the marked track which took us past the historic Earnslaw hut. A quick refill of water by the hut (and an accidental shower under the waterfall) and we made our campsite in the middle of Kea Basin by 1300.



**Lennox Falls – Rees Valley (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

After finishing off lunch and pitching all of our tents, half of our merry band had enough energy left over to have a crack at making the snow line of Mt Earnslaw. 6 of us eventually made it after 90 minutes of climbing along a steep and unmarked but nonetheless obvious path. A few photos, a quick rest and a bit of snow stuffed into a pack for dinner drinks, and we made our way back down to camp where the others had been busy exploring the many waterfalls coming off the snow and glacier surrounding the basin. The weather had started to turn for the worse by now and a few showers were roaming the hills, so dinner was cooked and wolfed down

before the worst of it hit. A short fireside chat under the nearest rock bivvy by some of the group and it was off to bed.

The next morning the clouds had parted, turning the morning into a scorcher. Lunch was had where Twenty-Five Mile hut once stood, followed by a quick dip in the frigid Rees for the braver members of the party. We made the car park by 1400 and looked forward to a quick drink at the Glenorchy pub (and a couple of extra stops for pies and ice cream).



**Kea Basin rock bivvy (PHOTO: Rodger Clarkson)**

All was going to plan until we got to Roxburgh where the heavens had opened. We hoped to find a way down the true right of the Clutha but the rural postie informed us the water was over head height further up the road. No matter, we'll cross over the Roxburgh Dam and go down the road on the true left of the river? Wrong. We got almost to Miller's Flat where we discovered the reservoir had burst and sent a torrent of water over this road too, taking out fences and power poles along the way. What really rubbed salt in the wound though, was finding out Rodger and his two passengers had made it out not 10 minutes before. The only option left was to head back to Alexandra and drive back to Dunedin via the Pigroot. Fortunately, that was trouble free, and we finally made it back to the clubrooms almost 9 hours after leaving the Kea Basin car park.

Thank you very much to Richard for leading the trip and getting us all home safely after a very long drive.

Richard & Alex Forbes for Rodger Clarkson, Rose Colhoun, Michael Stott, Andrew McConnell, Michaela Day, Wayne Hodgkinson, Sharen Rutherford, Will Sweetman, Christine & Steve Hopkins, Mark Stephenson, Andrea Hudson, Barry Walker, Tania McMillan, Nathan McCauley

## **OTMC COMMITTEE (2017-18)**

**President** – Richard Forbes

**Vice President** – Antony Pettinger

**Secretary** – Leonie Loeber

**Treasurer** – Rodger Clarkson

**Chief Guide / Transport** – Wayne Hodgkinson

**Bulletin Editor** – Barry Walker

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**Social Convenor** – Sharon Bretherton

