

Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club

100 Years of History

1923 - 2023



Celebrating 100 Years of
Tramping and Mountaineering



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The majority of this history has been published previously in various OTMC Outdoors magazines, as well as being available on the OTMC website.

This update adds the period from 2013 to 2023, and has been published to celebrate the clubs centenary on August 23, 2023.

I am indebted to Ron Keen for compiling and writing the comprehensive history of the OTC and OTMC for the 50th Anniversary, and published in Outdoors '73.

Thanks also to Richard Pettinger for the 1973-83 section, and David Barnes for the 1983-1993 update.

It is important that an organisations history is recorded, and it is satisfying to see our entire 100 years recorded in this publication.

Antony Pettinger
August 23, 2023.

Part 1 -The Early Years (1923 - 1930)

From the 'Otago Daily Times', 23rd August, 1923: Ladies and gentlemen interested in the formation of a 'Tramping Club' are invited to attend a meeting, to be held in Mr. Diver's Board Room, Grand Picture Palace Building, to-night (Thursday), August 23, at 8 o'clock.

From the 'Otago Daily Times', 24th August, 1923: A successful and enthusiastic meeting was held in Mr. E.S. Wilson's Board Room last night

for the purpose of forming the Otago Tramping Club. There was an attendance of fully 60, including a large number of ladies. Mr. O. Balk, who was voted to the chair, referred to the great advantages which Dunedin offered to a Club of that nature. He pointed out the benefit to be derived from such healthy exercise as tramping in the hills, and the elevating effect it would have on the mind. In the Tararua Tramping Club, of Wellington, which had now completed its fourth season, they had an excellent model to work upon as regards rules and procedure. A decision to form the Club, proposed by Mr. R. Gilkison, and seconded by Mr. F. W. Clayton, was carried. The following Committee were elected: Messrs. O. Balk (President); R. Gilkison and F. W. Clayton (Vice-Presidents); C. J. Hayward (Secretary); E. Miller (Treasurer); A.E. Gascoigne, P.L. Ritchie, R.B. Hamel, and Misses E. Webling and M. Le Brun. Messrs. J. Knox, I.B. Mackie and Miss E. Harrison were later co-opted on the committee

The original meeting was convened by a small committee headed by Mr. Balk and Mr. Gilkison. It is interesting to note that these gentlemen had independently conceived the idea of the formation of a Club, and both had written to the Tararua Club asking for advice and information. From their enthusiasm and that of their colleagues arose the early success and progress of the OTC.

The formation of the club was not an isolated event. Dunedin had been the home of a good many noted trampers and mountaineers such as Malcolm Ross, Kenneth Ross, H.F. Wright, J.K. Inglis, E. Miller and E. A. Duncan. In the earliest post-war years groups of Otago University students - G. M. Moir, R. S. M. Sinclair, D.R. Jennings and many others - had been exploring and track-cutting in the Hollyford and Cleddau Valleys. And both the hills around Dunedin and the Routeburn, Greenstone and Hollyford areas saw an ever increasing number of visitors. Amongst these the idea of forming a Club had been discussed informally, and the idea was quick to gain acceptance.

The Otago Tramping Club held its initial outing last Saturday afternoon, when a party of about 50 members met at Ross Creek Reservoir. The route thence was via Ross. Bush track to Pineapple Point, and then over Flagstaff, most of the party visiting the trig. The south-west wind was exceptionally cold on the mountain, but the bright, clear view, especially over the city, was much enjoyed, and altogether the tramp proved most exhilarating.

D U N E D I N
THE PEDESTRIAN'S PARADISE.
Ladies and gentlemen interested in the formation of a "TRAMPING CLUB" are invited to attend a MEETING to be held in Mr Divers's Board Room, Grand Picture Palace Building, TO-NIGHT (THURSDAY) August 23, at 8 o'clock. 18au

The new Club immediately started with a flourish, and forthwith set out to walk. There was an immediate rush of new members, and at the end of the first year the roll was 157. The first tramp was planned for Saturday afternoon, September 1. About 50 members assembled at Ross Creek reservoir and set off up the Pineapple Track to Flagstaff - a clear sunny day, with a cold south-westerly wind, the kind we know so well.

The following Saturday some 60 persons gathered at the Gardens corner for a climb of Signal Hill and down the other side to Burkes; and this was followed the next day by a trip to Whare Flat, where various parties converged on a pleasant river-bank below McQuilkan's (long since washed out by floods and ruined by the invading gorse). A fortnight later while one group climbed Mt. Cargill, two others set off for Whare Flat - one of which made the journey successfully, but the other was stopped and warned off by Ben Rudd, the old hermit whose property was long afterwards purchased by the Club. Scott Gilkison was

one of those cut-off and still remembers the feelings of alarm as they encountered the stocky, bearded little man with the shot-gun. As a result of this, the Club arranged with Ben Rudd that he would cut a track through the manuka scrub, thus providing a route to Whare Flat while keeping members well away from Ben's property. For this he was paid the princely sum of £5, and the track was under very heavy use for the next 11 years until it was blocked by extensive scrub fires in 1935.

Outings have been arranged as follows:-

Saturday Sept. 8. Meet at Gardens at 2.30, over Signal Hill and down to Burkes; home per 5.30 train or walk. Leader Mr. Balk.

Sunday Sept. 9. Meet at Ferry Wharf in time for the 10 o'clock boat to Portobello, climb up Harbour Cone and return along Upper Road to Anderson's Bay. Leader Mr. C. Hayward.

Saturday Sept. 15. Meet at St. Clair tram terminus and proceed up to "Cargill's Castle" and along cliffs to Black-head. The tide should suit for going round to the Cave. First party leaves at 1.30. Leader Mr. R. Gilkinson. Second party leaves at 2.30. Leader Mr. A.E. Gascoigne.

Sunday Sept. 16. Whare Flat to see Kowhai in bloom. Meet at 10 a.m. at Ross Creek Reservoir (Leader Mr. F.W. Clayton) or Kaikorai Tram terminus (Leader Mr. P.L. Ritchie) as suits convenience of members.

Notices regarding Outings will be posted in the windows of the Sports Depot and of Messrs. C. & W. Hayward, George Street.

On Labour Day it is intended to tramp over the Silver Peak.

Members may at any time form groups or parties, having regard to vicinity of residence, similarity of tastes and preferences as to objectives, distances and pace, each party to be provided with a leader or guide if so desired & requested. It would be a matter of mutual convenience between the Executive and members if such groups appointed one member to communicate on their behalf with the Executive and advise the latter on any intended trips.

O. BALK, President.
'Phones 1308 and 9590 (Res.)

C.J.HAYWARD, Hon. Sec.
'Phones 77 and 2053 (Res.)

Above: Otago Tramping Club trip programme - September 1923

Labour Day, 1923, saw a massive gathering on Silver Peak. Club weekend parties went by way of Whare Flat and Mt Allan, by Bendoran, and by Waitati-Red Hut; and on Monday they were joined on the Peak by another party of about 40 who had come by the Central Otago train to Mt Allan. About 70 Club members were joined on the top by some 30 others; the summit was crowded and the water supplies in the vicinity were severely taxed.

The first Christmas saw a lot of activity on the hills round Dunedin, while one party spent a fortnight based on the shearers' quarters at Cecil Peak station.

The pattern of Club activities had now fairly well settled down. For a period tramps were organised for both Saturday afternoons and Sundays, both being well supported. Saturdays then started to fall from favour, and for a while were dropped from the programme; a few years later the call for Saturday outings developed again, and as they gained in favour the Sundays dropped off. Over the years there have been many changes in the pattern of Club activity, but always it has endeavored to meet the demand and give satisfaction to members.

During the period up to 1930, the Club roamed far and wide over the local hills, while Christmas trips saw

visits to Milford Sound, Cecil Peak and Fox Glacier. The membership dropped sharply in the first two years; some of those who had rushed to join at the start found that the Club was not just what they wanted, and by 1926 the roll had dropped from 157 to 73. Then a more healthy growth developed, and for the next 20 years the membership varied between 100 and 160.

Social activities developed at an early stage. At a special general meeting in 1924 'dancing was indulged in till 11 p.m. and all went home pleased with their evening's enjoyment'. Also in 1924 a Military Pageant was staged at Carisbrook in aid of the War Memorial Fund; the ladies of the Club ran a refreshment stall while some of the men joined in the Pageant as "The Yeomen of the Guard".



OTC Members taking part in the Yeomen of the Guard, April 1924 (OTMC Archives)

Then the Club ran a successful Kitchen Stall at an Oriental Bazaar in aid of St. John Ambulance Association funds. A framed list of outings, surrounded by views of typical beauty spots, was on display at the N.Z. and South Seas Exhibition, 1925-26. Soon after this the Club began supplying the Press with regular reports of day and weekend trips. This lasted for about two years, and was replaced by a series of radio talks over 4YA.

The first Club Room was opened in 1927, and operated every second Wednesday in the International Harvester buildings in Castle Street. Over the following years the Club Room idea was maintained, with varying support, in several different locations; but it did not, at this stage, play the vital part in the Club's life that it has done in recent years.

Mr. Balk was followed as President by Mr. Gilkison, after whom came Messrs. Knox, Clayton, Lumb, Kennedy, Gascoigne and Ritchie. During this period two particularly competent Secretaries kept the Club's affairs in order: Mr. I. B. Mackie (1924-26) and Mr. G. A. Pearson, who held the position from 1927 until he left Dunedin in 1939. Messrs. Hayward, Knox and E. W. Hunter also carried this responsibility for short periods. By 1930 then, the Club was well established as a force in the community.

Whereas previously trampers had been looked on almost as cranks, or at best as rare curiosities, their activities were now accepted as rational and respectable. The 'thirties, and the onset of the Depression, saw the Club ready to play its part.



Ben Rudd and OTC Members at his stone hut on Flagstaff, circa 1924 (OTMC Archives)

Part 2 -The Thirties

The early 'Thirties was a period of world-wide economic depression, and had a profound effect on the lives and habits of people everywhere. The strengthening interest in tramping and mountain activities was widespread; in New Zealand there were spontaneous developments in many areas, partly the result of a recognition of the value of healthy recreation involving only minor expense. The Tararua Tramping Club had been formed in 1919, the Otago Club in 1923, the Canterbury Mountaineering Club in 1925, to name but a few. The 'Thirties saw an outbreak of new clubs in many areas.

On the local scene there was extensive development of active interest in the mountains. For seven years the Otago Tramping Club had been building up its activities. The Otago University Tramping Club was functioning very actively in some years, more modestly in others. Under the influence of Ellis, Miller, Boddy, Aitken and others, Otago men had been taking an active interest in the higher mountains in North-west Otago. At the end of 1930 the Otago Section of the N.Z. Alpine Club was formed in Dunedin, this being the start of a long period of friendly co-operation between trampers and mountaineers.

In 1932, as a result of five weeks of continuous ski-able snow on Flagstaff, the Otago Ski Club was formed; the Tramping Club 'learned with interest of its formation and extended to it its good wishes for a successful future'. The three clubs operating in their respective fields worked in well together, with some members common to all, and with members of one of the clubs not infrequently becoming interested in the others.

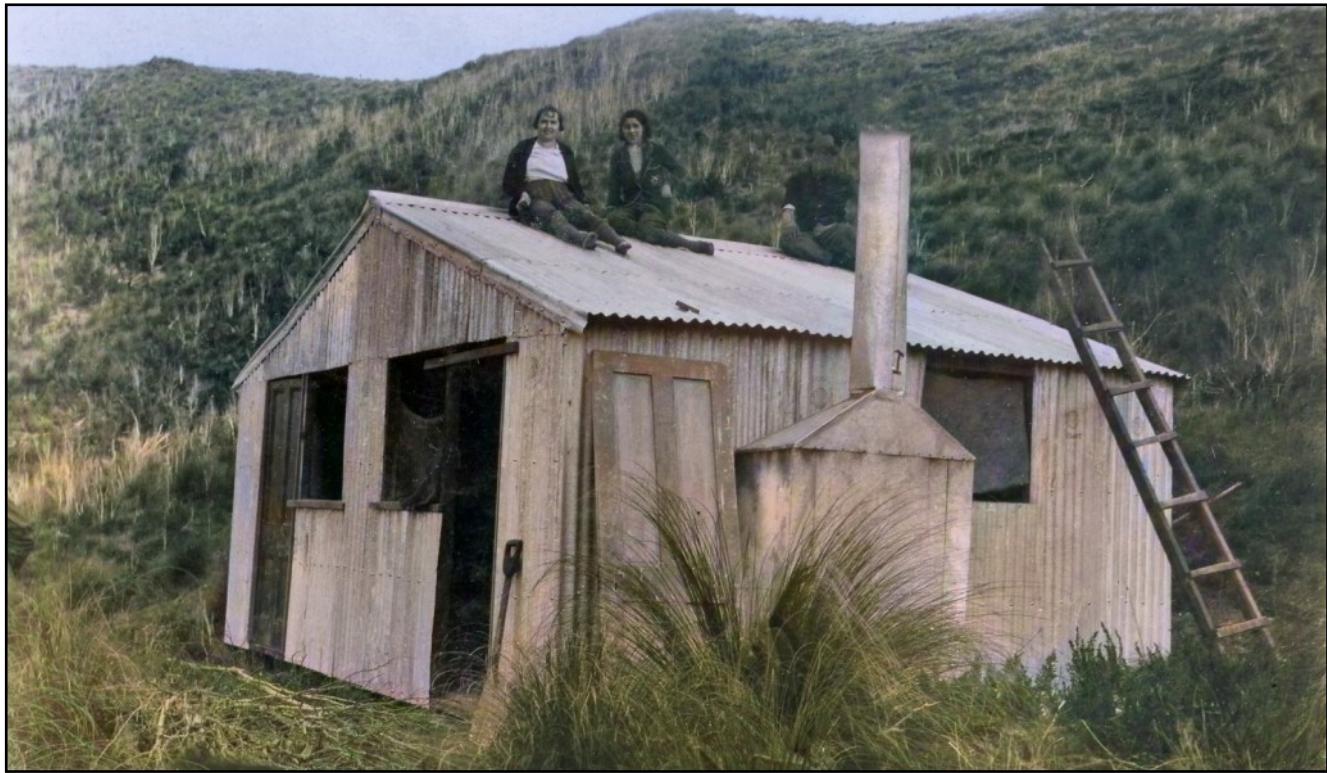
During this period the life of the Otago Tramping Club continued at a fairly steady tempo. The membership had built up during the period 1925-32, but then fell quite sharply - due in part to the purging of un-financial members - and for the next 15 years was little over 100. Christmas trips became more far-ranging, from Ohau, Ahuriri and East Matukituki to Routeburn and Lake Gunn; while Easters covered a variety of areas mostly in Central or South Otago. As for the usual weekly trips, " every effort has been made to provide the greatest possible variety in the fixture cards, at the same time keeping the cost to a minimum ".



Skiing on Swampy Hill (OTMC Archives)

It was in this period that the Club did its first hut-building. In 1932 it had donated £5 to the N.Z. Alpine Club as a contribution to the cost of Cascade Hut in the Matukituki Valley. At the end of that year permis-

sion was obtained from the Dunedin City Council for the erection of the Club's own hut on a site selected on Section 3, Block X, Silver Peak District. This venture was approved at a special general meeting of the



The Club Hut nearing completion, 1933 - colourised photo (Photo from Dave Still, OTMC Archives)

Club on March 16, 1933, when the Committee was authorised to spend £50 on the scheme. A packing contract of £30 was let, and working parties from the Club, assisted by parties of helpers from the N.Z. Alpine Club, proceeded to get the materials transported and hut erected. Access was by the old Sawmill Track from near the Leith Saddle, and it was a grand sight to see the team of oxen hauling their sledge up the bush track, then along the narrow ridge from Hightop to Green Peak. In 1933, Club accounts record the total cost of the hut (less donations) at £48.16.10; so it is clear that some good planning and keen financing was involved to keep within the budget. Green Peak Hut was officially opened on June 3, 1933, and over the next few years it became the main base for Club activity.

Now that the Club had acquired property, it became necessary to give it proper legal standing, and shortly after it became duly incorporated.

A year later, in September, 1934, the Club's first publication appeared 'Outdoors No. 1'. Originally a very modest pamphlet-style publication, it has had many changes of content, format, size and style, but it has continued over the years to record at least some of the thoughts and experiences of Club members. The first Editor was C. Lucas, for many years Town Clerk of Dunedin, who, over a long period, showed himself an excellent friend of the Club. Social activities at this period consisted mainly of fortnightly or monthly gatherings. At various stages there were reports of the " Club Orchestra ", and of the plays, music, dances and magical performances that were presented at these functions. By these means the Club's spirit and enthusiasm were maintained and developed.

Part 3 -The War Years and the Post War Renaissance

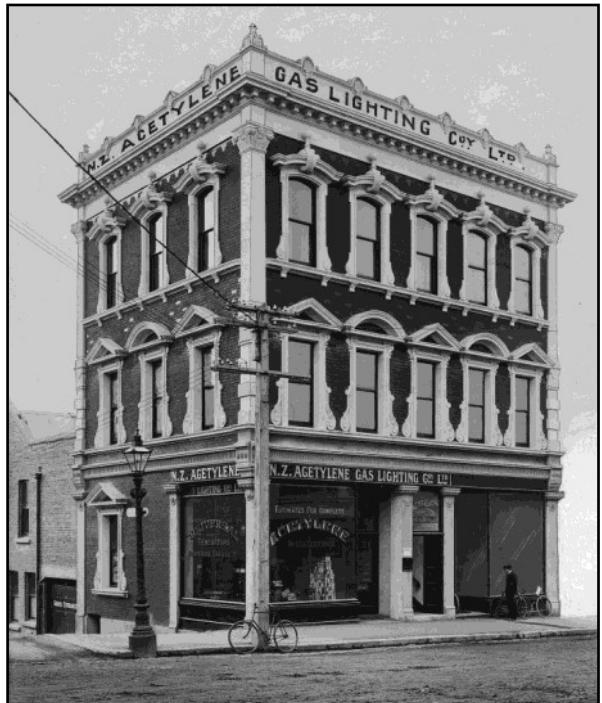
The Second World War, commencing in September, 1939, led to a very difficult period in the Club's history. Although the membership was well maintained during this time, the loss to active service of many of the Club's most energetic young men and women threw an extra burden on those who were left. Nevertheless a steady pattern of Saturday afternoon, Sunday and occasional weekend trips was maintained, and most years an extended Christmas trip was run. Social activities continued, having the added purpose of the preparation and dispatch of parcels to members serving overseas. An important element in the Club's life at this stage was supplied by the arrangements made for the use as a Club Room, every Friday evening, of the Otago, Chess Club's rooms in Lower Stuart Street. This room proved to be of steadily growing importance until it became too small for the growing numbers using it.

