

The Silver Peaks

The very first Otago Tramping Club trip to the Silver Peaks was during Labour Weekend 1923 (October 20-22), so this trip is happening just over 99 years later. From a distance it is likely the profile of the Silver Peaks has not changed much, and the same could have been said about the terrain and 'ease of travel' up until say the mid 1990's. Certainly, trampers who have visited the Silver Peaks regularly over the past 50 years or so will have noticed the dramatic change in vegetation, hindering what was once easy travel. This is a result, in part, of the club fight against the expansion of exotic forestry across the Silver Peaks we know today, and means we can still access the 'best bits of the Silver Peaks'.

In 2017 I asked our Life Members if they would like to nominate trip for 100 Trips for 100 Years, and David Barnes picked this trip. David noted that his love of the Silver Peaks is well known, and this is a trip he has led several times. Rocky Ridge to many is the jewel of the Silver Peaks, with its remoteness, rock tors and expansive views (on a good day) all good reasons. It can be quite different in fog, and many a trip have had to rely on a compass to avoid following a side spur into the adjacent valleys.

This trip follows most of the standard Silver Peaks route, but avoids dropping into Cave Stream (Jubilee Hut) and misses out the Devils Staircase. This means the track / route along Rocky Ridge can be quite variable. The section from the Pulpit Rock end to where you drop down to the Hermit's Cave is not overly bad, but further north from here the track can become less distinct, so be prepared for some route-finding and scrub bashing.

With David now residing in Wellington, he noted in 2017 that he hoped he could attend the trip - a recent opportunity for David means he will be in Dunedin over this weekend, so a reshuffle of trips means he is able to lead his trip, which is very appropriate.

This particular trip was last run in October 2017 from the Hightop direction and took seven and a half hours, so this trip is technically a Fit trip (7-9 hours), but we have graded it as a M-F trip (6-8 hours).

This is the third '100 Trips' trip to visit the wider Silver Peaks area in October 2002 - this confirms our stats that show the Silver Peaks is our most visited trips over the past 100 years, with over 1000 trips run (out of circa 6,800 club trips).

Notable OTC / OTMC Trips

June 24-25, 1961

A winter weekend trip from Hightop to Green Peak - Jubilee Hut - Yellow Ridge and out to Evansdale

December 2, 1972

Our trip programmes show four 'marathon' type trips ahead of this one, but this accepted as the first OTMC Silver Peaks Marathon, a 60km & 3,300m height climbed and lost circuit from Booth Road. The northern point was The Gap, and then southbound to Dunedin via Rocky Ridge, Green Ridge and Swampy.

November 12, 1978

The first mention of Rocky Ridge on a club programme was this Over-Thirties trip.

May 30, 1982

Green Hut - Rocky Ridge - ABC Cave - Jubilee Hut - Green Hut (circuit). David Barnes noted watching the sun going down over the Rock and Pillar Range while waiting for stragglers to come up the Devils Staircase, and no-one had a torch, so an interesting trip out to Hightop.

March 3, 1985

Classic Silver Peaks circuit. Similar to the above trip, but in reverse - Green, Jubilee, ABC, Rocky Ridge, Green. Another trip late out, in this case the trip leader forgot to adjust his watch for Daylight Saving.

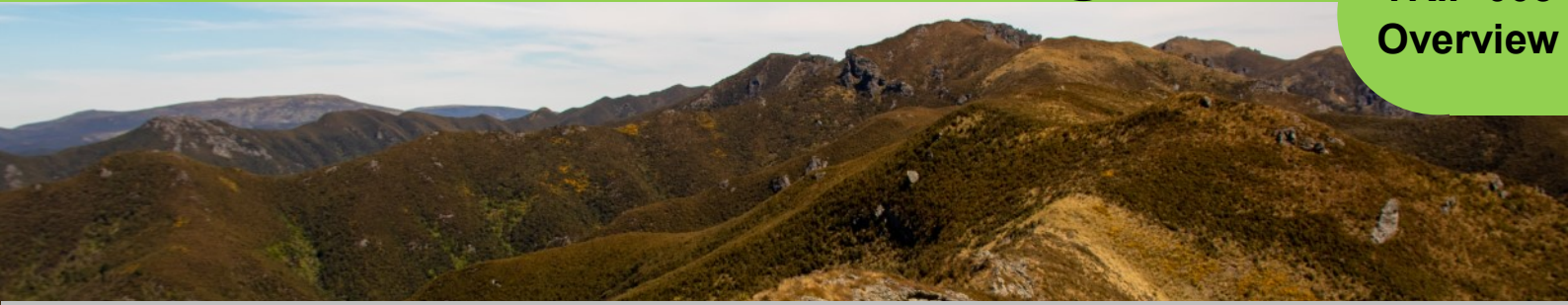
October 29, 2017

The most recent OTMC trip that traversed Green, Rocky and Yellow Ridges.

100 Trips for 100 Years

Celebrating 100 Years of Tramping & Mountaineering 1923-2023





Photos related to this area



Carrying replacement floorboards in to Green Hut, 1960's (photo taken in the Hightop area)



1987 view from above Green Hut across the Double Hill , Mountain Road and Blueskin Bay



Good track on southern end of Rocky Ridge



Yellow Ridge from The Gap as seen in 1986 - a lovely tussock covered ridge