**Social Convenor** – Gail Mitchell

**Day Trip Convener** – Sharen Rutherford

**Conservation & Recreation Advocacy** – Chris Pearson

**Gear Hire** – Joe Bretherton

**Librarian** – Helen Jones

**Librarian** – Gail Mitchell

**Website** – Antony Pettinger

**Clubrooms** – Barry Walker

**Clubrooms** – Helen Jones

**Hon. Solicitor** – Antony Hamel

## OTMC TRIP PROGRAMME 2017

Month	Date(s)	Specific Trip	Leader
January	15	Sea To Summit Bush Bash	Gordon Tocher
January	21-23	Huxley / Temple V-Notch Pass	Wayne Hodgkinson
January	21	Leith Saddle Track - Burns Track	Peter Loeber
January	22	River Track (Catlins)	Raewyn Duncan
January	28	OTMC Open Day 2017	Committee
January	29	Leith Saddle Track (Open Day Walk)	Committee
February	4-6	Broderick Pass	Richard Forbes
February	5	Green Ridge to Pulpit Rock	Tomas Sobek
February	11	Moa Flat Cycling	Jane Cloete
February	12	East Of Flagstaff	Chris Handley
February	14	Bushcraft 2017 - 1st Evening	Antony Pettinger
February	18-19	Mount Cook Area - Annette Plateau	Wayne Hodgkinson
February	19	McNally Track	Janet Barclay
February	21	Bushcraft 2017 - 2nd Evening	Antony Pettinger
February	25	Swampy Summit (Rustlers Ridge)	Sharen Rutherford
February	26	Bushcraft 2017 - Flagstaff Navigation Day	Antony Pettinger
February	28	Bushcraft 2017 - 3rd Evening	Antony Pettinger
March	5	Bushcraft 2017 - River Safety Day (Outram Glen)	Antony Pettinger
March	5	Maungatua (up & Down from Woodside)	Tomas Sobek
March	7	Bushcraft 2017 - 4th Evening	Antony Pettinger
March	11-12	Bushcraft 2017 - Silver Peaks Weekend	Antony Pettinger
March	11	Urban Adventure Town Belt Without Tracks	Antony Hamel
March	12	Bull Creek to Akatore Estuary	Rob Seeley
March	18-20	East Matukituki (Anniversary Weekend)	Rodger Clarkson
March	19	To The Hermit's Cave	Jan Burch
March	25-26	Caples / Greenstone / Fraser Col	Wayne Hodgkinson
March	26	Taiari Millennium Track (Henley)	Peter Loeber
April	1-2	Balmoral / Otekaieke Track (2 x day trips)	Jane Cloete
April	2	Leith Valley - Waitati - North East Valley (Cycle)	Rose Colhoun
April	8	Nicholls Creek to Ben Rudd's	Rodger Clarkson
April	9	Cloud Forest / Escarpment Track	Tony Timperley
April	14-18	Makarora Area (Easter)	Antony Pettinger
April	16	Crater Lake (Taiari Ridge)	Alan Thomson
April	30	Off-Track Wander Below Sandymount	Christine Hopkins
May	6-7	Gunn's Camp (Day Trips From)	Ray & Jill McAliece
May	7	Government Track	David Bunn
May	13-14	Pathway to the OTC/OTMC Centenary - 10th Anniversary of opening of new Jubilee Hut	Antony Pettinger
May	14	Jubilee Hut (Pathway Day Trip)	Alan Hanson
May	20-21	Kea Basin	Richard Forbes
May	21	Rosella Ridge	Tomas Sobek

OTMC TRIP REPORTS – 2017

May	28	Peninsula Walks	Rose Colhoun
June	3-5	Mt Somers / Hakatare Conservation Park	Peter Boeckhout
June	11	Big Rock / Little Rock / Ben Rudd's / Bush-Bashing	Jan Burch
June	18	Flagstaff Sunrise (7am to 9am only)	Jane Cloete
June	24-25	Winter Kepler - Luxmore	Richard Forbes
June	25	Tavora / Pleasant River / Goodwood	Tony Timperley
July	2	Trotters Gorge	Jill McAliece
July	8-9	Takitimu Mountains - Aparima Hut	Peter Boeckhout
July	8	Round The Harbour (Cycle)	Jane Cloete
July	9	Heyward Point	Gordon Tocher
July	16	Macandrew Bay to Boulder Beach	Peter Loeber
July	23	Clutha Mouth	Wayne Hodgkinson
July	30	Sandfly Bay & Sandymount	Peter Boeckhout
August	5-6	OTMC Snowcaving Weekend (Old Man Range)	Richard Pettinger
August	6	Philip J Cox Memorial Hut via the new Arthur's Track	Antony Hamel
August	12-13	OTMC Snowcraft (Basic Iceaxe and Crampons) Rock & Pillars	Wayne Hodgkinson
August	13	Millennium Track	Leonie Loeber
August	19-20	Silver Peaks - Gorse Pruning @ The Gap and Compass Navigation	Peter Boeckhout
August	20	Bethunes Gully to Mt Cargill & Organ Pipes	Sharen Rutherford
August	27	Clutha Mouth	Alan Thomson
September	2-3	Winter Routeburn (Falls)	Rodger Clarkson
September	2	Work / Picnic Day on OTMC Ben Rudd's Property	Tracy Pettinger
September	2	OTMC Annual Dinner (Filadelfio's)	Wayne Hodgkinson
September	3	Leith Saddle / Swampy Summit / Burns Track / Rustlers Ridge	Sharen Rutherford
September	10-11	Dart Valley (Daley's Hut)	Nathan McCauley
September	10	Bull Creek to Akatore Estuary	Rob Seeley
September	16-17	Green Lake	Rose Colhoun
September	17	Leith Valley - Lake Whare Circuit	Fieke Neuman
September	23-24	Blue Mountains	Jan Burch
September	24	Grahams Bush to Mt Cargill	Peter Boeckhout
October	1	Powder Hill	Sharen Rutherford
October	7-8	Silver Peaks - Jubilee via the Back Door	Peter Boeckhout
October	8	Unexplored Silver Peaks	Richard Pettinger
October	15	Tunnels Track to Possum Hut	Jan Burch
October	21-23	Alps 2 Ocean Trail (Selected Sections) Cycle	Maria Hamelink
October	21-23	Ashburton Lakes	Jane Cloete
October	22	Mihiwaka / Mt Kettle / Mt Cutten	Bronwen Strang
October	28	Ben Rudd's Workparty	Sue Williams
October	29	Green Ridge / Rocky Ridge / Yellow Ridge	Antony Pettinger
November	4-5	Kepler In A Day	Sarah Chisnall
November	5	Kayaking - Taieri Mouth to Henley (and back)	Rodger Clarkson