About the end of 1944, a new breath of life seemed to come over the whole situation. The war picture was looking much brighter, and it began to look as if a normal life might shortly be resumed. About this time came a grand crop of new young members who did so much over the next few years to lead a tremendous revival of activity - names like Markby and McLaren, Vann and Lymburn, Burke and Tilly, Shona Hogan and Val McGavin, these and many more moved in to take control of the Club's destinies.

A decision not to run a Christmas trip in 1945 was reversed at short notice, and the result was a highly successful expedition to the Rees and Dart.

During 1946, Club trips became even more interesting and better patronised, and the crowded Friday night Club Room gatherings became more and more important. Plans were set up for a Christmas gathering in the Rees Valley; this materialised as a base camp near the Hunter junction, used by upwards of 60 members as a starting point for tramps and climbs over the whole of the upper valley. Indeed, the considerable number of climbs that were accomplished were later to cause differences of opinion as to what the Club's philosophy should be. R. B. Hamel, who was President at the time, was a man with very strong views and a certain bias against climbing and skiing. Eccentric as he may have been on occasions, he nevertheless played a valuable part in forging a link between the extreme age groups in the Club at this time by joining members of the "under 30" group in an operation to renew and revitalise the whole Club. Dick Hamel had a sense of humour, sometimes acid, sometimes wicked, but nearly always enjoyable. As a lawyer, he gave the Club much useful advice, and he will always be remembered for the 25th Anniversary Dinner at Brown House which he organised from beginning to end. In the words of one of the participants, 'Not before or since can I recall having enjoyed better food, better wine, better after-dinner speeches or a better evening. The whole affair was an eye-opener to most of us, and I can well recall my intended requiring two days off Training College to recover from the after effects'.

Interest in organised Christmas trips reached a peak in 1947 when no less than three expeditions were planned Rockburn - Olivine, Hopkins and Ahuriri, with 50 to 60 members involved. Gordon McLaren and Murray Douglas climbed Mt Ward (third ascent) - the first major ascent to be made by the climbing enthusiasts. A high standard of safety was maintained on all these trips and no incident of any sort occurred, despite the numbers in the field.



Second OTC Clubrooms, - 1940s, cnr of Lower Stuart & Bath Streets

It was during the 1947-48 period that Horace Tilly officiated as President, and, it was under his leadership that the Club's future course was to be charted. During these two years he laid an administrative foundation which, with minor alterations, has been followed ever since. Monthly news bulletins were issued to keep members abreast of current events, sub-committees were appointed to attend to the detailed running of the Club, skiing and climbing were put into their proper perspective and given the Club's blessing, and the Rules were amended and brought up to date.



Jubilee Hut as new, 1951 (OTMC Archives)

Meanwhile, the pent-up energy and enthusiasm of the active group within the Club had expressed itself in other ways. Green Peak Hut, which had become almost unusable due to the depredations of pig hunters, was almost wholly rebuilt and became once more a centre of Club activity. Then the approach of the Club's Silver jubilee led to much discussion as to the best way of marking the occasion. The final decision was in favour of a new hut alongside Cave Creek, just above the junction with Christmas Creek; and this having been agreed, much planning and preparation had to be undertaken urgently. A major sledging contract had to be organised to get all the material from Hindon, up to the top of Lamb Hill, and part way down to Christmas Creek; from here it had to be manhandled down to the junction and up to the selected site. Eventually the hut was completed, and its official opening, on March 17, 1951, in the presence of some 60 or 70 members and well-wishers, was an impressive landmark in the Club's history.

Another important development at this stage was the acquisition of the old Ben Rudd property on Flagstaff. This area had been offered to the Club, and thanks to the generosity of Mr and Mrs W. Stevenson, the offer was able to be accepted. A group of young Club members transported materials and built a hut on the old Ben Rudd site, and a little later this hut was handed over to the Club for the use of all members. Although that particular structure was abused by visitors to the stage where it had to be demolished and replaced by a vandal proof building, it nevertheless made a major contribution to the development and activity of the Club over the last 25 years.

Meanwhile tramping activity - which, after all, was the Club's basic purpose - continued at an ever-

increasing tempo. The Silver Peaks country was full of trampers every weekend - the majority being Club members, but their paths crossing a variety of groups known as the "Shakobites", the "Trapperites" and the "Same Old Mob".

Christmas 1948 saw another Club camp in the Wilkin Valley. Pack horses took half a ton of stores to Jumboland Base Camp and their owner charged £97 for the privilege. Every part of the Wilkin and its tributaries were visited, and several good climbs made, including the first ascent of the inaccessible Pickelhaube in the South Wilkin. Jack Hoskins and Scott Gilkison made a first crossing from the West Coast via the Waiatoto, Pearson Saddle and South Wilkin. The Rees, Dart, Matukituki, Rockburn, Hollyford and Ahuriri were also visited by other parties. Aspiring was climbed by Gordon McLaren and party, and Murray Douglas climbed Mt Cook - the Club's first major post-war ascents.

Nineteen forty-nine was a year of busy activity in many parts of Otago, but for the first time an official Christmas trip was not held. This probably reflected the individual member's desire to go off in smaller parties and put his newfound experience to the test. Many ambitious trips were planned, including one to circle Aspiring and ski across the glaciers to the north into the South Wilkin. Weather unfortunately limited this expedition by McLaren, Lush and Hubbard.

A further Club camp was held in the Hopkins Valley during Christmas 1950, and this was to be the last of its kind for a good many years.

In the Presidential letter to the 1948 edition of "Outdoors", Horace Tilly wrote: 'Twenty-five years' activity is behind us, and I feel privileged to call myself a member of our Club with its history. What we do now will be history 25 years hence. Let us follow on from the foundations of the past and use our energy and vitality to create a history which, in 25 years' time, will be respected by future members. That second 25 years is now behind us, and the Club looks forward with anticipation to the next half-century.

Part 4 -The Fifties

The great burst of post-war enthusiasm was now receding and the effect of this was not so much a slackening of interest in the Club, but dispersal of members' energies into more diverse fields. The Otago Ski Club was rapidly expanding and its new building programme at Coronet Peak claimed the attention of some of our members. Private trips to more out-of-the-way places were popular now that some individuals owned their own transport, even if it was only, the humble motor cycle. Matrimony took its toll as the years and other responsibilities combined to cause a slowing of the vigorous tempo the Club had become accustomed to since 1945.

For the next few years, the Club was to pursue a more leisurely pace, with many fine cross-country trips undertaken in remote places. Great interest was taken in the Olivine country, with Bruce Campbell spending considerable time there. The Darrans, too, attracted increasing attention.



*George Arras and Freeman family at Ben Rudd's former hut site, circa 1951
(OTMC Archives)*

Some of the best-known personalities who made major contributions to the post-war revival have already been mentioned. There were many others, too, who collectively made the Club the great success it was during this period. George Arras, a life member and active from the '20's until his death in the '60's was a climber and skier of note, a guide at the Hermitage and the Club's first Chief Guide. Wilf Broughton, Jack Hoskins and Bruce Campbell were each in their turn President and no club could have been better served in this capacity.

And those who just tramped, skied, climbed, built huts, cut tracks, etc. - well, there were many. Cliff Anderson, Gavin and Daphrie Clark, John Scott, Russell Gregory, Arnold Hubbard, Ross Adamson, Ross Lake, the O'Kane brothers, Keith Lambie, Stuart Needs, June and Barbara Napier - to mention only some of those best recalled.

During the mid-fifties the Club met in the TOC H rooms in upper Dowling Street. These rooms were heated by a round pot-bellied stove in the middle of the floor- a stove which often gave out more smoke than heat. Furnishings were very old easy chairs and sofas and there was an all-pervading smell of dust and old age. The practice of detailing two members each week for clubroom duty continued, with the anonymous organiser often using considerable skill and acumen in pairing likely lads and lasses, who, it was felt, should get to know one another better. It is interesting to record that the 72 male and 70 female members of 1954, had changed to 90 and 64 by the following year. In 1955, the last Barn Dance at the Leith Valley School was held, later years shifting to the Pukehiki Hall.

In 1954, an appeal went out for gifts of equipment to set up a hire pool, and to the two packs, two large billies and 80 feet of manilla rope that was donated, the Club added two four-man tents which it had purchased. Later on, ice axes were added and new members were then able to enjoy weekend trips without the worry of a large financial outlay on equipment.

New areas were being chosen for long weekend trips. Queen's Birthday, 1954, saw 26 members in the Orari Gorge, with some of the party climbing Mt Peel. At Labour Weekend, 34 went to the Shotover and then followed the Moonlight to Lake Luna, finishing at Mt Creighton station on Lake Wakatipu. There was no official Christmas trip that year, although private parties went to the Rees - Dart, Routeburn - Hollyford, Hollyford - Pyke - Olivine - Rockburn, Martins Bay - Big Bay and the Mt Cook area.

In 1955, 30 members enjoyed a round trip at Easter from the South Temple to the Huxley, and Timaru



OTC Snowcaving Trip, Kakanui, 1950s
(Photo: Peter Barker)

Creek was visited at Queen's Birthday weekend. This was only a short time before Lake Hawea was raised 70 feet and the very pleasant camp-site that was used is now under many feet of water. Snow-caving was first attempted in the Kakanui during September, and the Eyre Mountains were the venue for Labour Day. During this period Saturday trips lost much of their former support and were consequently no longer arranged.

Club politics were lively around this time. At the 1954 Annual General Meeting, there were two nominations for the Presidency (something almost unheard of), but as it turned out there was no vote. Dick Hamel withdrew from the "contest" and Ian Pollard was elected. Ian's tenure was to be short-lived - a transfer away from Dunedin forced him to resign and his place was taken by Albie Green. Albie was re-elected unopposed at the 1955 A.G.M., but resigned for personal reasons early in 1956, with Bruce Campbell filling the gap until the next Annual Meeting.

April, 1956, saw the new diamond-shaped Club badge go on sale to members. Practical, but with little appeal.

Scott Gilkison became President at the Annual General Meeting and a vigorous policy was begun to rid Flagstaff of some of its gorse. Forty-eight people turned up to help and A. H. Reed presented his booklet 'Walks Around Dunedin' to those who took part. Membership at this time was 155 and many large-scale working parties were held on track clearing and hut repairs. Long weekends were spent at Lake Ohau, the North Temple and the Ahuriri Valley.

By the end of Scott Gilkison's term of office, the roll had climbed to 164, the highest for that time. Jim Malcolm followed Scott as President and it is worth mentioning that Jim always practised what he preached. You could count on seeing him on nearly every Sunday trip, often with a small slasher at the ready.

Easter, 1957, saw over 30 members spend a very wet time up the Matukituki Valley and although very little was achieved, a few stalwarts managed successful ascents of Liverpool and Bevan.

Working parties were still to the fore, in fact so much so that a number of active members of the time all pleaded "wanderlust" and took off overseas.

By 1958, Club activity was steadily increasing, with most trips being reasonably supported. Weather dur-

ing 1958 left a lot to be desired and although it considerably reduced some activities, it was said by one active member that if nothing else, it played a firm part in character building. To wit, there is nothing better than sitting out a storm for three or four days in a small tent to learn to live with your fellow men. There may be a lot of truth in this, but it is suspected that the member quoted was also in the habit of ensuring that his 'fellow-men' were issued with a daily ration of " Lifebuoy ".

Private trips were still a part of Club life at this stage, with various parties climbing or tramping in the Seaward Kaikouras, Hunter Hills, Mt Grandview, Homer, Hopkins, Mt Murchison, Hunter Valley, Dart, Whit-bourn, Arawata and Matukituki Valleys.

The official Christmas trip for 1958/59 took nine members over the Routeburn-Rockburn-Hidden Falls-Olivine-Pyke-Hollyford-Greenstone circuit, with more than the usual share of fine weather. Easter, 1959, was centred on the Ahuriri Valley. With 29 members in the valley, popular campsites were sometimes at a premium, but the lack of serious river-crossing problems meant all grades of experience were adequately catered for; from an ascent of Mt Peterson to a gentle ramble to the head of the valley.

During 1958, the usual snow-caving trip to the Kakanuis gave way to igloo building. Good snow, plus slightly-below-freezing temperatures, allowed three to be built, with that erected by the Keen / Cunningham party assuming true classical lines. One of the others was a massive structure about 14 feet across. Shortage of time and an uncertainty of procedure made it necessary to roof it with a tent, which caused it to be likened to an astronomical observatory or alternatively a convertible automobile.



Igloo with tent fly serving as the roof, Kakanui Mountains, 1950s (Photo: Peter Barker)

A 35th Anniversary Reunion was held between the 12th and 14th of September, 1958, and proved to be both a great success and a triumph for the Organising Committee. An informal evening at the clubrooms on Friday night drew a large crowd who saw slides of past and current club activities, looked through the old albums, and chatted over supper.

The dinner on Saturday night at The Vedic was attended by approximately 120 members and friends. Toasts honoured were "The Queen" (Horace Tilly), "The Club" (Bruce Moore), "The Founders" (Bill McFarland/Charles Hayward) and "Present Members" (Jim Freeman/Bruce Campbell). Ralph Markby was in the Chair. After some piano items by Pam Barton, Gavin Clark showed tramping films, and dancing and supper completed the evening.



Ahuriri Valley, March 1959 (Photo: Peter Barker)

At Ben Rudd's on the Sunday, 80 members and their families enjoyed a picnic outing in spite of dull weather. The hope was expressed that the large numbers of cars seen at the firebreak was not a sign of decadence, but rather of the prosperity of the older members.

Bruce Moore was President during this period, and those who were fortunate in attending the 50th Anniversary Celebrations and were subjected to his "harangue" will perhaps understand why he was so instrumental in getting everyone back into the hills - no one wanted to be put in the position where they might have to listen to one of his lengthy 'speeches'. In a serious vein, though, Bruce has been a mainstay in the Club since 1953, and his achievements were later recognised by life membership being conferred on him.

Part 5 - The Fortieth Anniversary Celebrations

Late in 1962 it was decided that the Club's 40 years of existence warranted recognition, even if only as a 'warm-up' for the 50th anniversary.

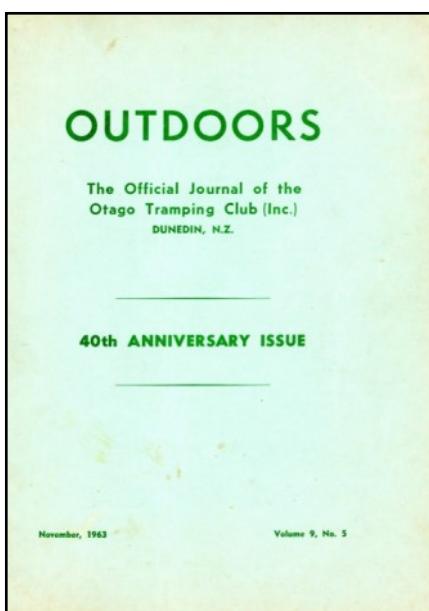
The then Vice-President, Ron Keen, was coerced into the position of chief organiser, his first task being to compile a register of members past and present. With able assistance, this formidable task was soon accomplished.

The activities were planned for a weekend in August, 1963. A get together was arranged for the Friday night, and because the Dowling Street Clubrooms were considered inadequate for the numbers expected to attend, the Otago Cine Club rooms were hired. A fine selection of colour slides was shown of notable Club trips, of members through the years, and of some rather peculiar activities that trampers indulge in from time to time.

Well patronised was the collection of Club records and black and white photographs arranged for display. Among these was a series entitled "The Seven Ages of a Tramper - , featuring a well-known member of that time, from his earliest days as a babe-in-arms to his debut as a booted and bearded man of experience.

The main celebration was held on Saturday night at the Crawford Lounge, with a formal dinner and dance. At the conclusion of the dinner itself, Horace Tilly proposed the toast to the Club and was in turn followed by the speaker for the evening, life member Jim Freeman. Jim regaled the large gathering with stories of the local hills. One in particular, told against himself, was of the occasion when he was mistaken by a small lad for Ben Rudd. After the laughter died, the floor was quickly cleared and dancing began, with the band playing everything from a sedate waltz to hectic limbos.

Dancing was interrupted for a special interlude provided by the "Committee of '63 ". This (rather discordant) choir, accompanied on the piano by Ian Smith, sang a selection of well-known tramping songs, the feature song highlighting certain events of the Club's 1962 Rees Valley trip.



A Club picnic was held at Ben Rudd's on the Sunday, this being attended by a large number of family groups as well as those who hadn't succumbed to the previous night's festivities. From the amount of noisy chin-wagging and reminiscing that went on, there was no doubt whatsoever that the celebrations had been a tremendous success.

'Outdoors' for 1963 was printed as a 40th Anniversary issue and featured a number of portraits of Club members active at that time; as well as serving as a pictorial record of places and faces from Club trips of that year.

Part 6 - The Sixties

It is part of convention to break the history of clubs into decades, and though most of us shun convention, it is perhaps difficult to find a more convenient way of comparing eras in the Club.

Naturally, when the 1960's arrived you would have expected that the then committee would have said, 'Let us make this the best 10 years of the Club's history', but as the writer was the President at the time he could vouch that no such thought crossed their minds. They were only concerned with running the Club, and enjoying themselves tramping and climbing. It is true that they had the interest of the Club at heart, and whilst they were there they hoped the Club would prosper. Membership at the start of this period was 125 and they were determined to build this number up.

The early '60's saw a great deal of activity in property development and maintenance - Ben Rudd's hut received new bunks, Jubilee Hut had top bunks added, and the Club took over the maintenance of Dart Hut. The Club property on Flagstaff was finally surveyed by Ron Keen and a detailed topographic map drawn of the area. Many thousands of trees were planted with a great deal of encouragement from Bruce Campbell and Eddie Cutler. It is noted with interest that in this early period of the '60's vandalism to our huts was a continuing source of worry to members, but it was known that this had also been a problem in the early days of Green Peak Hut, and in fact, when the contractors built the hut in two parts - one for males and one for females - so much "hanky-panky" went on that the partition was eventually removed.

In November, 1961, the Club moved out of its rooms in Upper Dowling Street and shifted to Broadway, where Dr Cotton had generously given us the use of a room next to his surgery. Almost overnight attendance doubled, and about this time the Club started its Advanced Instruction Course to provide plenty of capable leaders for the future. The emphasis was on climbing as this was thought to be the best way of strengthening the Club. This arrangement continued to the mid 1960's when a change in attitude became noticeable in the committee. However, individual climbers still brought climbing to an important stage during this period.



OTC campsite at Lake Harris, late 1950s (Photo: Peter Barker)

The Easter trip in 1962 saw 35 members tramping and climbing in the Hopkins Valley area, the largest number since 1958.

In late 1962 the South Otago Branch of the Otago Tramping Club was formed with people like Russell Gregory, Clarry McNie and Jim Kinnamond providing the driving force. On July 3rd, 1963, another Branch was formed, this time at Mosgiel. The organisers were John Armstrong, Graeme Hasler, Trevor Pullar and Eric Donaldson, names that proved how valuable the formation of this Branch was.

It is also interesting to note that at about this time Jim Cowie was given the task of leading a group to climb Mt Cargill, Mihiwaka and Mopanui, so future "guns" - take note and don't scoff when you are asked to lead a trip to Mt Cargill. About this time the Club took over the repair and maintenance of Twenty-five Mile Hut; and no-one will ever forget the sterling efforts that Gerry Kampjes put in to getting the Club's



OTC Truck mishap, Rees Valley, 1960s (Photo: John & Robyn Armstrong)

own transport established.

It is interesting to note just how advanced the Club had become by the end of '63, with parties as far afield as Cook, Homer, Harrison, Tutoko, Matukituki, Dart and Rees. A considerable number of peaks were climbed in these areas, and while this may be commonplace today, it was then regarded as another milestone in the Club's history. In November 1963, the Club moved into its (then) present premises in Lower Dowling Street. By 1964 the Club was under the capable control of President Gerry Kampjes who initiated skiing within

the Club, and expressed a desire for the Club to build a hut at Coronet Peak. Models, plans and specifications were prepared, but even up until 1968 'red tape' foiled all plans to go ahead with this.

Trip records showed 62 members up Mistake Creek at Easter, and the Club roll had risen to 226.

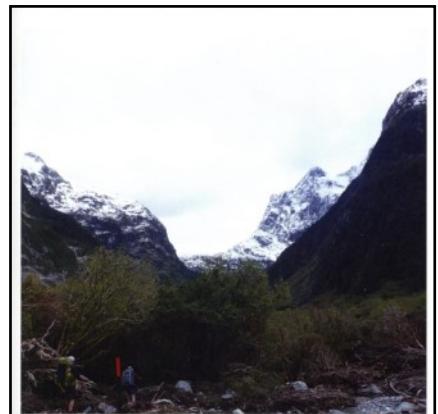
In September 1965, the Club purchased a '49 Morris Commercial truck. This replaced the one owned by Gerry Kampjes and which had been so generously loaned on many occasions for official trips. It had certainly had a chequered career, having run into a ditch near Lawrence, gone head over heels down Stuart Street, run out of road on Swampy, got stuck in the Matukituki, cracked its block in the Eglinton and nearly lost its deck crossing Muddy Creek. It was sadly missed, and no doubt its "misadventures" would have provided enough material for a first-rate book.

1965 saw the Club enter politics with its famous freedom walk on the Milford Track. This, of course, is now history and was adequately covered in the 1965 "Outdoors"; but it should not be forgotten that the action the Club took then has had far reaching consequences for all trampers and climbers in New Zealand.

On January 8th and 9th, 1966, six Club members climbed Mt Cook - M. Jones, G. Kampjes, J. Armstrong, G. Hasler, I. Meyer and H. Laing. Although Club members had climbed Cook before, and have since climbed far more formidable peaks, this does serve to give some idea of the standards reached during this period.

A change in attitudes was noticed in 1966, and is evidenced in the following report which is worth a place in history: At a lively extraordinary general meeting held on October 26, 1966, the grandiose plans of the committee, led by radical President John Armstrong, were amended. Chief Guide James consented to remain in the cabinet, as tramping is still an 'approved' sport.

The following motion was passed after hours of discussion and much amendment. "This Club should continue to encourage tramping, climbing, ski mountaineering and ski-ing without detriment to the Club's prime aim of tramping."



Milford Track
Freedom Walkers
The whole story; Why and How

Robyn Armstrong BSc

Bob Cunningham: " There has been a considerable change in the last five years. There was next to no climbing up until that time."

Gerry Kampjes: " Five or six years ago there was little ambition in the Club and less than half the number of people."

Graeme Hasler: "Safety is of paramount importance. We must have a balanced club"

Laurie Kennedy: "Something must suffer if we run a climbing course"

Jim Freeman: " People now have more money and are able to spread out into areas and sports not previously possible. Now less scope for tramping. Climbing is the natural outcome of tramping"

Alan Thomson: "Need to support tramping"

Arthur James: " Far better to have a small specialist club where you know most of the people rather than a large social skiing and climbing organisation."

Jim Cowie: " If the O.T.C. does not run an instruction course in climbing there is little incentive for the likes of me to remain in the Club."

Roger Conroy: " Let's change the name to the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club"

Ross Adamson: "Too much advertising on skiing by word of mouth and publications"

Here the President made some extremely sensible and pertinent remarks. He also pointed out that the visit of President Johnson was in no way connected with the Otago Tramping Club's Extraordinary General Meeting!

Easter '67 still saw climbing being carried out with Bruce and Ken Mason, Heather and Stu. Thorne, Logan McGhie and Dick Brasier climbing Mt McKenzie. Mt Strauchon was climbed by Stu. Thorne, Logan McGhie and Dick Brasier, and Mt Huxley by Bob McKerrow, Graeme Lockett, Jim Cowie and Keith McIvor. Bruce and Dick became Club Presidents in the 1970's.

August 1967 saw John Armstrong finish his two years of Presidency. His enthusiasm and concerted drive did much to popularise tramping, climbing and skiing, the latter becoming firmly established during his term of office. This was helped along by Graeme Hasler's booklet on "Ski Touring Notes".

During this year Lyall Campbell and Marie McDonald started the Family Tramping Group. This group continues to thrive and provides a valuable adjunct to the Club. Also, Dave Still helped to set up an older members' group. Mr and Mrs P. L. Moore played an important part, but the group did not get the support it deserved.

Note should also be made that at this time Bruce Campbell retired as Secretary, a position he had held for many years. In one way or another Bruce has influenced the Club since the early 1950's.

Christmas 1967-68 saw Club trips led by John Armstrong and Bruce Mason to the North Routeburn, North Col and Rockburn, other's going on to Fohn Saddle and the Beansburn. Parties led by John Fitzgerald went to Martins Bay, Big Bay, Pyke, Alabaster Pass, Olivines, Cox Saddle, Hidden Falls, Park Pass and Rockburn.

Trevor Pullar looked after a party from the Arawata River to Milford Heads, Laurie Kennedy's party went into the Olivines whilst Jim Cowie spent 10 days in the Cook region and 10 days at Aspiring. Graeme Hasler also, was back in the Cook area. All in all, a fantastic amount of tramping and climbing was achieved during this season - on a scale which was to continue until the end of the '60's.

Club member Bob McKerrow was a member of the 1968 Andean Expedition, and in return for some assistance from the Club, provided interesting accounts of his exploits.

Club membership began to climb again from the 235 in 1967 to 271 in 1969. Judy Knewstubb (now Knox) was the second woman President in the 1960's, the first being Jean Armfield (now Payne). There had been only one woman President prior to the '60's, Miss Agnes Edmond, who filled this position in 1934

and again in 1941. Both women had similar capacities for hard work, and knew how to get the most out of members of both sexes. Judy is particularly remembered for her sterling efforts during the campaign to "Save our Lakes". Mention also should be made of Henry Stoddart who helped to get the Dunedin Mountain Safety Committee off the ground.

Nineteen sixty-nine saw the Taieri Branch fading out, the South Otago Branch having already disbanded. The era of the Club's own transport also closed and this is probably a fitting place to record members' thanks to the small band of "mechanics" who helped to keep it running.

The 1969 Annual General Meeting saw a move to change the Club's name, but this was not to be achieved for a few more years. Although unsuccessful, this move did serve to show where the Club's future interests lay.

It is impossible to mention all trips, people and events that have helped make history for the Club. If anyone wishes to delve further, it is suggested they make the effort to read old bulletins and back numbers of "Outdoors". There is a wealth of information there.

Mention could be made here of "Outdoors". In 1963 it changed its format and continued to improve year by year until 1970, when members received the first printed copy for some 20 years. It has always been a worthwhile publication, despite the fact that the Editor has often had to bludgeon articles from unwilling writers.

The number of Club members who went south to the Antarctic during the '60s included Ken Gousmett, Keith McIvor, Bob McKerrow and Frank Graveson. A large number of members have tramped and toured overseas, with some distinguishing themselves on the climbing scene. Two names that spring to mind readily are Bob McKerrow and Murray Jones.

In the writer's search for information for this chapter, he has never ceased to wonder at the number of engagements and marriages that have taken place within the Club. He started to write all the names down, but there were just too many for the available space. What is evident is that the partnerships formed within the Club are very stable indeed - divorce is non-existent. It is suspected that this is the result of both parties having got to know what their future spouses look like first thing in the morning, as they emerge from their sleeping bags, unwashed and unkempt!

Part 7 - The Early Seventies

Late in 1969, the traditional Friday night meeting was altered to Thursday. With an ever-increasing interest in weekend trips further afield, the Friday night was often required for travelling. The decision to make this change has resulted in a startling increase in the numbers attending film and lecture evenings - an average attendance of fifty to sixty with occasional turn-outs of up to eighty.

Evidence of the ever-increasing popularity in tramping was shown, by the establishment of clubs in some of the smaller centres. These include the Maniototo, Lawrence and Earnslaw Tramping Clubs.

This surge in popularity for the sport also brought with it the ever-attendant problem of vandalism. Pyramid Hut, a popular Sunday Mecca for the older members was burnt down; extensive repairs had to be made to Jubilee Hut; the Green Hut floor was replaced once again; and Ben Rudd's Hut had to be demolished after excessive vandalism made repairs impracticable. Approaches to those groups most benefiting by the use of these huts, several attempts to police them, even the black-listing of known vandals all had very limited effect. On the credit side, though, the end of 1971 saw Poplar Hut, Leaning Lodge and Twenty-five-Mile Hut all in good order, and a start made on improvements to facilities on the Ben Rudd property. These improvements included the planting of 5,000 Douglas Fir trees, and the erection of a "vandal-proof" shelter alongside the old hut site.

The 1971 Annual General Meeting provided one of the most significant milestones in the 50 year history of the Club. A motion was passed that 'advanced levels of tramping and mountaineering be encouraged'. To fit in with this new concept the Club was renamed 'The Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (Inc)'. Not content to rest on its laurels with this, the meeting went even further in appointing ten senior members to act as consultants to the committee. Only time will tell if this move proves successful in bringing together the experience of the older members and the enthusiasm of the younger ones.



The Club has always shown an active interest in Conservation and National Parks, both through personal efforts of members as well as representation through the Federated Mountain Clubs and the Dunedin District Conservation Committee. During the height of the "Save Manapouri" campaign several letters to the press were written on behalf of the Club and door-to-door canvassing obtained nearly 1,000 signatures to the petition. Members, both individually and collectively, have taken an active interest in the affairs of both Mount Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks, with a number of Club members being board members of the former. Annual well-attended work parties to both parks have been a feature of Club programmes for some time.

Bushcraft courses continue to be organised by the Club for the National Mountain Safety Council, with instructees from these courses providing the greater proportion of new members in the Club. R. Brasier, R. McKenzie and H. Stoddart have at different times acted as Course Directors. In July 1972, a snowcraft course was organised by Bryan Freeman, but unseasonal heavy snow and flooding isolated Dunedin and resulted in one weekend's instruction being cancelled. A later weekend, however, allowed a certain amount of ice and snow work to be covered in the area around Ball Hut.

Search and Rescue operations have always had the full backing of the Club, with, on occasion, up to 60 members on call for ground support parties. During the early seventies there were frequent local searches for missing persons as well as a coastal search for a missing fishing boat. The Club can be proud of the fact that a number of its members play an active part in the Dunedin Face Rescue Team.

After the steady increase in membership of the late sixties, the number has levelled off at somewhere around 280. The committee considered that this was a sufficiently large enough number to warrant a membership secretary, and this was endorsed by the 1972 Annual General Meeting.

The Family Tramping Group, under the expert guidance (plus it is suspected, a certain amount of connivance) of Lyall Campbell and Marie McDonald, continues to thrive, with up to fifty children and adults taking part in some of the trips. Easter and Christmas camps have always been a feature of this group's activities, with some very pleasant combined camps being held with the Hokonui Club.

What has been written so far shows the healthy interest the Club has taken in affairs around it, but its main aim, that of promoting tramping and climbing, should not be lost sight of.

A lot of the former appeal of the Silver Peaks area has been lost in recent years. Intensive farming practice has resulted in roading, fencing and burning off, and this together with the forestry development to the north, has made substantial inroads in to what was once tramping country". Communications aerials and their associated installations and roading have proliferated on Swampy Summit and Mount Cargill. The result of all this has meant that the Club has had to look further afield for a lot of its weekend trips. A look at the trip lists for 1970, 1971, and 1972 shows the commendable efforts of the various committees to introduce both variety of area and variety of interest into the programme.

Some of the more unusual weekend trips were to places such as Lake Monowai, The Chaslands, Green Lake, Port Craig, Lake Luna and the Moonlight, Mavora Lakes, Moke Creek and Arthurs Pass. Weekend climbing trips took members to Castle Rock on Banks Peninsula, the Grand Plateau, Mts Earnslaw, Sir William and Aurum, Homer and the Matukituki Valley. And if not content with this impressive list, the Club introduced a "marathon" to test the stamina of those harder souls amongst its members. The course ran via the Pineapple Track, Ben Rudd's, the Chalkies, Poplar Hut, Mt John, Christmas Creek, the Gap, Silver Peak, Green Peak, Swampy Summit and finally back down the Pineapple. For the statistically-minded reader, the course involves a distance of 35 miles and 9,400 vertical feet of ascent and descent. No mean feat! Winners to date have been R. Brasier and A. Smith with a time of 10 hours 30 minutes and R. Davies in 9 hours 20 minutes.

1973-THE YEAR OF CHALLENGE

As the 1972-73 tramping and climbing season got under way, the Club appeared to be moving along smoothly, with everyone intent on making the season a successful one. But this serenity was to be short-lived. A small but vocal group of dissident climbers felt that the Club should cater for their interests exclusively. Transport to the areas where they wanted to climb appeared to be the basis of their discontent, with clubroom activities and the trip list also emerging as major issues. In an attempt to rectify this situation, a selection of active Club members were invited to discuss their complaints with the committee. It was hoped that some worthwhile criticism would come of this, but unfortunately the vocal dissidents dominated the meeting and reverted to some harsh personal attacks on some of the committee members. This hindered some of the quieter members from presenting their sides of the story and the only result of the meeting was the resignation of the Vice-President and the general disillusionment of the committee.

At this juncture, Club members who had attended the special meeting soon realised that there had to be some outcome, but the failure of the December Bulletin to appear resulted in members not being informed of changes proposed for the New Year.

At the January committee meeting, various decisions made in December on the social programme and trip organisation were annulled. This series of events eventually led to the resignation of the Club President. These domestic problems were by now impinging on other matters which should have been receiv-

ing precedence; namely tramping, climbing and the 50th Anniversary celebrations. An Anniversary sub-committee evolved from the main committee and the rest set about trying to establish some sense of direction.

The 1973 Bushcraft Course still went ahead, and although small was very well organised by Clive Donaldson. Publicity this year was directed at the man in the street and not at school pupils as in the past. There was a wide variety of ages present but unfortunately very few of these people have continued within the Club. The local television camera team appeared at the river crossing and certain young ladies --swimming--- in tramping boots and bikinis suddenly became very self-conscious when they saw the lens directed at them.

This really was one of the few lighter moments of the year. Trip patronage continued to decline although most trips still managed to get away. A few newcomers turned up but after a trip or two, disappeared. Finally, a small but strong nucleus emerged that has given constant support to most of the recent trips.

And so the year has passed. There have been challenges such as this before, but each time the Club has emerged stronger and more closely knit. The reader may very well ask himself what causes dissension such as this to erupt periodically. Is it a failure of some to take but not give in return, to criticise but refuse to accept criticism, of the older members down-grading the achievements of the young, or of the young deriding the memories of the old? Or is it perhaps a little bit of each?

What can we do about it? The 50th Anniversary went part way to bringing all age groups together; allowed them to compare philosophies and ideals. The rest is up to each of us, young or old, to ensure in some way that the next 50 years will be as good as the first.

1923-1973 compiled and written by Ron Keen

Part 8 - 1973 to 1983

This latest decade in the Club's history has been an eventful one.

Now, in our sixtieth year, we see a tramping club as active as ever, and a mountaineering club growing in maturity and accomplishment to compete with any other.

The first fifty years of the OTMC's history were described in "Outdoors 1973". The further ten years of the story reveals continued overall growth and confidence, and a lessening of the cyclic pattern of growth and decline in Club affairs and spirit that was expected. A series of competent and enthusiastic committees promptly dealt with any hints of decline.

Although individual members have come and gone, the Club's spirit has been continued by people with similar enthusiasm, so the atmosphere at any meeting has retained its vitality. The half dozen or so members who have remained active from 1973 to 1983 would agree that "although faces change, the Club remains the same."

Let's go back to the Annual Report of 1973, produced just after the 50th Anniversary celebrations. During that year President Bruce Mason resigned and was replaced by Dick Brasier. Over summer, many Club members had visited the Olivine Ice Plateau. They were supported by air-dropped food supplies, something which today's members would

frown on as we have grown to appreciate wilderness qualities. Ben Rudd's shelter on our land behind Flagstaff was finished "at long last", but the Plane Table for the summit of Flagstaff, which was the Club's 50th Anniversary Project, was "not ready to be officially opened" at the time of the celebrations. During the 1972-73 year Castle Rock Hut or "Leaning Lodge" was bought by the Club. It wasn't a particularly active year: Clive Donaldson's Bushcraft '73 attracted only nineteen pupils, and there were only two 'away' weekend trips with more



than sixteen attending. However, the anniversary celebrations saw a huge revival of interest in the Club. 130 members or ex-members "highly praised" Ken Mason's slide show on the Friday night, and a staggering 230 on the Saturday night enjoyed the dinner and speeches by Scott Gilkison, Bruce Moors, Ralph Markby, Dave Bond, Peter Johnstone, Wilf Broughton, and M.C., Horace Tilly.

Membership at 30/6/73 is stated 194 "Financial", 69 un-financial". Notwithstanding this the general funds profited for the year by \$863. At the Annual General Meeting Dick Brasier was elected President, and Ron Keen, who had organised both 40th and 50th Anniversary celebrations, was appointed a Life Member.