OTMC TRIP REPORTS – 2017

November	11-12	McKellar Tops (McKellar Saddle towards Routeburn Track)	Ian Billingham
November	12	Ben Rudd's Picnic and Rhododendrons	Alan Thomson
November	19	Leith Saddle - Swampy - Rustler's Ridge	Peter Boeckhout
November	25-26	Kea Basin & Beyond	Richard Forbes
November	26	Rosella Ridge	Tomas Sobek
December	2-3	Blue Mountain Traverse	Jan Burch
December	3	Complete Skyline Traverse	Debbie Pettinger
December	9-10	Teal Bay Hut - Lake Hauroko	Sarah Chisnall
December	9	Summer Wheels Over Water	Jane Cloete
December	10	Top of Devil's Staircase	Peter Boeckhout
December	16-17	Catlins Area (Social - OTMC Members and Families)	Rodger Clarkson
December	17	Calins River Walk	Sharen Rutherford

# OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (FEBRUARY TO MAY)

**OTMC BULLETIN** 

Members of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc. # 179 February 2017



*People climbing*

**February Trips & Events**

Broderick Pass (Walking Weekend)	Arenella Passes (20 Cooks week)
Green Ridge to Puffin Rock	McNolly Track
Maa Flat Cycling	Sawley Summit (Rustler Ridge)
East of Flagstaff	Bushcraft #1 - Clothing and gear
	Bushcraft #2 - Navigation (and day exercises)
	Bushcraft #3 - Trip Preparation

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**OTMC BULLETIN** 

Members of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc. # 178 March 2017



*Hiker enjoying the view near Broderick Pass, Rustler's Conservation Park - Neil Stevenson*



*Looking down the South-Hunter Valley - Neil Stevenson*

**March Trips & Events**

- Bush Craft River Crossing Day and Overnight Weekend
- Maungatapu (from Woodside)
- Utah Adventure (Town Belt)
- Bull Creek to Arahura Estuary
- East Matahuki (Ayers Ward)
- Hemitt's Cave
- Cape/Greystone/Fisher Old
- Tairā Millennium Track

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**OTMC BULLETIN** 

Members of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc. # 180 April 2017



*Windmill Peak and Fairweather Peak, from slopes of Scauphen Peak (East Matahuki Trip) - Andrew Fethering*

**April Trips & Events**

- Dome Hill & Bulmer and Okunui Track
- Cycle Leith Valley/Warbur Hill
- Nichols Creek to Ben Road's
- Coast Forest & Escarpment
- Easter at Matahuki
- Saravaliere
- Daytrip Leaders Training
- Extraordinary General Meeting

**Extraordinary General Meeting**

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the OTMC will be held on Thursday 27th April at 8pm at the clubrooms. (to be followed by a photo DVD)

The matters to be discussed are the setting of Membership Subscriptions and associated issues. All members are encouraged to attend this meeting.