The incoming committee was a young one, but with growing enthusiasm in the wake of the anniversary celebrations, it rose to a challenge by a member of the previous committee to "do something about" the waning in the Club's energy. Richard Pettinger and Peter Marr advertised around local High Schools for pupils to attend a membership drive weekend at Poplar Hut. Club members rallied but only 6 pupils joined. They were all there, but so was a dreaded lurgy that laid low half the members at the camp with the exception of some trail bike enthusiasts who rode around and around the campfire while dedicated Club members were attempting to lead newcomers through the O.T.C. Song-book. Trail bikes were a problem at many of our socials.

On November 14th Jim Freeman, perhaps our most active life member, a man of unbounded enthusiasm and knowledge of the local hills - formed the Over Thirties Club, to help get older people out walking. On the 25th the new O.T.C. had its first outing, a day trip to the Craiglowan Falls area.

The 50th Anniversary Christmas Camp was held in the Rees, an important haunt of Club members for decades. Bryan Freeman organised the event for at least sixty, members and friends and families. The weather was excellent except for a downpour one night. It was highly successful and a natural extension of the anniversary celebrations.

Bushcraft '74 succeeded in being the membership drive the young committee still felt was needed. The Silver Peaks were assaulted by a huge number. On the second trip, 102 pupils swarmed after their leader up the Taieri Gorge. The last instructor up the gorge Course Director Richard Pettinger, was alarmed to find himself collecting a number of stragglers from in front. The leaders, not all of whom were Club members, were reminded of their duty to uphold the teachings of the Mountain Safety Council and on the final weekend 144 Otago trampers took to the Takitimu Mountains, Lake Mavora and Green Lake areas, without mishap. It was thought that the happy atmosphere of a friendly, enthusiastic Club, after a fairly informal course was the incentive that attracted 22 new members from the pupils.

1974's Annual Report notes the increase in activity. The membership stood at 213, but the Club managed to make a loss of \$336 from general funds, although trips as usual made a profit. At the AGM Murray Kokich was elected to begin what was to become two years in the chair. On the 15th October the committee decided it hadn't the time nor the experience to get into writing submissions on "matters affecting outdoor recreation" and the "Outdoor Recreation Subcommittee" was formed. One of the big issues they were concerned with was aired in the December '74 Bulletin. It was a proposal to install two large pole aerials for an N.Z.E.D. repeater station and a road to service it, on the Scenic Reserve, near the summit of Flagstaff. We joined many other groups in opposing what would have been an eyesore from the city and the proposed Flagstaff walkway. The Club became very active, even getting involved in a "sit-in" overnight at the site. Also in late 1974 a proposed Remarkables Skifield came to the attention of the Outdoor Recreation Sub- committee. Trampers and Mountaineers felt the Rastus Burn was a most in- appropriate place for a skifield, and a great deal of evidence supported this view. The battle with the Mount Cook Company gathered momentum over the years to follow and much energy was put into it by Club members, in particular Bruce Mason, Russell George and John Begg. Plans to road the Greenstone Valley, the valley that has delighted family groups who have walked it over many decades, was another concern at this time. The Club felt threatened by many such issues, often quite minor losses but which spelt a gradual whittling away of Otago tramping country, but there was one positive note in 1974. The Dunedin Metropolitan Regional Planning Authority was looking at trampers' interests in the Silver Peaks.

A lighter note at the time of these struggles came with a Christmas Social at the Trotters Gorge University Hut. The peaceful atmosphere in this delightful setting was once again marred by the incessant drone of trail bikes, the most memorable feature of this social.

Bushcraft '75 ran smoothly with none of the problems of the '74 course. Only 39 enrolled and the leaders were all OTMC members. Of the 39 only 10 were males and the oldest on the course was 25. Whare Creek in the Takitimu Mountains was a pleasant but restricted venue for the final weekend.

According to the 1975 Annual Report, the Club's membership was 212 and nine trips went away over 74/75 with 25 or more taking part. Loss for the year from General Funds was \$89. At the Annual General Meeting, Murray continued in the chair, subscriptions were raised to \$6 for members, \$4.50 for the less active "postal" membership, and the name "Leaning Lodge" was officially accepted as the name for the hut we were busy renovating for our use on the Rock and Pillar Range.

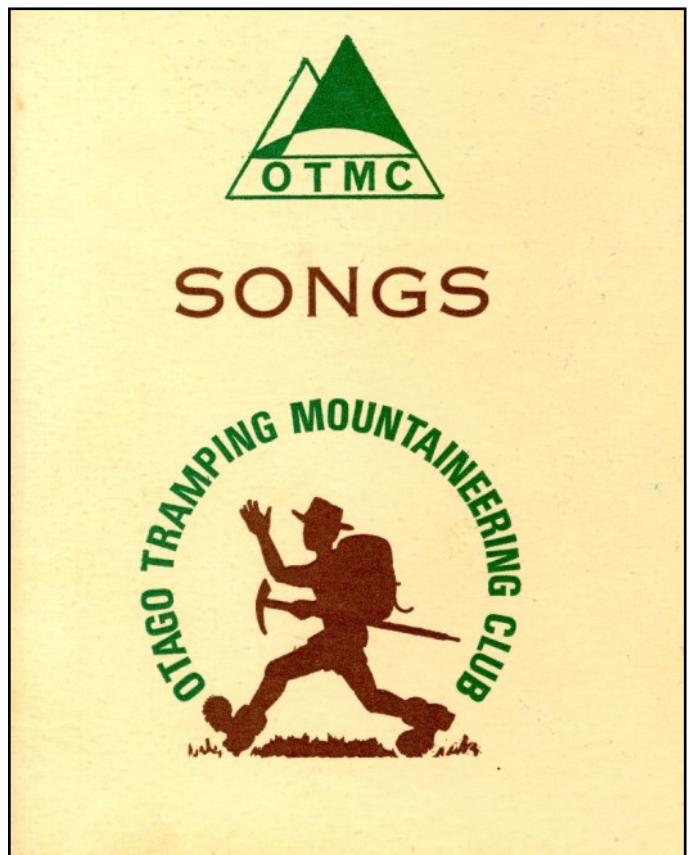
In December Dave Still let the Club use his property at Mahinerangi, the "Pick and Shovel", for the Christ-

mas Social and the Christmas Trip was Martins Bay - Big Bay round trip.

Bushcraft '76 was directed by Ross Davies. With 48 pupils, Ross took the final weekend to the Eglinton Valley where the many side valleys provide scope for a great range of trips, some only lightly tracked so providing valuable opportunity for teaching route finding. At the time of the course a fire swept through the tussock of the Flagstaff Scenic Reserve. It was a spectacular sight from Dunedin. Club members were involved in fighting the fire which resulted in the destruction of 56% of the 1971 plantings of Douglas Firs in spite of hurriedly bulldozed firebreaks. It was an occasion that upset many Club members: some were shocked at the damage by the fire and bulldozers, while others were despairing privately that the pine plantation had been saved. The Club began to question its policy concerning exotic trees on Flagstaff. Some thought we should manage the area with regard to the adjacent scenic reserve and ignore the original objective of planting for fundraising. Poor management of the plantation after the initial enthusiastic planting had meant that any funds raised would already be minimal anyway.

The weekend before Easter saw the Club's first 'Pre-Easter Social. Organised by Sarah Glasson, it was a most enjoyable fondue party in the Old Stone Cottage at the foot of Grant's run on the Rock and Pillar. Another tradition was begun!

Dissatisfaction with the wording of some of the Constitution led some members to begin trying to get changes made to the Objects of the Club so that they would reflect new feelings in the Club. The Club was arguing against the development of certain areas as "resorts", so that it seemed inappropriate and even embarrassing that we had as an object "to open up and develop resorts." Ross Davies was the first to



attempt changing the objects out it was not to be until 1981 that a General Meeting agreed to delete the offending pieces.

The 1976 Annual Report shows the first profit to General funds for a while - \$90. Membership stood at 172, and over 75/76 there had been 4 away trips of 20, or more, The Annual General Meeting decided to remove trees on Flagstaff, Club members expressed disappointment about the closure of the, Otago Cen-

tral Railcar Service. The trips we had taken leaving town on Friday evening to go to Hindon or Middle-march, and returning Sunday night, were really enjoyable; it was a much used service - especially during the crisis of 1974. The closing of the service meant the end of another era in the Club's history.

Russell George was elected President for 76/77. Early in 1977 news reached the Club about 25 Mile Hut in the Rees suffering some damage. Apparently more than ten girls, suffering from cold, had attempted to sit on the top bunk. The sudden collapse saw a subsequent embarrassed letter and a cheque from a girl's high school in Southland and was followed later by a number of work parties to undo the damage. Geoff Jackson's Gypsy held a starring role in the repair of this, our most distant hut. It's character (and rodent colony) were maintained.

Peter McKellar took Bushcraft '77 back to the Eglinton for a weekend that was blessed with a perfect Sunday, the type of day in the mountains that inspires many to begin a lifetime of tramping. In April and May of 77, \$120 was spent by a work party under the guidance of Disk Brasier to put in a plywood floor and a new chimney at Green Hut. The Jackson Gypsy was seen at Pulpit Rock getting the gear to the site. This was the last time that any amount of money was spent on Green.

Russell's Annual report for 76/77 makes interesting reading. 157 members returned a profit of \$118 for the year to the General Funds. There were 3 trips away of 30 or more participating: Bushcraft, Labour weekend and a Ski Instruction weekend at Coronet Peak. Sarah Glasson had printed a new song book during the year, an OTMC one to replace Linda Mercier's by now rare OTC publication. The Family Tramping Group, still organised by Marie McDonald and Lyall Campbell, had been active for 10 years and members had had the first organised Ski Week, something that has since become another tradition.

For "Outdoors" that year, a Club photo was taken. As not everybody could attend the photography session by the Queens Gardens Cenotaph one Saturday afternoon it was taken in two parts. Intended as a centrefold, the printers misjudged the page numbers so it missed the middle page spread.



Yellow Hut adrift from its site (Photo: John Begg)

legal battle was begun.

At the AGM Richard Pettinger became President, a decision was made to remove the last of the Douglas Firs that had survived the Flagstaff fire, subs went up to \$10 for full members and \$7 for country (postal) members. Dave Still was now added to the list of Life Members.

In October 1977 the Remarkables Action Council was formed. Club members played a major role in the action and a lengthy

On 5-6 November John Cocks ran a Snowcraft course at Homer for Club members who might encounter

alpine conditions when tramping. In the report he said he believed there was 'surely a place for a Snowcraft course in the O.T.M.C annual programme' Yet another tradition begins!.

Waiora Scout Camp was the venue for the Christmas Social, at which the local "Ginger Minge Bush Band", assisted by OTMC musicians kept Club members on their feet till all hours.

On the 3rd February '78 the Dunedin Metropolitan Regional Planning Authority advised the OTMC that a Silver Peaks study they had done with the future of Dunedin's recreation interests in mind had been rejected by the powers that be. The Silver Peaks however, ought from then on to be recognised by the decision makers as a recreational asset of great importance. The Silver Peaks have certainly been important to the keen young trampers of Dunedin who perhaps couldn't afford trips to the mountains. A group of Club members inspired by these hills privately continued a series of "Silver Peaks Expeditions", that ranged from the birth of the tradition in Fiddlers Gully in 1971, to the Olivine Ice Plateau in February '78, and beyond.

February '78 saw the subletting of the Dowling St clubrooms to the Otago Section of the Alpine Club. We had several years earlier sub-letted to the Otago Motorcycle Club, but they had bought their own building. The Alpine Club was obviously a more compatible bunch of roommates.

In early '78 Dave Craw began work on resurrecting Yellow Hut which had blown from its moorings during a Westerly gale and had been left for some time as a crumpled mess at the bush edge near the top of Yellow Spur. The hut was built by Geoff Williamson in 1963 with help from Club member John Fitzgerald. Now it was up to Dave to restore it to its original, site and it would become an OTMC hut. This was done by June at a cost of \$40 to the Club.

Bushcraft '78 was organised by Russell George. His 45 pupils enjoyed a weekend in the valleys at the head of Lake Ohau. The course followed the same general format that the Club had used for the last decade, This was in spite of the fact that each year the Taieri Gorge was becoming more of a challenge to route-finders.

Geoff Jackson began to look at possible vehicles for Club transport. This work culminated on June 22nd with a Special General Meeting, which was to decide the purchase of a vehicle. The meeting approved the principle but so much caution was expressed that Geoff's and Dave Levick's sub committee lapsed subsequently "through lack of interest."

In July '78 creeping conservationism in the Club became more evident. With the Remarkables Action Council and the then almost defunct Outdoor Recreation Group setting the example that we fight for our land, the committee passed the following motion: "THAT the committee supports the banning of air access in National Parks other than for purposes of emergency, protection and management." On the 17th August Mr. Cuddihy of NZFS spoke to the Club on their attitude to the Dart State Forest. Thus begun a big issue that ended in the Club, under Ross Davies, calling a public meeting on 26/2/79.

August '78 also saw the second Ski Week . Organised by Hank Lockhart for a private group, it was held at Craigieburn. Some Club members had long felt strongly that the skiers in the Club were bringing the demise of winter tramping. Ski Weeks were a cheap way to go skiing and many of the less financial members of the Club took advantage of them and. as it turned out, kept winter weekends aside for tramping or for cross-country skiing which is cheaper, and more akin to the spirit of tramping than downhill.

The Annual Report for 77/78 lists 5 trips away with a, least 36 attending, a membership of 144, and records a profit to funds of \$32. At the AGM Ross Davies became President, and the Club supported the Committee's motion on air access in National Parks but was happy as long as it was "consistent with National Parks Authority Policy and the Management Plan." The Club has always maintained a responsible

attitude to National Parks as it appears that the greatest hope of guaranteeing our continued use of mountain lands lies with that form of management.

The special feature of the 1978 Christmas Social was the music, supplied by the OTMC Bluegrass Band. They kept the 65 people present at Waiora square dancing and boogying along to a very professional sound. The band was fronted by Russell George, banjo and calling the dances, Martha Vosseler, Gaye Johnstone and Kelvin Liggett on fiddle. Geoff Markby on mandolin, Nicki Hodgson guitar, and Peter Mason on tea chest bass.

The 1978/79 Christmas Camp was held in the Hopkins Valley, an area that was getting a lot of attention from the Club. Richard Pettinger took the final weekend of his Bushcraft '79 back there. There were 52 pupils on this course which was the last to take the trip through the Taieri Gorge, on a river crossing, compass reading and route-finding weekend.

A membership of 144 is once again recorded. in the Annual Report of August 1979, there were four bus trips including Bushcraft, and a loss of \$530 to general funds. Some saw the low ebb in tramping activity caused by this year's being perhaps the most active one, for environment issues. The Club was, however, rightly proud of its conservation efforts.

The AGM elected Steve Milne President and gave life membership to Phyllis Hardie and Trevor Pullar.

November and December 1979 were busy months. After years of searching for cheaper clubrooms the Club moved into 3 Clark Street, the former Lodge building now owned by the Otago Motorcycle Club. A concrete pad and room were installed in the basement. All our old furniture except 30 or so stacking chairs, a projector table and a table tennis table were dumped. The first meeting in the new rooms was held on Thursday 6th December. At the same time the Club organised the first 'Tramparama', a guided public walk over Flagstaff visiting Ben Rudd's for lunch, for the Dunedin Mountain Safety Committee. On the 15th December the 50th Anniversary Plane Table was finally installed on Flagstaff. Six years late, it's production finally brought to an end both the lengthy debating of its desirability, and the session of fund-raising that received donations from both active and non-active members.

A Christmas Social at Lee Downs, organised by Wendy Milne, and a camp in the East Matukituki with climbs of Sisyphus and Dragonfly from a base by the old homestead, saw the year out.

January 1980 and yet another float in the Festival Procession. As usual the opportunity was taken to advertise the forthcoming Bushcraft Course, but this time the shambolic tent on the truck surrounded by naked legs and placards gained second place in the Sporting Section. Apparently it had happened once before. Advertising must have been effective, as Bushcraft '80 directed by Stu Mathieson, attracted 94 pupils. Once again the Ohau area was the venue for the final weekend.

The 15th and 16th March will be remembered as the "Jarvis Bay Trip" Members who wanted to know where this obscure bay was were invited to attend to find out. It turned out that Don Greer and a group of OTMC members were taking a large number of Australian Navy mid-shipmen through the Silver Peaks. Club members were pleased to see these sea lubbers have the time of their lives. In return they were invited back to a cocktail party on board the Jarvis Bay, where the girls received plenty of attention and, a little shield with the ship's coat of arms.

At noon on 20th March (or thereabouts) nine Club members met outside the Chief Post Office in Kathmandu. Tour guide was Ross Davies and the trip, known as the Silver Peaks Himalayan Expedition was open to any Club member who was silly enough to apply for it using form PS 17A. Members were away for approximately half a year and did trips in Nepal, and other Asian countries, and ski trips, car tours and cycling tours in Europe and Britain. Mention of the Silver Peaks had now been made in hut, hotel and visi-

tors books from Andorra to Tangboche, from Brisbane to Base Camp.

In April 1980, the army territorials offered to remove our trees on Ben Rudd's property "as an exercise." The committee was still wondering how to respond when the offer was withdrawn. As a result Dave Craw prepared an essay on the Ben Rudd's property, its history, its problems and possible solutions, which was published in the May Bulletin.

Later on, the Planning Tribunal dismissed the Combined Remarkables Protection Group's case and appeal. The Mt Cook Company would go ahead and develop their "skifield" on this important mountain range. The group was expected to pay \$19,000 costs.

The 1979/80 Annual Report shows membership of 157 and a profit of \$17 to general funds. At the AGM the President elect was described as "Dongala - more commonly known as Donald McKellar." Shortly afterwards, on the 9th October a Special General Meeting raised the subscriptions to \$15 for full members, \$9 for postal.

The following Christmas Camp was held in the Rees Valley, with members visiting the Dart Glacier, Cascade Saddle, the head of 25 Mile Creek, completing Rees - Dart crossings, climbing the East Peak of Earnslaw and Leary, from a base at 25 Mile Hut.

On 26th February 1981 Donald McKellar's resignation was accepted and Janet Girvan became President. Donald had left Dunedin.

Rob Archibald was director of Bushcraft 181. Seventy one pupils took part, and many joined the Club as a result of our first attempt to attract Bushcraftees on a cheap subs deal. The final weekend trip went to the Eglinton.

In May of this year a Club President was taken from a camp on snow near Fraser Col in a basket slung under a helicopter...

The Annual Report made no mention of this, but it did report a membership increase to 187, 12 trips with 20 or more over the 12 months, and a huge \$795 profit to general funds. During the year Tasman Forestry reduced our Silver Peaks playground by about a third. Mt Allen Station, for the previous 58 years a popular venue for Club trips, with its Big Stream and Poplar Huts, Long Ridge, Mts. John and Allen, was to become a roaded pine plantation. The Poplar Hut Book was deposited in the Hocken Library, along with other Silver Peaks hut books. It tells of an enjoyable and interesting era in the Club's history, now sadly closed. A dedicated Silver Peaks lover, Richard Pettinger was elected President by the Annual General Meeting, for his second go.

This years Ski Week became an official Club trip. The weekend of the 22nd-24th August was the 50th Anniversary of Federated Mountain Clubs. To mark the occasion the Federation held a "Wilderness Conference" in Nelson, at Rotoiti. The OTMC sent perhaps the largest contingent of any club not directly involved in the organisation of the weekend demonstrating our concern for wilderness and countryside protection in general. At a Special General Meeting on 10/9/81, the Club finally changed the objects as in the Constitution to delete the object to develop resorts.

Christmas 81/82 saw a number of Club members tramping in the Wilkin. The 'official' Club trip was cancelled due to lack of leaders, but groups went privately anyway. Peaks climbed included Mts Jumbo, Twilight and Aeolus.

1982 has to be remembered as the year of the Silver Peaks, with the Club getting upset by plans to zone the whole of the traditional tramping area, except for reserves, for Commercial Afforestation as a pre-

dominant use. If we lost any more of the Peaks as we had Mt Allen Station, Dunedin's future trampers would lose this inspiring training ground. Firebreaks, fence lines and farm tracks had already ruined many old haunts but now, planning provisions would mark the final demise of the bulk of it. After a hearing of objections at which Bruce Mason and Bruce Chapman presented evidence, the Silver Peaks County Council decided to recognise the recreational use of a small core area of the Silver Peaks. However, other uses are also recognised, and some aren't compatible with tramping. The Club will still need to keep a watch on developments, and participate in the administration of Walkways and Reserves. It was felt that maintaining goodwill with farmers and decision makers would be very wise, indeed.

In early 1982 Alister Metherell directed Bushcraft on which 77 Pupils went back to the Eglinton. The Easter Trip visited Arthurs Pass, a distant trip that was well attended and turned out very successful.

After Easter, a Glacier Travel course was held. Dave Manson organised the trip to De la Beche corner of the Tasman Glacier, and John Cocks led a group of Alpine Club members who instructed crevasse rescue techniques to the growing number of climbers in the Club. This year was to see the instigation of a Mountaineering Group in the Club, convened by a committee member, the first convener being Ewan Paterson. Under his enthusiastic leadership, Ewan organised regular climbing trips. The standard of rock climbing among Club members improved greatly after evening climbing sessions at Long Beach over the following summer.

In August '82 the Annual Report was published, a document that detailed a busy year, 194 members now belonged to the Club, numbers boosted by a major "fast track" drive at the end of Alister's course. The general funds however, suffered a loss of \$428. At the AGM Michelle Green was elected President, following a meteoric rise in the Club's ranks. Michelle had been a Club member for only 16 months.

The '82 Christmas Social was held at Galloway near Alexandra, at which the Club completely tired out the "Pioneer Pog'n' Scroggin Band" and called for taped music to satisfy its exuberance. The Club was getting fitter'.

The Christmas Trip that followed was to the Paparoa Range. The first official Club trip to this range, we were blessed with fine weather for most of our stay. We discovered a really beautiful area, which we all agreed was of National Park quality.

In January 1983, major rebuilding of Jubilee Hut was begun and a pot belly stove is intended to replace the heavy fire place and chimney.

Bushcraft 1983 was directed by Ross Davies and Paul Olsen. It began with a weekend at Tirohanga Camp, at which practical skills were demonstrated and practised. That weekend was a success both in its instruction as well as socially, and it is hoped that it will become an annual feature of Bushcraft. The final weekend took the 52 pupils, whose average age was probably 30+ to the Ohau area.

On the free weekend during the Bushcraft Course, the OTMC took part in a joint tramp and camp in the Glenorchy area where we met members from Fiordland, Southland, Hokonui and Wakatipu Tramping



Jubilee Hut work party in the 1970s (Photo: Ross Davies)

Clubs. This weekend grew out of an idea at an F.M.C seminar in early 1982 when the various Club Presidents got together. The weekend at Glenorchy was one of tramps, climbs, conversation, singing and partying around a bonfire, and an inter-club games competition day. Another annual event, it is hoped!

An annual event that has increased in popularity markedly is now the ski-week. 1983 found 55 at Craigieburn.

The Annual Report for 82/83 records 219 members, an increase due largely to a big influx after Bushcraft. There was profit of \$647 to general funds, due, it is felt, to a resourceful Committee. 14 trips of 25 or more took place over the twelve months, , indication of a healthy Club. Some Clubrooms have been found and the Club will move into a Stuart Street house belonging to the Polytechnic very soon. Our own rooms should help to produce an even better Club identity and spirit.

At the Annual General Meeting, Alister Metherell was elected President, and subs were increased to \$19 for full members and \$11 for postal members.

On 26th-29th August, immediately after the AGM, the Sixtieth Anniversary Celebrations were held. Over 160 members, past members and their partners, including a founder member Mr. George Pearson attended the weekend. George and other members from the 20's and 30's had fascinating stories to tell, and useful information for those historians in the Club. Those currently active members who attended the weekend will remember the spirit that is peculiar to the O.T.C/O.T.M.C, and will look forward to it continuing in the future.

Richard Pettinger

Part 9 - 1983 to 1993

Following the highly successful 60th Anniversary celebrations, the Club continued to flourish. Much effort went into renovating the clubrooms in Stuart Street. After a long time sharing premises, it was good to have a place that was "ours", at least for the meantime.

A well supported Labour Weekend trip went to Ohau. Plans to raft the Taieri on inner tubes escalated and ended up with the Club booking out the commercial rafting operation for a whole weekend - 42 people participated. The year wound up with a memorable social at the Vollweiler farm near Lake Waihola.

The Christmas period was marked by a "traditional" Christmas camp, this time at the confluence of the Hopkins and Huxley Rivers. Up to 30 people were present at different times, with trips to the Richardson Glacier, Elcho valley and Rabbiters Peak. Two parties also made expeditions to the Olivines.



South Temple Hut, Bushcraft, early 1980s (Photo: Gaye Davies)

Bushcraft 84 followed the highly successful format introduced the previous year. The only hiccup was when a party in the Maitland took a wrong turn in poor visibility and ended up a day overdue.

The timing of Anzac Day on the Wednesday after Easter meant that Easter was a six day weekend - almost a contradiction in terms. A busload went to South Westland.

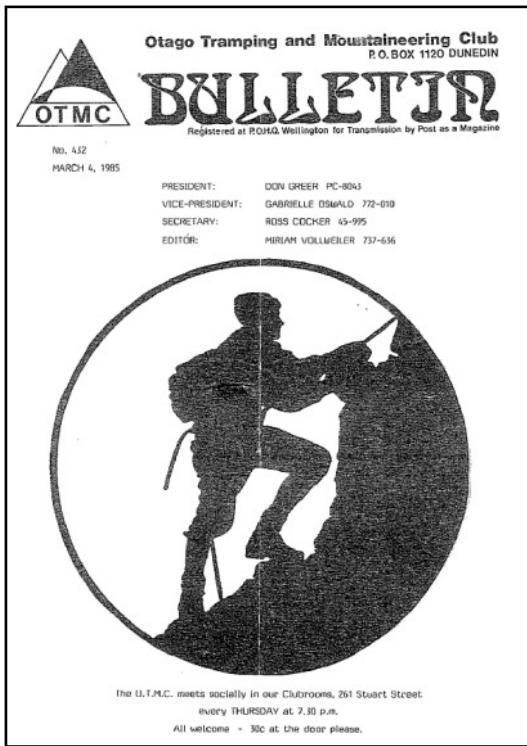
A vicious circle of problems finding leaders for day trips plus poor attendances, accentuated by an admitted lack of interest in day trips

by a number of more active members, led to proposals to reduce their frequency to fortnightly or monthly. The committee took a more proactive approach and appointed a Day Trip Convener to take over responsibility from the Chief Guide. Before long this aspect of Club activity, which is important to beginner trampers and less active members, was up and running again. At the other end of the scale of Club activities, plans were put in place for a graduated programme of alpine instruction.

In one of the Club's more bizarre activities, 66 members and hangers on (this term is used advisedly) managed to get themselves onto a waterbed, thus setting an alleged world record and winning the waterbed, which was raffled.

The 1984 AGM saw the election of Don Greer as President and Nancy Munro as a Life Member. Nancy was reputed to have almost single handedly kept the Club running during World War 2, and had maintained her membership and an interest in the Club for the ensuing 40 years. Sadly the Club also lost a Life Member with the death of Bruce Campbell after he took ill on a Family Tramping Group trip on Flagstaff. Bruce's memory lives on with the rhododendron dell he planted on the Ben Rudd property.

Since it was apparent that our occupancy of the Stuart Street rooms would eventually run out as the Polytech gradually moved from the area, the first of several sub-committees was formed with a view to finding a more permanent home for the Club. Over the next few years, the various members of the committee looked at scores of buildings to buy or rent.



The Christmas trip followed the lead of 1982 with the Club investigating a proposed National Park. This time the destination was North West Nelson, and those who went were suitably impressed.

In February '85 a radical change in the production and format of the monthly Bulletin was made. The ageing and increasingly unreliable Gestetner was dispensed with, and the Bulletins appeared in A5 photocopied form. This enabled a lot more creativity to be used in layout, and allowed the use of graphics and illustrations.

Following an approach from a number of people from Balclutha, an affiliated group was formed in that area. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of Don Greer, Michelle Metherell and others, it was short lived.

The Queens Birthday trip saw the most serious accident on a Club trip for some years. John Bevin fell while bouldering on the Hump Range and suffered a badly broken leg. A combination of

favourable factors including good weather, an accessible location, the presence of 11 able bodied trampers, the medical knowledge of Graham Johnston and the very quick exit of Doug Forrester, meant John was in hospital within about 10 hours.

In July the announcement was made that a large block of land had been purchased in the central Silver Peaks for the formation of a reserve. This was great news for the Club which had fought hard to retain much of the area in a form suitable for tramping.

Mike Floate became President for 1985-86.

The Bushcraft final weekend which went to Fiordland, became an optional trip in order to keep the basic cost down. However it was found that many people who didn't intend to do this trip enjoyed the Course so much that they attended anyway. The Club joined with the OUTC in their annual pre-Easter river crossing instruction day.

A reflection of the Club's ongoing environmental concerns was the erection of a toilet at a mustering hut on the Old Woman Range. The hut is a favourite cross country ski venue.

The Stuart Street clubrooms gained a kindred sub-tenant in the Otago Section of the NZ Alpine Club.

A sub-committee considered the issue of life membership. In particular they looked at the tendency to award this honour to people of "advanced" age, and the possibility of deserving candidates missing out because they were unknown to the current active members. As a result, Richard Pettinger, Ken Mason and Bruce Mason, who had all been continuously active in the Club since the 1960s,



The rock tor on the Hump Range that John Bevin fell from, Doug has shown how high he was
(Photo: Doug Forrester)

were elected Life Members at the 1986 AGM. John Pohl was elected President. John Hamel resigned as Honorary Solicitor due to ill health and was succeeded by his son Antony. This continued a family association with the Club as John's father had been a founding member.

With slide shows forming a major part of Thursday night proceedings at the clubrooms, a modern magazine slide projector with a long throw lens and remote control was purchased.

In April 1987 we entered into discussion with the OUTC to finalise our occupation of the Big Hut on the Rock and Pillars. This hut had been built by the Otago Ski Club before they moved to Coronet Peak, and is an ideal base for cross country skiing.

Another topic of ongoing discussion was the firebreak track through the Ben Rudd property. This was upgraded when Telecom laid a fibre optic cable to Swampy, but we felt it exceeded the approval we had given.

However the Club had to balance its wish to see the track revert to less of a landscape scar, against the prospect of an opportunity for access to enable the removal of the plantation on our property.

Spen Walker, when declining nomination for President at the 1986 AGM, had promised "next year and was duly elected in 1987.

The annual snowcaving trip had problems with the local authority and adjoining landowner in gaining access to the traditional site on the Old Man Range. This was to be the beginning of a battle involving the Ombudsman and FMC, with great dedication from many OTMC members. The battle was eventually won.

1988 cycle trip to Young Tai's, near Dunback (Photo: Doug Forrester)

In February, a bicycle trip to Dunback attracted 14 riders, while Bushcraft was over subscribed.

April saw the end of our occupancy of 261 Stuart Street, as the building was to be demolished. We moved to premises in Dowling St and changed Club night to Monday. However both the premises and the day were less than ideal, and in July we moved to a church hall in Russell Street and reverted to Thursday night meetings.

In May the Club formally took over Big Hut for the princely sum of \$300. On a sadder note, historic Green Hut, which had long been a target for vandals, was damaged beyond repair. It was demolished between 13 and 15 July 1988, just over 65 years from its opening.

The Club also decided that 25 Mile Hut was too far from Dunedin for us to maintain, and too close to the road to get much use by our members. Accordingly it was offered, without success, to the Wakatipu and Central Otago Tramping Clubs. The 1988-89 President was David Peacock. Under his leadership a contract was finally let for harvesting the Ben Rudd plantation. The trees were removed over Christmas, and work began on restoring the site to a state compatible with the adjacent reserve.

The Bushcraft Ohau trip, with over 60 people on it, encountered floods. Virtually the entire trip was a day overdue, with only those in the Temple reaching the road on the Sunday. It was certainly a valuable learn-

ing experience for those involved.

Stuart Mathieson was elected to the presidency at the 1989 AGM. As was often the case, the Ben Rudd property was a topic for discussion, following a controversial proposal that the property be disposed of. It was agreed that work would continue on restoring the area to a natural state.



Sir Edmund Hillary addresses the OTMC, 1990
(Photo: OTMC Archives)

prints, library and gear hire areas, it is an ideal base for our Club. It is also being used by the Alpine Club, Antarctic Society and other outdoor related organisations. An official opening was held on 21 June 1990, with Life Member Marie McDonald and husband Gordon officiating.

In June, the first of a number of tracks on the Otago Peninsula was established or identified by the Otago Peninsula Walkers. This group, which included a number of Club members, was heartened by the attendance of over 400 people at the occasion. Later, a well attended public meeting saw Elspeth Gold and Neil Donaldson included in a DCC working party looking at improving walking opportunities on the Peninsula.

Also in June, Club members called out for Search and Rescue in the Taieri Gorge were pleased with their efforts in locating the missing person safe and well until they were told he wasn't overdue!

The 1990 AGM saw the election of Elspeth Gold as President, while a subsequent Special General Meeting constituted a "Ben Rudd's Fund" whereby the money received from

On the 4th of November 1989, after numerous attempts and a certain amount of ribbing, Doug Forrester finally stood atop Mt Aspiring.

In February, Social Convener Elspeth Gold scored a great coup. Sir Edmund Hillary was to be in Dunedin as Festival Week guest. Elspeth rang the DCC and invited him round for a "cuppa" on the Thursday. He couldn't make Thursday, so at very short notice a Monday function was arranged. The clubrooms were packed to hear an informal address by the much admired climber, followed by the promised "cuppa".

On the 22nd March 1990, a Special General Meeting approved the purchase of the former TAB building at 3 Young Street, St Kilda for \$45 000. Those who had been looking at numerous buildings throughout the city were convinced that we got a bargain. It did require some work to bring it up to scratch, including the installation of an Oregon beam to support the roof where a partition was demolished, but under Peter Mason's supervision it was quickly transformed to a superb facility. With its map walls, historical displays, facilities for projecting slides and



Clubrooms Opening, June 1990 (Photo: OTMC Archives)

the trees, plus interest, could be used only for work on the property. This was to allay concerns that the money would be used, and the Club would later find itself with a major cost for weed clearing.



Droflim (Milford Backwards) at Omanui / McKinnon Pass
(Photo: Doug Forrester)

The cross country skiers had a good season. The Central Otago District Council finally announced that the Waikaia Bush Road on the Old Man Range would "not normally be dosed in winter". And a well supported, week long, cross country ski camp was held in the South Hector Mountains.

At the other end of the scale, a large party walked the Milford Track during Anzac weekend after the season was closed. This tramp, titled the Droflim since it was walked in the opposite direction from normal, and finishing with a crossing of Dore Pass, has become a bit of a Club legend.

Elspeth Gold became the first President in many years to do two consecutive terms in office. Unfortunately this period was made difficult for the committee by an ongoing disagreement over tactics and personalities involved in environmental/access politics. Despite strenuous attempts by the committee to mediate and find a peaceful solution, the situation culminated in the resignation of Life Member Bruce Mason.

On a brighter note, the first National Walk Week, organised by FMC, was run in March. The Club organised well supported walks on the Otago Peninsula.

Antony Pettinger was the 1992-93 President, and the Club moved into the electronic age with the purchase of a computer for use by the Secretary, Treasurer and Editor.

The Christmas trip was a well supported rafting expedition to the Clarence River.

The Club was saddened by the tragic death of Mary Clark after a fall on a Club day trip to the Catlins. Mary's death is believed to be the only fatality on a Club trip in its 70 year history.

As the Club moves into its eighth decade, I believe it continues to fulfill all its major expectations - to provide a variety of trips for people with a variety of levels of experience, to provide a social environment for people with a love of our country's wild and scenic places, and to work for the continued protection and availability of those places. Roll on the next 70 years!

David Barnes

Part 10 - 1993 to 2003

The AGM in August 1993 marked the completion of 70 years of continuous activity for the OTC/OTMC. Antony Pettinger was elected to a second term as President, along with an experienced Committee to run the club. Among the topics discussed at the AGM was an old favourite, the future of the annual 'Outdoors' magazine. A later Extraordinary Meeting recommended that the publication continue, especially with the 75th anniversary approaching. The Annual Dinner was held at the Botanica Restaurant commemorating the 70th anniversary of the club.

In September 1993 the OTMC enthusiastically supported the Department of Conservation taking over the ownership of the Otago Central Rail corridor from Middlemarch through to Clyde.



OTMC Kayaking trip preparing to leave Manapouri, 1990s
(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

Another first for the OTMC occurred in November 1993 - a kayak trip to Lake Manapouri. Led by Justin Calder, this trip has become a popular trip for the club, sometimes combined with a mid-winter trip to Moturau Hut on the Kepler Track.

After the success of an earlier mid-week trip to the headwaters of the Mavora Lakes, Ian Sime led a second expedition to the area in October 1993.

A Pre-Christmas social was held at the Mt. Fortune Woolshed behind the Razorback Range. Although the weather could have been kinder, the weekend was enjoyable. A few keen trampers climbed Mt. Fortune itself on the Sunday.