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**OTMC BULLETIN** 

Members of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc. # 181 May 2017



*Coast Forest and Escarpment Track - Dunedin Views - Thomas Dufur*



**May Trips & Events**

Guinea Camp, Hollyford	Government Track	Archie Hut	Kia Bush
Rosella Ridge	Big Rock, Little Rock, Ben Road		

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# OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (JUNE TO OCTOBER)

**OTMC BULLETIN** 

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc. # 782 June 2017



*Julian had 10 year celebration, complete with birthday cake and candles. Thanks Aubrey for organising a great outdoor tea and Debbie for the cake. They were joined by Helen and Barry, Sharon and Jo, Mark, Tina and Helen. The 10 lunch had over 21 people sharing and 4 in beds. The Sunday day trip saw 8 more OTMC'ers on the track. It was a busy start!*

**June Trips & Events**

Mount Somers    Peninsula Walks    Flagstaff Summit    Winter Keptin  
Taylors/Pennant River/Goodwood

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**OTMC BULLETIN** 

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc. # 783 July 2017



*All Somers, Queen's Birthday Weekend, 3-5 June - Tomasz Soban*

**July Trips & Events**

Toblers Grage    Takahemua    Harbour Cycling  
Clotha Mouth    Sandfly Bay and Sandymount

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**OTMC BULLETIN** 

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc. # 784 August 2017

**OTMC Photo Competition 2017 - And the Winners are ....**



*Above the Bushline (no human element)*  
**Rodger Clarkson**



*Above the Bushline (with human element)*  
**Alex Tuppa**



*Below the Bushline (no human element)*  
**Rodger Clarkson**



*Below the Bushline (with human element)*  
**Barry Walker**  
*More photos page 9*

**August Trips & Events**

Snow Caving    Snow Skills    PM Coa 1400    Arthur's Track    Rautauau  
Mckenzie Track    Stear Nicks    Bellshairn Gully/M Gorge/Organ Pipes

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**OTMC BULLETIN** 

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc. # 785 September 2017



*A photo around the Old Man Range the morning after Snowcaving - Julie Hill*

**September Trips & Events**

Ben Road    Annual Dinner    Leith Saddle/Swanopy/Burns/Hudner Ridge  
Dart Valley    Bull Creek- Akatore Estuary    Green Lake  
Blue Mountains    Grahams Bush to M Gorge    Leith Valley - Lake Wharer

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# OTMC BULLETIN COVERS (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

## OTMC BULLETIN

Newspaper of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club, Inc. # 128 October 2017



*"Spring" Mountain, Royden Clarke*

**October Trips & Events**

Procter Hill	Silver Peaks (Ardle) / Silver Peaks (Shogibend)
Tunnels Track to Possum Hill	Ben Hurst's Work Party
Labour Weekend - Alps to Otago-Cyren Trail - and - Lake Okauchie	
Mt Asoka, Mt Kaitike, Mt Collier	Green, Rocky and Yellow Fodges

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## OTMC BULLETIN

Newspaper of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club, Inc. # 129 November 2017



**Tunnels Track to Possum Hill 16 Oct 2017**  
 (Climbering down to Whakauahi River South Branch, Silver Peaks  
 Tomasz Sobek

**November Trips & Events**

Kopu (on a Day)	Kayaking Tairāwhiti to Henley
McKellar Trips	Ben Hurst's Fodges & Rhododendrons
Leth Saddle - Swampy - Roubert's Ridge	
Kau Saddle & Beyond	Ronette Fodges

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## OTMC BULLETIN

Newspaper of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club, Inc. # 128 December 2017



**Ashburton Lakes Trip, Labour Weekend**  
 On the Carriageway, Cameron Valley  
 Tomasz Sobek

**December-January Trips & Events**

Blue Mountain Traverse	Skyline Traverse
Trail Bay Hut - Lake Hauko	Wheels Over Water (cycling)
Devil's Staircase	Cullins River Saddle - Cullins River walk
Phenixan Track - Flagstaff	Ben Hurst's
Death Valley and Scott Creek	Admiral Hill
Five Passes	East of Flagstaff

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