To conclude 1993, Elspeth Gold organised a second OTMC Pantomime in December. The event can best be described as memorable.

1994 started well financially with a grant from the St Kilda Tavern enabling us to purchase First Aid Kits, a snow shovel, billies and fuel bottles as well as some guide books for our library.

After a low number of participants in 1993, the club's Bushcraft course attracted 29 keen participants. Antony Pettinger was again the Director, with the course format following that of recent years. The course was notable for the very inclement weather during the Silver Peaks Weekend. The continuous rain combined with the ever present mist on the tops made for a very miserable trip for everyone. Both the participants and the leaders learnt a great deal during the weekend - some participants decided that tramping wasn't for them, while the leaders, with the benefit of hindsight, decided that the weekend should have been postponed. One party was beaten back by the near zero visibility at The Gap and were forced to retreat to ABC Cave and spend a second night in the 'Peaks. A reconnaissance search party met them (in glorious sunshine) near Yellow Ridge the following day.

Another event that affected the OTMC in early 1994 was 'The Big Flood'. A lot of the areas the club tramped in were subjected to flooding on a scale not seen for a long time. The Routeburn Track alone was out of action for months, with the Army called in to help repair the section between the Glenorchy road-end Shelter and Falls Hut. Other areas were also affected, such as the Ohau valleys, the Hunter, and some Makarora valleys. The effects can be still seen now, with some area's receiving little or no maintenance

over the intervening years.

Anzac Weekend 1994 enabled the club to run a highly successful 3-day trip to the Eglinton Valley and environs. Led by David Barnes, 40 people travelled by bus to their drop-off points for 3 days of late autumn tramping. One party took advantage of the fact that the Milford Track had just entered the off-season, meaning that this legendary track could be tramped without pre-booking.

The Department of Conservation consulted with the OTMC during 1994 regarding the club's views on signposting the tracks in the Silver Peaks. The club believed that signposting should be confined to the outer fringes of the reserve, leaving the inner section from Green Hill to The Gap largely signpost free. The club agreed that significant track junctions like Yellow Ridge/Rocky Ridge should be marked with a metal standard, but otherwise once you pass the Green Hut site you need to rely on your experience. The club also promoted the upgrade of the Hightop/Green Hut Site/Possum Hut/Hightop circuit as a possible solution to lesser experienced trampers venturing into the Silver Peaks area. To date (2003), this has not happened.

Social evenings continued to be well supported, with one night in 1994 particularly standing out. We were lucky enough to have Peter Hayden as a guest speaker. Renowned for his work with Wild South and Natural History, Peter gave a fascinating talk on the journey along the southern 45th Parallel during the making of a television series.

The 1994 AGM saw the start of a discussion on transport for weekend trips. The method of using mattresses on top of the packs in vans was deemed unsafe, so an alternative was sought. By using seats in the back of the vans meant that an alternative method had to be found for transporting the packs. After a long drawn out period including two EGM's the decision was made to use a trailer to carry the packs. The

St Kilda Tavern again helped us out with a substantial grant towards the purchase.

The club continued looking for new places to visit. The Albertburn Valley was chosen for the 3-day Waitangi Weekend in 1995. Trevor Deaker was the leader and several parties visited the area from different directions, including a crossover from the Wilkin Valley. The Albertburn Valley was one of the valleys hit hard by the 1994 floods, with most of the lower tracks washed away and the Albertburn Hut rolled up into a steel-clad ball by a slip.



Remains of Albertburn Hut, 1995

(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

After the good number of 29 participants in 1994, Bushcraft '95 attracted 14 people. It is thought that one of the reasons for the decline stems from the changes in peoples working hours. The introduction of the Employment Contracts Act meant that many people no longer had a traditional Saturday/Sunday weekend.

In July 1995 Bruce Newton led a return kayak trip to Lake Manapouri, a role that he has excelled in over the years.

Two motions presented to the AGM in 1995 were bound to generate discussion. One was an attempt to increase membership of the club by reducing the annual subscription by 50%. This was not carried. The

other motion regarded another AGM favourite - the Ben Rudd's property. The motion supported disposing of the property. After some debate it was decided to retain the property...in the meantime.

In a one-off trip for the OTMC, Barry Wybrow organised a crossing of the Copland Pass. Titled the '*Champagne Copland Crossing*', the logistical nightmare turned into a memorable trip for the participants. Unfortunately Paul Bennington was struck by a dislodged rock and had to be flown off the mountain.

The debate at the AGM regarding Ben Rudd's prompted renewed interest in the property, with a harvest of Christmas trees from the property being sold prior to Xmas '95 as a fundraiser.

1996 saw a debate regarding the cost of trips. The outcome was that all weekend trips using hired vans shall be the same cost, regardless of destination. As it has turned out, the club still more or less broke even in running the weekend trips.

December 1996 saw a group of club members practising river safety skills in the West Matukituki. Mountain Safety had introduced some new crossing methods which were being practised on this trip. The OTMC Bushcraft has taught the updated methods ever since.

Bushcraft in 1997 was unusual in that the course was not run, the only year the course hasn't gone ahead since the 1960's. The course was to be a joint venture between the OTMC and Mountain Safety Dunedin. When course numbers failed to reach a set number of participants the course was cancelled. The OTMC held an instructional evening, prior to taking the interested ones on a tramping trip to the Greenstone / Caples area.

Welcome to the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club Web-Site

Introduction

The Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club (OTMC) is based in Dunedin, New Zealand. You can find out more about who we are and what we do [here](#).

Trips

The OTMC run both [day](#) (usually Sunday) and [weekend](#) trips throughout the year. Check here for details on where we are going and how to join in. Non-members most welcome.

Meetings

We hold a meeting almost every Thursday in our clubrooms, situated at 3 Young Street, Dunedin (not far from the Prince Albert Rd intersection). Visitors are most welcome. More information is available [here](#).

Publications

The OTMC publish a monthly Bulletin, containing information, as well as trip reports of trips gone by. Selected reports from past issues are archived [here](#).

Early version of OTMC website (circa 1999)

1997 also saw the running of the 25th Silver Peaks Marathon. Appropriately it was 'won' by Dick Brasier, who had also won the first Marathon in the 1970's.

Trip numbers declined sharply in 1997, with several trips being cancelled, including the normally popular Easter trip. On the upside, the club visited Mt. Somers for the first time in a while. The Mt. Somers area has now become a very popular destination, with the last bus trip run by the club going to Mt. Somers.

A sub-committee comprising Robyn Bridges, Peter Mason, Wendy Brasier, Dave Still and Antony Pettinger commenced planning for the 75th Anniversary of the OTC/OTMC, to be held during August, 1998. A feature of the planning was a 'coast to coast' traverse of the lower South Island. Starting in Big Bay, trips were to be held throughout 1998, culminating in a trip to St Clair Beach.

The OTMC went 'high tech' in 1997 with the launch of the OTMC website. Our presence on the Internet has resulted in a lot of queries to the club, and several new members.

The issue of the Ben Rudd property arose again in the latter part of 1997. A proposed programme of weed spraying costing \$9,000 was presented to the Committee. This sparked the question of who is best to own/manage the property. An Extraordinary General Meeting was held in November which first mooted the idea of a trust being set up to manage the property, with the OTMC retaining ownership. The trust was ultimately adopted in July 1998. To many, the decision has been a win/win for the club and the prop-

erty.

The first outing of 1998 was a late Christmas trip travelling from Big Bay to Glenorchy, forming the first leg of the 75th Anniversary Traverse. A late surge in Bushcraft registrations saw 31 people participating in the 1998 course. The optional weekend at Ohau was wet, and saw some parties frustrated by the river conditions.

The second trip of the 75th traverse was held at Easter 1998, travelling from Glenorchy (Lake Luna) through to Macetown. Other trips held during the year were Macetown to Cardrona, Cardrona to Cromwell (via Pisa Range), Cromwell to Clyde (kayak and bike), Clyde to Middlemarch (via the Rail Trail, Middlemarch to Pineapple Track (via the Silver Peaks) and the last stage through Dunedin to St Kilda Beach.

The 75th Anniversary was held at the end of August, and was a great success. The structure was much the same as the 50th and 60th anniversary's, with a social night on the Friday, and open day on Saturday at the clubrooms, followed by the Anniversary Dinner. Sunday offered people the chance to visit the Ben Rudd's property.

The OTMC elected Antony Pettinger as a life member of the club at the 1999 AGM.

The Easter 2000 trip headed to George Sound from Lake Te Anau. While the trip was a success, the area proved to be challenging.

The 2000 AGM commenced an ongoing discussion regarding the club's huts. It was suggested at the AGM that Big Hut should be gifted to a like minded group. A replacement for Jubilee Hut was also discussed.

Trip numbers started to rise again after a decline in the late 90's, with 290 people tramping in the 2000/2001 period. Bushcraft 2001 attracted the largest number of participants since 1991, with 37 entries.

A work party in early 2001 at Big Hut saw two days work carried out in one, due to a blizzard preventing access on the Friday night. This was in January!.

A new committee role was fulfilled by Greg Powell, that of Funding Officer. This has proved a great success, with the first year seeing us purchase 5 sets of crampons, as well as 40 metric maps with monies received in grants.

The major event of 2002 was the opportunity for the OTMC to develop a new walking track in our area. The Committee decided that the missing link in the Dunedin Skyline would be the track with the most benefit to the city. The OTMC is constructing this track in conjunction with the DCC, with funds generously donated by Barbara and the late Dick Calvert, along with Bob and Evelyn Entwistle.

The Easter 2002 trip to areas at the headwaters of Lake Wakatipu was hit by some very nasty weather, meaning most trips were curtailed. All Great Walks in the area were also forced to close.

The Easter holiday and ANZAC weekend combined nicely in 2003, with the club making the most of the opportunity. The Easter trip went to Makarora, with two notable trips being undertaken. One was the



Big Hut during the last OTMC work party, 2001

(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

classic Makarora/Hunter/Wills through trip, and the other being the rarely visited Tiel Creek, crossing over to the Siberia Valley. Five days of glorious weather for both trips. As Easter marked the end of the summer season on the Milford Track, the OTMC took the chance to repeat the early 90's trip 'Droflim' (Milford Backwards) during ANZAC weekend. Numbers were limited to 30 to reduce overcrowding - although dozens of other people had the same idea as us. A second trip was run to cater for the OTMC overflow. In all, 43 members enjoyed the area, but over 100 in a 40 bunk hut was too much. At least the weather remained fine, if a little windy on McKinnon Pass.

The OTMC continues doing what it does very well. It is more than a tramping club, it is a social outlet and for some it is a way of life. The club caters for many different needs, be it overnight trips, a day trip, or a social night out once a week. There is also the history of the club, the need to keep fighting for recreation and conservation values in our beloved backcountry and the need to continue education in tramping safety in New Zealand's hills. Ultimately the OTMC is the people in the club.

Antony Pettinger

Part 11 - 2003 to 2013

The milestone of 80 years of tramping and mountaineering by the club was attained in August 2003. Terry Casey was elected as President replacing Alan Thomson. Alan had served as club President for five consecutive terms, demonstrating a strong commitment to the club.

Ian Sime was bestowed with Life Membership of the OTMC at the 2003 AGM in recognition of many years' service in various roles including Vice President, Secretary and Membership Secretary.

The 2004 Easter trip ventured to Arthurs Pass. Despite heavy snow upon arrival a successful trip was enjoyed by members, with trips to the Edwards Valley as well as an ascent of Avalanche Peak. Another trip that featured snow in 2004 was a late September crossing from Kay Creek to Scott Creek—an enjoyable trip.

At the 2004 AGM Antony Pettinger was elected to the role of President, a role he had previously held in the early 1990s. The club membership was just under 250 members, this contrasting with 160 odd just ten years earlier.

The annual meeting in 2004 also reported that the club was in a stable financial position, with a steady increase in membership—this is a trend that has generally been maintained for the decade.

In 2004 Big Hut, on the Rock and Pillars, was sold to the newly formed Rock and Pillar Trust with the intention to rehabilitate the hut in line with its historical background.

During 2005 discussion was initiated amongst various interested parties regarding Leaning Lodge, the club hut near the summit of the Rock and Pillar Range—this followed a report from the Department of Conservation “that the structural life of the hut is very limited”.



*Ball Pass Crossing 2005, 1km from Caroline Hut
(Photo: Antony Pettinger)*

Doug Forrester organised a crossing of Ball Pass in March 2005. This was a trip of two completely contrasting days—the walk up Ball Ridge to a point just before Caroline Hut was enjoyed in fantastic weather. The crossing to the Hooker was achieved on a day where the weather deteriorated constantly— one tramer was heard to mutter he would be going to church the next day as “*he had just been to hell and back*”.

Easter and the Otago Anniversary fell on consecutive weekends in 2005, so an eight day trip was planned in the Matukituki area. The planned route was Shotover Saddle / Tyndall Burn /

Lochnagar / Snowy / Dart Hut / Cascade Saddle / Aspiring Hut / French Ridge Hut / Scott's Biv and return to Raspberry Flat. The trip started with a wet slog over Shotover Saddle and finished by just beating a storm on the descent of Cascade Saddle—the head of the West Matukituki was abandoned. Sadly this trip was the last time Doug Forrester tramped with the club.

One of the more popular trips in 2005 was the Labour Weekend trip to the Otago Central Rail Trail—once

it was figured how to get 25 bikes on one trailer a great weekend was enjoyed, with chilly starts rewarded by stunning days.

An important step in the rehabilitation of Leaning Lodge took place at the 2005 Annual Meeting, when the Leaning Lodge Trust was formed—the Trust was set up so that the various interested users are represented, with at least two Trustees from the OTMC, with the club responsible for ongoing elections of new Trustees.

One of the largest trips over recent years was the one to Fiordland in March 2006—42 trampers split across 11 parties enjoyed trips along the Livingstone and Hollyford valleys and into the Earl Mountains.

In 2006 DoC reached an agreement with the club that would see the Department replacing Jubilee Hut—the hut built in the Silver Peaks to mark the club's 25th Anniversary in 1948. The new hut would be built on the true left of Cave Creek, on an elevated terrace. As part of the agreement with the club, both Jubilee Hut and Yellow Hut would be removed by the Department.

The clubrooms received its first major “make-over” since the club purchased the Young Street property in 1990. The interior was completely repainted and new carpet laid. New photos and a “metric map” wall completed this work.

In lieu of a tramping hut social, Wolfgang Gerber instead arranged the 2006 social weekend to travel to Greymouth by train and then back to Arthur's Pass for the night. Unfortunately dark skies and showery weather obscured the views, but it proved to be a popular trip for the 38 participants.

For the end of year trip for 2006, the club ran “the ultimate mystery day trip from Dunedin”, with the destination ultimately being revealed as Conical Hill, above Harris Saddle on the Routeburn Track.

24 people completed a cross-over trip from the West Matukituki to the Rees Valley over Waitangi Weekend 2007, while 37 people completed the Routeburn Crossover in early May. It was the relatively early arrival at Falls Hut from the Divide that determined that the best way to see the Routeburn in summer whilst avoiding the booking necessities was to tramp it in day. Come December and 10 members took up the challenge, although as it turned out, it was a pleasant moderate day trip—there was plenty of time to enjoy an extended break on Harris Saddle.



*The final Bushcraft trip at Tirohanga, on the long compass exercise
(Photo: Antony Pettinger)*

The Bushcraft course held early in 2007 was the last time we have used Tirohanga Camp for the first instruction weekend. Tirohanga Camp proved an ideal location for this weekend since the early 1980s and the club can be proud of the many successful weekends held here. For the first time ever, Bushcraft 2007 did not feature a Silver Peaks weekend—instead the practical tramp ventured to the East Matukituki. The optional weekend revisited the Ohau area, with key trips being the North–South Temple crossover, and the Maitland / Freehold Creek crossover.



Opening day for the new Jubilee Hut, May 10, 2007

(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

May 10, 2007 marked an important day for the Silver Peaks—the opening of the new 10-bunk Jubilee Hut. The club President officially opened the new hut at a ceremony that included several OTMC members. Life Member Lyall Campbell provided a great link to the past. As a young tramer she helped to construct the original OTC hut, and was able to attend the opening of the new hut. The new hut has revitalised usage of the Silver Peaks, with the hut proving a popular destination for overnight trampers. Fittingly, the plaque from the club hut now adorns the new structure.

2007. Doug had joined the club in 1983 and was a pivotal and inspiring member to many over the years. Doug's tramping ethos leant more to the tougher trips, off track and up high. Doug led many trips, as well as instructing extensively in Bushcraft and Snowcraft—Doug's legacy lives on in the many he encouraged in the hills.

An excellent trip to Jackson's Bay in November saw a club party traverse the coastline to Stafford Bay and return via the inland route.

December 2007 saw an end of year trip to Doctor's Point in the Roxburgh Gorge, downstream from Alexandra. The weekend was very hot, with many members dipping into the Clutha to cool down. A barbecue and social evening was enjoyed by all.

The club was struck by tragedy in February 2008 when the OTMC lost Trevor Mason, who drowned in a river crossing accident at Whare Creek during the annual OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon. Although Trevor was a recent member of the club, he was one of the more active trampers, particularly if the trip was to be hard, long or different.

The Milford Track was revisited at the start of May 2008—the weather was typical for the area, but early fog cleared from McKinnon Pass, allowing some great views.

After a break, Richard Pettinger reinstated the annual snowcaving trip to the OTMC trip calendar. This trip continues to provide an instructional and fun weekend constructing and inhabiting a shelter made from snow.

With the recent opening of the Motatapu Track, the club undertook this challenging three day trip in November 2008, travelling from Glendhu Bay right through to Arrowtown.

After no course being held in 2008, Bushcraft returned twice in 2009, in a revised format. Rather than use the camp based instruction weekend, we have reverted to a clubroom based evening instruction course, augmented by a navigation day, a river safety day and a practical weekend trip. The practical trips in 2009

The club was saddened to learn of the death of Doug Forrester following an illness, in October



Motatapu Trip, 2008 (Photo: Antony Pettinger)



Pigeon Island End of Year social trip, 2008

(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

went to the East Matukituki (March) and the Huxley (in November). The changeable weather in spring reminded us the most settled weather is in February to April.

Membership of the club numbered 221 in 2008, down from a peak of 269 in 2006. This number has now averaged out to be steady at approximately 200 members.

For something different, the end of year social trip ventured to Pigeon Island, on Lake Wakatipu. This was the first time any of the 20 plus participants had been to the island, which proved to be a special place and a great way to celebrate the OTMC year.

Waitangi Weekend 2009 was spent in the Craigieburn area. Two parties completed the Cass / Lagoon Saddle trip, while another party ventured up Jordan Stream to the tarns.

The OTMC's management of 25 Mile Hut ended in 2009, following agreement with Rees Valley Station that the club relinquish its interest in the hut. The future of the hut is now with Rees Valley Station, who have always owned it.

Early 2010 saw the OTMC tackle the Five Pass trip over eight wonderful days. The route over Fohn Saddle, Fiery Col, Cow Saddle, Park Pass (and for this trip) North Col is an established moderate tramping trip through Mt Aspiring National Park. 16 members and friends made up two groups of eight travelling in opposite directions. Highlights include time spent at Fohn Lakes and ascents of Sunset Peak as well as Fohn.

In keeping with providing new challenges for the club, a trip was run to the "hidden lakes" beyond Brod Bay on Lake Te Anau—the lakes are easily seen from Mt. Luxmore on a good day. Relatively open bush allowed half a dozen of these lakes to be discovered. The trip provided useful opportunities for navigation skills (including by GPS).

An Open Day was held in February 2010. The reason for this was two-fold, one to promote the Bushcraft course, as well as to publicise the club. The 2010 Bushcraft course saw a return to the Silver Peaks—it is hard to beat the advantages of using this traditional tramping area.

In June 2011 Lyall Campbell, a Life Member of the club passed away. Our club records showed that Lyall was our second longest serving member at the time, having joined the Otago Tramping Club in 1951 as a sixth former. The Campbell name resonates strongly through the tramping club. Lyall's late husband, Bruce (Life Member) did much to shape the club as an active tramer and leader. Lyall, along with Marie McDonald (another Life Member) was instrumental in forming and running the Family Tramping Group for many years.



Fohn Lakes on the 2010 Five Pass trip

(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

During 2011 the clubrooms received a new roof. The club knew the roof at 3 Young Street had only a limited life remaining when the rooms were purchased, so to get 21 years out of it was surprising. Due to sound financial management over many years the club was able to pay for the new roof directly from club funds.

A return to the Rees / Matukituki area in February 2012 saw a follow-up to the 2007 trip, this time as a cross-over. Fine weather allowed side trips to the tops overlooking Lochnagar and a trip to the head of the Snowy.

Debbie Pettinger and David Barnes were both elected as Life Members of the club at the 2012 AGM. Debbie has held several roles since 1987, with many years as Bulletin Editor to her credit. David has also carried out various roles for the betterment of the club and the wider tramping community. The AGM was honoured to elect Debbie and David as Life Members at the start of the club's 90th Anniversary year.

Work on the replacement of Leaning Lodge commenced in earnest in 2012, with the hut being completely rebuilt on the same site. The new hut was essentially complete by February 2013, with some smaller jobs being completed by Easter. Now that the future of both former ski and OTMC huts is assured, trampers, skiers and other outdoor people can enjoy the wonderful Rock and Pillar area knowing there is reliable shelter at hand.



Kepler In A Day, 2012

(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

In what could only be viewed as a foolish challenge the club ran a trip entitled "The Kepler in a Day". Surprisingly this attracted 16 starters, one of the larger trips of 2012. The trip was a success, with an average finish time for the whole track of 14 hours.

Continuing the tradition of an extended Waitangi Weekend trip, 2013 saw a five day trip to the Makarora region. Three parties basked under cloudless skies on trips the Top Forks of the Wilkin, the Makarora / Hunter / Wills through trip, and a reverse traverse of Tiel Creek.

Conservation and recreation protection continue to be a strong focus for the club. David Barnes has led this activity for many years, ably assisted by Richard Pettinger, Rob Mitchell and Mike Floate. In 2013 the OTMC was heartened by the government decision to reject the construction of the Routeburn to Hollyford tunnel. There will always be similar issues to work through and it is imperative the club maintains its work in this area.

It was noted in the 2005 Annual report that the OTMC consists of "two different sides", a tramping side as well as a social side—this trend has continued to this day and enables the club to retain a larger membership. The recent 90th Anniversary celebrations reinforced the view that the OTC and OTMC have provided many lifelong friendships and experiences. The good news is, the 90th was only a dress rehearsal for the centenary in 2023.

Antony Pettinger

Part 12 - 2013 to 2023

The 90th Anniversary Celebrations in late August 2013 were very well run and patronised - 144 people attended the Friday night social gathering, and 151 enjoyed the 90th Anniversary Dinner on the Saturday night. The well received celebrations were organised by Henriette Rawlings, assisted by Richard Forbes, Tina Anderson and Debbie Pettinger.

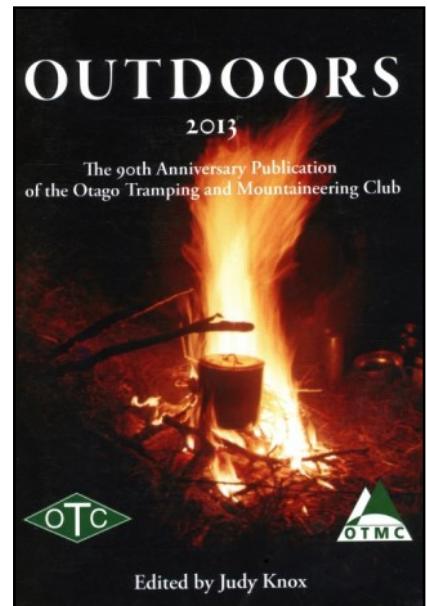
To mark the 90th Anniversary, Judy Knox edited a special edition of 'Outdoors', the first publication of this sometime annual club magazine since 2003/04. The 2013 edition combined a mix of historic and contemporary writings, and as a bonus included a DVD filmed and edited by Antony Hamel. Our Outdoors collection over the years has provided a valuable archive for the club, and Judy's edition was a welcome addition to this.

Our Life Members have always been very important to the club, and we were delighted that Marie McDonald had been planning to join us for the 90th Anniversary. This writer had the opportunity to visit Marie earlier in 2013 at her home in Oamaru, and as she showed me some photos from the Family Tramping Group days, she told me how much she was looking forward to the 90th. Sadly, illness prevented Marie from travelling down to Dunedin for the Anniversary. Marie died in early September, just a few days following the club's 90th celebrations. A small group of club members were honoured to hold an iceaxe guard of honour at Marie's funeral in Weston. Marie, along with husband Gordon, as well as Lyall and Bruce Campbell were instrumental in running the very successful Family Tramping Group, under the auspices of the OTMC. Many youngsters owe their love of the outdoors to the Family Group, and we were lucky that it was part of our club for over 20 years.

Despite the recent success in rebuilding Leaning Lodge, by late 2013 it was becoming obvious that there would be issues in obtaining the required consent from the Dunedin City Council, acting as the local Building Authority. The issue of what to do with Leaning Lodge would come to consume many hours of committee and Leaning Lodge Trust time over the next 10 years.

Alan Thomson was elected to the position of President in 2014, a role he had previously held from 1998 to 2002.

2014 started with an excellent trip to the North Routeburn / Rockburn area in February. 13 trampers completed the traditional '3 pass circuit' of North Col, Park Pass and Sugarloaf Pass, while another three members diverted from the main party just below North Col and headed to Lake Wilson via the Serpentine Range. This route has been rarely (if ever) traversed by a club trip, and it typifies the more adventurous trips from days gone by.



On the Serpentine Range, 2014
(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

In 2013 the club was approached by the Department of Conservation enquiring if we would be interested in sending a couple of representatives to the 125th Anniversary celebration of the Milford Track as a result of the OTC's original Freedom Walk in 1965. John and Robyn Armstrong were our obvious and very appropriate choice, as they were among 28 'revolutionaries' who decided that 'the track should not be out of reach for ordinary Kiwis'. Thanks to John and Robyn's involvement, the 2013 trip generated a lot of national publicity and recognition for what the club achieved in 1965.

The 125th Anniversary led to the club thinking about how we could celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Freedom Walk (despite John Armstrong saying '*can't be 50 years, we are not old enough!*') Time can't be changed though, and April 2015 was indeed 50 years since the milestone trip.



The nine originals from the 1965 Freedom Walk at Dumpling Hut, April 2015 (Photo: Antony Pettinger)

A return trip to the Milford was the ideal way to celebrate, and to allow as many original members of the various 1965 parties to attend, the club requested and received permission from DoC to book all 40 places for mid April, 2015 while the track was still in the summer season. As it transpired, nine participants from the 1965 trip were joined by 31 other OTMC members for what was a wonderful trip.

An unplanned coincidence saw the 2015 trip departing exactly 50 years to the day since the original trip.

The weather earlier in the week had forced the track to close, but we got lucky and the track reopened on our departure date. A touching moment each evening was when the hut wardens didn't want to give us their hut talk, preferring to hear from the 1965 originals about the Freedom Walk. That the OTC trip from 50 years ago was still so relevant was heartening to hear.

With the assistance of DoC on the final evening at Dumpling Hut, a celebration was had, and Robyn Armstrong launched her just completed book on the Freedom Walk - it is great that this historic trip has been put down on paper.

For the record, the nine original Freedom Walkers who joined the 2015 trip were: John (1965 trip leader) and Robyn Armstrong, Stu Thorne, Celia Davies, Mary Miller, Terry Richardson, John Allan, Bruce Mason & Bruce Dwerryhouse.

With Easter and ANZAC Day holidays aligning in 2014, the club took the opportunity to revisit Stewart Island. The club had visited the island for Easter 1985, and most recently for the Christmas / New Year trip of 1991/92. Wayne Hodgkinson organised a well supported trip with 20 participants. Seven completed the North-West Circuit over 10 days, another seven headed for the Rakiura Track, four completed the Southern Circuit, while the final two undertook shorter trips.

The club decided not to run a Bushcraft instruction course in 2014, which led to the inevitable decline in membership later that year (Bushcraft can be seen as artificially inflating steady membership numbers for the following year). The return of Bushcraft in 2015 saw around 20 people pre-register. You can imagine the organisers concern when the first 20 people to arrive for the first night Bushcraft hadn't registered - as it turned out the course attracted 54 people, a number not seen since the 1988-1991 period.

By 2015, the Bushcraft course had evolved a lot from earlier courses in response to feedback from participants about the commitment required. The 2015 course consisted of four instruction evenings in our clubrooms (which helped greatly in keeping the cost down). Other events included a navigation day on Flagstaff, and a River Safety day in the Taieri River. The final traditional weekend spent tramping in the Silver Peaks was curtailed to a day trip due to weather.

The 2015 AGM elected Richard Forbes as club President, the start of a three-year term.

The club had been involved in Search and Rescue for many years, and our contribution, utilising our tramping ability, has been recognised several times over the years. Volunteering for LandSAR has changed over time, and regular training is now a major commitment that volunteer searchers need to undertake. A discussion at the 2014 AGM led by Ross Hunt outlined that to be part of SAR officially you are expected to attend 12 training sessions per year. Trevor Pullar, who had made an incredible contribution to SAR on the OTMC's behalf for many years believed the club no longer has a future in SAR, a sentiment shared by the meeting. The AGM directed the incoming committee to gauge support (or not) from the wider membership. This led to a motion being presented to, and passed, at the 2015 AGM that saw an end to our formal contribution to SAR. Club members were encouraged to volunteer in a personal capacity if desired.

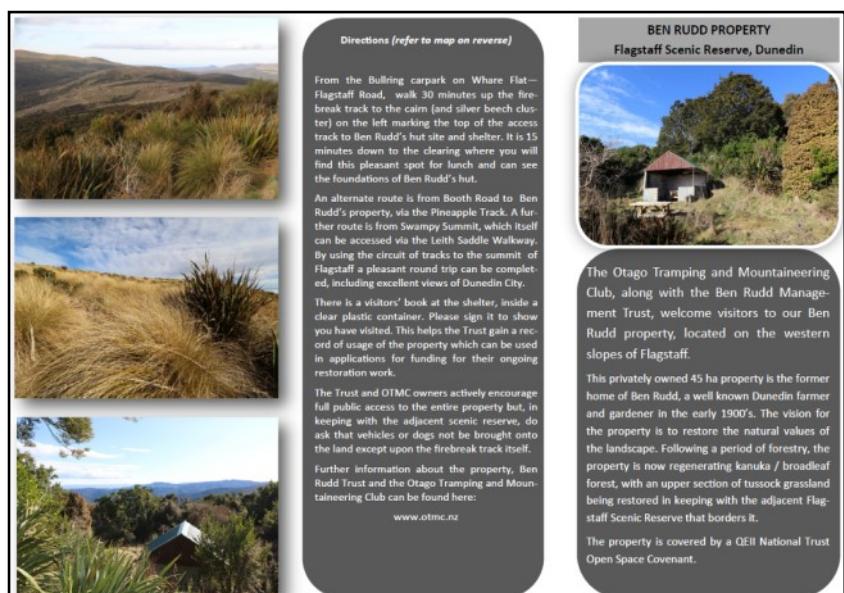
In 2015, Andy Cunningham compiled a comprehensive overview of Ben Rudd and his old property on the northern slopes of Flagstaff, which the club have owned since 1946. This overview of Ben Rudd's led to extensive information being added to the club website to encourage more understanding of the history, as well as the importance of the property to the club.

Also during 2015, the Ben Rudd's Management Trust installed two picnic tables at the current Ben Rudd's Shelter (the third hut/shelter on the property, the other two being Ben Rudd's original stone home, and a hut built in anticipation of a great ski-field on the property, which subsequently became the first OTC hut on the property. The shelter logbook is recording a decent number of visitors to the property.

The upper Escarpment Track section of the Skyline Track from Sullivans Dam to Mt Cargill was hit hard by a heavy snowfall in 2013. This was made worse by felling of the pine forest in the vicinity of Pigeon Hill, which led to some large trees falling over the edge on to sections of the Escarpment Track. The viability of the route was affected to the point that Antony Hamel declared the track 'as lost' in an online video.

Several club members were determined that this should not be so, so in 2016 commenced reopening the track - this included a diversion at the Pigeon Hill end to bypass several large fallen pine trees. The through route was re-established, but time has shown that the track requires significant maintenance to keep open, which is hard to undertake alone with the club resources available.

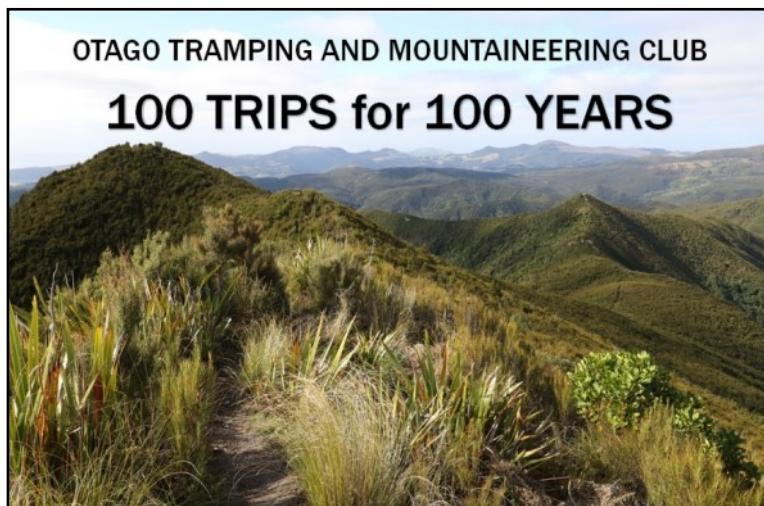
As part of the reopening of the through track in 2016 extensive information on all seven tracks that make



up the Dunedin City Northern Skyline Traverse was created and shared on the club website to encourage more usage. In 2023 we are aware that to increase usage the track needs extensive and ongoing maintenance as well as more signage. The original plan that the DCC would take over the ongoing upkeep does not appear to be an option, and the long term viability of the route remains uncertain.

Successful trips run in 2015/16 included a 10 day trip to the Dusky Track, organised and led by Chief Guide Wayne Hodgkinson. This was the only the second recorded club trip to the Dusky, the first being a five day trip for the 1973 Easter trip. Another well supported trip also led by Wayne in 2016 was to the Copland Valley to enjoy the hot pools at Queen's Birthday weekend.

Bushcraft 2016 had the largest number of participants for many years. In total, we had 70 participants involved - as this was more than the clubrooms can hold in one group, the 2016 course was split into two, with two sessions held each week. This worked very well, and the commitment of the instructors, some who spent up to four night a week at the clubrooms (committee meeting, two bushcraft meetings and the normal club night) was deeply appreciated.



Long term planning in 2016 saw the decision to run a special project for the club centenary in 2023. The club agreed that '100 Trips for 100 Years' was an achievable target. At the time, total club trip numbers were around 60-70 trips per year, so adding another 30-40 was not regarded as an unsurmountable challenge.

The first task was to work out where we had tramped and climbed since the first trip in September 1923. A significant collection of

printed trip programmes were available, and these formed the basis of our trip database. Gaps were filled from our archives at the Hocken Library. The first full six-month tramping programme was published by the club for the November 1928 to April 1929 period. Before this, monthly programmes were circulated to members by the Secretary.

The database is now fairly complete, but there are some gaps that hopefully future research will fill. The full list is complimentary to this history, as it provides a comprehensive overview of where the club has tramped over the years. A positive outcome from this exercise has been that the club plans to revisit some of the earlier trips that have been forgotten over the years as part of 100 Trips for 100 Years.

We have also learnt that the Otago Tramping Club undertook more than 100 trips in a year in the mid 1920s until the early 1930s. In those years there was both a Saturday afternoon and full day Sunday trip every weekend, and all other holidays had trips scheduled as well.

We now know where are most common tramping locations are. It is perhaps appropriate that this is our local Silver Peaks, with over 15% of club trips visiting various locations in the area - this is more than 1,000 trips. This confirms the importance of the action taken by the club in the 1980's to protect what is left of the Silver Peaks today as a scenic reserve.

Rodger Clarkson led a successful weekend trip to the East Matukituki Valley over Otago Anniversary weekend in 2017. It was great to see a large trip with 25 participants completed successfully. A number of

the party summited Sisyphus Peak, one of the best viewpoints in the area.

Another successful trip was the Wilkin - Gillespie Pass - Young circuit. This smaller Easter trip was delayed in leaving by three days due to weather, and the ensuing trip enjoyed great weather.

Bruce Moore, Life Member, sadly passed away in May 2017. As noted in earlier sections of this history, Bruce joined the Otago Tramping Club in 1953, aged 17. Within five years he became club President, and a well respected leader and mentor. In recognition of the significant contribution to the club by the Moore family, the OTMC awarded Honorary Membership to Elizabeth Moore in 2017 following the death of Bruce.



The second Leaning Lodge (to be replaced)

(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

After the satisfaction with the completion of the second Leaning Lodge noted earlier in this OTMC history, it soon became apparent that this was premature. The Department of Conservation (as land owner) and the Dunedin City Council (as the building authority) identified building compliance issues that would prevent Leaning Lodge in receiving official sign-off for use. This was a shock to the Leaning Lodge Trust and the club, and this led to extensive discussion at the OTMC committee meetings for some years.

The initial response were attempts to remediate Leaning Lodge to the required standard for compliance. To this end, additional plans were drawn up, and strengthening undertaken. As it turned out, this was not sufficient to meet the requirements of the building code, and eventually the Leaning Lodge Trust, with the clubs support, concluded that the only way forward was to build new hut on the site from the ground up.

As this option comes at significant cost, a major fundraising round was commenced by the Trust. The OTMC started the ball rolling with a \$15,000 donation from club reserves, as well as covering a couple of outstanding invoices the Leaning Lodge were unable to cover. This seed funding allowed the Leaning Lodge Trust to complete compliant design plans that were accepted by the DCC. This in turn allowed a full-on fundraising campaign to commence.

The end result as of this history (August 2023) is that funding has been secured, and the majority of the third Leaning Lodge was completed between January and May 2023. There remains some minor tasks to complete on the new hut before sign-off from the DCC is sought. Other work remaining to be done is to remove the second Leaning Lodge from the site, and remediate the land to the satisfaction of DoC.

The need to do something to the OTMC's original Leaning Lodge date back to 2004, when the club was advised that improvements needed to be done with both Big Hut (then in OTMC ownership), and Leaning Lodge. Now, almost 20 years later, the club is delighted to put the discussions and issues relating to Leaning Lodge behind us as we welcome the next generation of outdoor users to be able to access the tops of the incredible Rock and Pillar Range safely.

The club records our appreciation to the current Leaning Lodge Trust (John Cocks (chair), Gerry Closs, Paul Coffey, Gene Dyett, Peter Loeber & Kate Wilson). The club also acknowledge the current delegates who

have assisted the replacement of Leaning Lodge immensely: Phil Dowsett, Phillip Lindsay, Mathew Parackal, Alan Thomson and Barry Walker. We look to the reopening of Leaning Lodge in the coming months.

In 2018, a return to the popular Five Pass route was undertaken in late January / early February. Unlike the 2010 trip, this trip included the traditional five passes of Fohn Saddle, Fiery Col, Cow Saddle, Park Pass and Sugarloaf Pass (in 2010 Sugarloaf Pass was dropped in favour of Lake Nerine and North Col).

17 club members had a very enjoyable trip, which included enduring Cyclone Fehi near the end of the trip.

Bushcraft 2018 attracted 53 participants, and following the course the club repeated a discounted membership fee for people who completed the course. As a result, almost 50% of the 2018 participants subsequently joined the OTMC.

Older members will remember the impact that Doug Forrester made in the club from 1983 to 2007. Although Doug died in October 2007, his legacy still remained strong. This writer remembered Doug in a club email to mark the 10th Anniversary of his passing. This was shared with Doug's family, who expressed their appreciation. This led to thinking about doing something to show Doug's family how inspirational Doug had been within the club.

It was known that Doug had a very unique way of writing, and as he was a regular contributor to both our Bulletin and Outdoors Magazine we decided it would be nice to compile all of his writings into a standalone publication. This was duly completed, and a special club night was planned to release Doug's this. There were so many stories to tell that it required a 144 slide presentation to adequately tell just some of those stories.

Glenn Forrester shared Doug's tramping photos with the club, and these photos certainly enhanced both Doug's writings, and the presentation.

The evening was held in April 2018, and we were honoured to have two of Doug and Marie's children join us. Suzanne had travelled over from Australia, and Glenn is based in Dunedin. A lot of club members who had tramped with Doug also attended, travelling from as far afield as Westport. Suzanne and Glenn deeply appreciated the effort, and enjoyed learning about the significant impact their father achieved in the OTMC.

Tragedy struck the club on May 11, 2018 with the death of Charlie Weaver following a medical event just a few minutes into the planned crossover of the Routeburn Track. Charlie and his wife Maree had recently joined the club following their attendance on the 2018 Bushcraft Course. With retirement imminent, Charlie decided to rekindle his interest in tramping, joining the club as a result. Although his time in the OTMC came to be tragically brief, Charlie had already made some good friends in the club.

Adversity brings out the best of people, and it was heartening to see the club wrap support around those members who were with Charlie when he died as well as the wider group on the trip. Charlie's family and the OTMC deeply appreciated the compassion shown.

After Richard Forbes rescinded his nomination for a 4th term as President, Antony Pettinger was elected

DOUG FORRESTER OTMC WRITINGS

1983-2002

DOUG FORRESTER'S PUBLISHED WRITINGS

SOURCED FROM THE OTMC BULLETIN AND OUTDOORS MAGAZINE



again to this role at the 2018 AGM.

Life Member Ian Sime died in September 2018 following a period of illness. Ian joined the club in 1979, and made a significant contribution to the club over the ensuing years.

One of Ian's first contributions to a club Bulletin he asked two questions: 'Is there life after forty?', and 'Is tramping possible for the aged?'. This was relevant because Ian joined the club when he was 50, at a time when the average age was probably closer to 25.

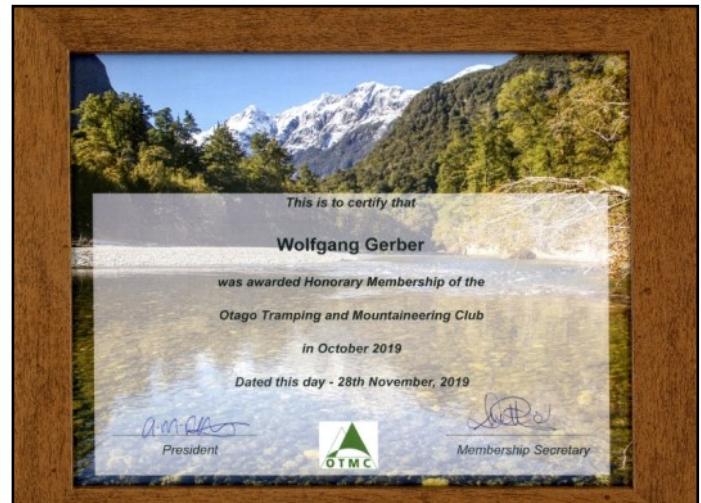
Ian joined the committee in 1987 as Vice President, but his forte was Membership Secretary, a role he fulfilled for 15 terms.

Ian's other contributions to the OTMC and outdoors included editor of several Outdoors magazines, week time tramping trips, Ben Rudd's trustee and significant commitment to both the Mountain Safety Committee and local Search and Rescue.

A milestone for tramping clubs was celebrated in 2019 with the centenary of the Tararua Tramping Club, the first such club to be formed in New Zealand. A invitation was sent out to other clubs around the country to celebrate the occasion by re-running their first trip. As it turned out, the OTMC were able to repeat our very first trip on Sunday, September 1, 2019 - exactly 96 years since our inaugural trip. With well over 30 people, this was the club's biggest day trip for many years.

In October 2019 the club (via the committee) were delighted to recognise Wolfgang Gerber's significant contributions to club since he joined in the early 1990s with Honorary Membership. Wolfgang was a charismatic and considerate leader, and his enduring legacy will always be the many Winter Routeburn (and sometimes other locations) social trips he organised and led.

We enticed Wolfgang and wife Fiona to a meeting in November 2018 to highlight his tramping life with the OTMC. Although this was true, the real reason was to present Wolfgang with his Honorary Membership. This turned out to be the most supported and enjoyable meeting of the year. A lot of effort was put into a presentation for Wolfgang, but as it turned out, we needn't have bothered as Wolfgang could remember all the facts and figures - a testament to what his time in the club meant to him.



Sadly, Wolfgang died in 2021, and the club lost a talented and treasured member and friend.

The clubrooms received some much-needed attention late in 2018. The foyer was made more inviting, with the addition of some large display photos. A comprehensive repaint of the entire outside of the rooms was also completed over a two-week period.

Inside the clubrooms, a Ben Rudd's display was installed, with an almost full-size photo of Ben Rudd included.

Additionally, the club replaced the orange clubroom chairs with more comfortable ones.

2018 was a busy year for the club committee - another task that needed to be attended during the year



was the establishment of a second Trust Deed and Management Plan for our Ben Rudd's property. The original Ben Rudd's Management Trust was established in 1998 for a twenty year term.

The four elected Trust's from the first 20 year management plan carried out their responsibilities admirably, and the OTMC and BRMT were keen to see this continue. Both parties collaborated to create a new Trust Deed, as well as the Management Plan. The term of the new agreements was reduced to six years, with the Trustee term being reduced to two terms of three years (down from the previous five). The updated documents were subsequently endorsed by the 2018 AGM.

Following a strong start to 2020, including the return of the Bushcraft Course, club activity was curtailed in March by the Covid19 pandemic. Following media coverage, the committee called a halt to club meetings a week before the country was placed in lockdown. There was a club trip underway enjoying a three day traverse from the Routeburn to the Glacier Burn via the tops when the lockdown was announced - the world seemed a completely different place when they got back to civilization.

The first trip casualty of the pandemic was a planned weekend to the East Matukituki - this was our post Bushcraft trip and around 30 trampers were disappointed to miss out.

The committee were keen to see interest in the club remain, so, like many other groups, instigated a series of Zoom club meetings. Initial attendance was good, but interest waned over time - it is hard to beat a face to face meeting in the clubrooms. A online photo competition was run, but support wasn't overly high.

By mid-May we were out tramping again, with restrictions on travel and numbers. August saw the country in lockdown again, which delayed the 2020 AGM until September.

Overall the OTMC has emerged from the pandemic in good shape thanks to the commitment of many members.

In April 2020, the club received the sad news that Mike Floate, QSM had died in Cromwell following a long illness. Mike joined the OTMC in the 1980s, and served as a committee member, Chief Guide and President. Mike was very passionate about protecting access to the areas we enjoy tramping and climbing, which led to Mike serving on the FMC Executive for many years. For this writer and many others, Mike was an important inspiration to us, and we acknowledge the contribution Mike made for the wider outdoor community. As Mike died during the 2020 lockdown, it was not possible to gather for a service, but club members held a Zoom tribute meeting for Mike, fondly sharing stories of trips gone by.

Antony Pettinger stood down as President at the 2020 AGM, and for the first time in the club's history the club had no serving President. Sharen Rutherford and other committee members shared the chairing of meetings throughout the years, and Sharen was elected as OTMC President at the 2021 AGM.

In between the lockdowns of 2020, we did manage to celebrate 30 years of ownership of our clubrooms at 3 Young Street. The club purchased the former TAB in 1990, and have been very happy there since. The club had previously rented 10 or so buildings as our clubrooms - having our own rooms means we can

make it our home, with our photos and maps permanently in place. Our ability to own our clubrooms is due to the diligence of past committees in raising and managing our funds over the years. That the club was able to purchase the clubrooms with no further fundraising, and to still have a healthy bank balance today is a credit to all past members.

2020 also saw the start of a project to compile all our trip reports from our Bulletins into yearly collections. The story of the club is best told through trip reports, as they are focused on the reason for our existence.



Seat installed at Ben Rudd's, looking north towards the Silver Peaks
(Photo: Antony Pettinger)

1985 was chosen as the starting point for no other reason than that being the year the compiler joined the club. Over 30 years have now been completed, and it is likely we will start going backwards from 1984 following the centenary.

In March 1921 Ben Rudd moved back to Flagstaff from Dunedin City - this time to a 45ha property on the northern slopes of Flagstaff. Ben lived here happily until his death in 1930. The club obtained the property in 1946, and 2021 marked the 75th Anniversary of club ownership, and

more importantly 100 years since Ben moved to the property.

The Ben Rudd's Management Trust and the club celebrated this occasion with a well attended outing to the former skid-site where picnic tables and lookout seat complete with photographic interpretation board have been installed. Speeches were made, and a shared lunch was enjoyed by all, but only after being earned by some work undertaken on the access track to Ben Rudd's shelter.

David Barnes had represented the club on the FMC Executive for 21 years, continuing an OTMC line of representation on the executive since the late 1970's. David stood down in 2021, and we appreciate and acknowledge David's advocacy work for both conservation and access on behalf of all outdoor users. David has led the OTMC response for significant issues such as the now abandoned Routeburn to Hollyford tunnel and the proposed Monorail to the Milford Rd from Lake Wakatipu, as well as looking after various DoC management plans and strategies. The club has a proud history of protecting access to the outdoors, and David has played a major role on our behalf for over 20 years.

2022 saw some significant trips completed. These included a brilliant weather trip to Brewster Hut and Mt Armstrong, an-



The complete OTMC party starting the Milford Track as part of 100 Trips for 100 Years (Photo: Antony Pettinger)

other glorious weather trip to the Rees & Dart with a side trip to Cascade Saddle, and an extended trip to Nelson Lakes, venturing over Travers Saddle up the Sabine as far as Blue Lake and Lake Constance. After a couple of years of club activity curtailed by the pandemic it was great to see these trips completed with great support.

In October 2022 the club commenced our main centenary project '100 Trips for 100 Years'. Following the creation of the trip database mentioned earlier, a trip programme for all 100 Trips had been developed for the period from October 2022 to October 2023. To allow 100 trips to be completed in this period, day trips were held on both Saturdays and Sundays, as well as public holidays. 19 weekend or longer trips were included in the trip programme, which was designed to have trips suitable for all.

The 100 Trips programme has seen the club return to areas or undertake trips we haven't completed for some (or many) years. In promoting the trips, information on the history of previous trips have been shared.



'Opening' of the new seats at the Green Hut Site, June 3, 2023
(Photo: Jade Pettinger)

100 Trips for 100 Years arrived at just the right time for the club, especially after 2-3 years of activity being affected by the pandemic. Strong numbers have attended the majority of the trips, and the surprising thing is that as of this writing (early August 2023) that none of the 77 trips run have been cancelled outright (a couple have been postponed, but later completed, and another three had destination changes).

100 Trips has proved to be an enjoyable collection of trips, and the club is looking forward to a successful conclusion during our centenary celebrations in October.

As we head towards our centenary celebrations, 2023 has continued to be busy for the club. Most of our activity is related to the club's 100th Anniversary. This has included the replacement of the seats at the club's former Green Hut site in the Silver Peaks, and the establishment of a lookout at Pineapple Point.

This complete history has been published on August 23, 2023 - 100 years to the day since the formation of the club. It would be interesting to know what Oscar Balk and the foundation members of the Otago Tramping Club would think of the club today - given that the club was formed because the city and environs were seen as a 'pedestrians paradise' I believe they would be pleased to see the club still active.

Tramping clubs nationwide have formed an important part of the social fabric of our country, and we know that relationships formed within the club become long-term and enduring. Any club will only be as good as its members, and the ongoing success of the OTMC is due to the many contributions from thousands of members over 100 years. I am proud to say the club remains in a very strong position as it enters its second century.

*Antony Pettinger
August, 2023*

Otago Tramping Club 1923-1970

Life Members *

1924: Donald McQuilkan	1937: Ian Mackie	1956: Dick Hamel
1924: Alex Gilmore	1937: Pat Richie	1959: Bruce Campbell
1924: George Gilmore	1937: Andrew Thompson	1961: Scott Gilkison
1924: William Gilmore	1937: George Wright	1962: Ted Hunter
1929: Fred Clayton	1937: Lionel Lumb	1962: Charlie Hayward
1931: Andrew Jopp	1947: Daisy Mackie	1963: Jim Freeman
1931: Don Malloch	1951: George Arras	1964: Ted Radford
1935: Robert Gilkison	1951: George Pearson	1966: Percy Moore
1935: Oscar Balk	1952: Bill Stevenson	1966: Ellen Moore
1937: Albert Gascoigne	1952: Grace Stevenson	1968: Bruce Moore
1937: James Knox	1955: Elizabeth Tweedie	

Otago Tramping & Mountaineering Club: 1971-2023

Life Members

1971: Alan Thomson *	1986: Richard Pettinger
1972: Lyall Campbell *	1986: Ken Mason *
1972: Marie McDonald *	1986: Bruce Mason **
1974: Ron Keen	1994: Peter Mason ***
1976: Dave Still	1999: Antony Pettinger
1979: Trevor Pullar	2003: Ian Sime *
1979: Phyllis Hardie *	2012: David Barnes
1984: Nancy Munro *	2012: Debbie Pettinger

Honorary Members

2017: Elizabeth Moore *	2018: Wolfgang Gerber *
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(* - deceased, ** - resigned, *** - removed)

Otago Tramping Club: 1923-1970

List of Presidents

1923: O. Balk	1946-1947: H. S Tilly
1924: R. Gilkison	1944: J. Niven
1925: J. Knox	1945: Mr. R. B. Hamel
1926: F.W. Clayton	1948: W. A. McFarland
1927: L. Lumb	1949-50: W. Broughton
1928: J. J. Kennedy	1951: J. Hoskins
1929: A. E. Gascoigne	1952-1953: B. W. Campbell
1930: P. L. Ritchie	1954: I. Pollard
1931: G. D. Wright	1955: A. Green & B.W. Campbell
1932: R. Gilkison	1956: W. S. Gilkison
1933: A.J. Thompson	1957: James Malcolm
1934: Miss A.F. Edmond	1958-1959: Bruce Moore
1935: P. L. Moore	1960: S. Tomkins & P. Barker
1936-37: R. B. Hamel	1961: Bruce Moore
1938: J. C. Lucas	1962-1964: Gerry Kampjes
1939: Mr. J. Niven	1965-1966: John Armstrong
1940: Mr. R. B. Hamel	1967: Laurie Kennedy
1941: Miss A. F. Edmund	1968: Ken Gousmett
1942-43: F. Dunn	1969-1970: Judy Knewstub



Otago Tramping & Mountaineering Club: 1971-2023

List of Presidents

1971: Bruce Mason	1988: David Peacock
1972: Bruce Mason & Dick Brasier	1989: Stuart Mathieson
1973: Dick Brasier	1990-1991: Elspeth Gold
1974-1975: Murray Kokich	1992-1993: Antony Pettinger
1976: Russell George	1994: Peter Mason
1977: Richard Pettinger	1995: Elspeth Gold
1978: Ross Davies	1996-1997: Robyn Bridges
1979: Steve Milne	1998-2002: Alan Thomson
1980: Donald McKellar	2003: Terry Casey
1980: Janet Girvan	2004-2013: Antony Pettinger
1981: Richard Pettinger	2014: Alan Thomson
1982: Michelle Metherell	2015-2017: Richard Forbes
1983: Alister Metherell	2018-2019: Antony Pettinger
1984: Don Greer	2020: Vacant
1985: Mike Floate	2021: Sharen Rutherford
1986: John Pohl	2022-2023: Antony Pettinger
1987: Spencer Walker	

