

The Bulletin

Newsletter of the Otago Tramping and Mountaineering
Club Inc #828 February 2023



Upcoming Trips & Events

★ WEEKENDS ★

*★ Mt Charles / Poatiri ★ Mt Watkin / Hikaroroa ★ Saddle Hill Seven Summits -
The High Points Of The Silver Peaks ★ Harbour Cone ★ Beatties Beach ★ Fairy Grotto
& Seal Point ★ Heyward Point*

★ SUNDAYS & SATURDAYS ★

★ Fiordland Weekend ★



The ups and downs of Rosella Ridge. Photo credit: Antony Pettinger.

OTMC Bank Account

The OTMC bank account with ASB is ... 12-3150-0311684-00

Please include your name and the reason for the payment when using internet banking (which is the preferred option). Non-members must pay for trips when signing the trip list, members should pay before departure. Vehicle suppliers/drivers will normally not pay the trip fee and will be reimbursed fuel costs later (check with the trip leader or Treasurer Sharen if in doubt).

Gear Hire

OTMC has a large amount of gear available for members to hire.

NO hire charge for members for the first week!

See or phone our Gear Hire Committee member.

- Ice Axes
- Crampons
- Cookers & Billies
- Packs
- Tent/Flys
- Climbing Helmets

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otmcnz@gmail.com**

**Thursday meeting at 3 Young St, South Dunedin Doors open 7:30 for
8pm start, all welcome**

Sign up to our email list: <https://lists.otago.ac.nz/listinfo/otmc>



Trip Reports

February 2023

4-6th (3 Day Weekend) (100 Trips 029) East Coast. Richard and Tracy Pettinger

**100 Trips #029 – Waitangi Weekend, was supposed to be East Matukituki,
- East Coast instead**

This trip attracted 34 people keen on the East Matukituki, but numbers dwindled somewhat as the day approached and the weather forecast turned dire. By Thursday morning, we had decided to get as far away from Sunday's predicted NW storm as we could without venturing into the Pacific Ocean.

The "Far-East", i.e. Herbert Forest area, was chosen, camping at one of the three grounds there: Riverview Haven. Many cars were offered to get everyone there, and we left the OTMC rooms at 6:05 pm. Very prompt. Some cars picked up people on the way and very soon, with tents up and all accounted for, we hosted a local, OTMC's Shelly Coleman, who told us about some of the local daytrips on offer (in return for refreshments). So, we were well equipped.

Plans were then hatched for 4 individual trips that actually turned into 5. We expected these to help towards achieving 100 OTMC trips.

(A) Day one, Saturday, saw the biggest group do a circuit incorporating Kahikatea Lodge and some terrible heat, led by Andrew;
(B) Day two had Tracy leading us through various Forest Tracks; with
(B2) a small group choosing a river tramp, led by Andrew again;
(C) on Monday, Day three began with Mark taking us around Trotters Gorge, and
(D) the lovely weekend ended when four remaining intrepid trippers climbed Puketapu.

Richard Pettinger, for Tracy Pettinger, Tina Anderson, Maree MacRae, Saskia Bronstring, Mark Stephenson, Andrew McConnell, Lily McConnell, Brendan Penwarden, John Kaiser, Mandie Lungley, Lynda Langridge, Bridget Sutton, Michael Priestnall.

029A: Kahikatea Lodge

As it happened Andrew had been up that road before and done the very same tramp. So, we were in good hands to tackle Shelly's suggested walk. Three of our

four-wheel-drive vehicles (see Mandie's "4WD fun" item below) went up to the car park from where you can see Kahikatea Lodge. We took photos at the beginning of the walk and then set off into very nice native bush. Richard was struck by the condition of the bush. Unlike our Silver Peaks, no weeds were seen apart from a few foxgloves within the near-original beauty. At the bottom of the hill there was a delightful clean-water stream. We were told it would be an important one-off resource! The temperature must've been mid-20s, when we commenced a slog through tussock, in the heat of the day up to the hut where we stopped for lunch. What a beautiful new hut this is, not 'officially' ready for use yet.

We carried on after lunch and it got rather hot and a bit of a struggle for some people - before we got onto the tops people would bags the shade whenever they could find it. At one rest stop, the largish flax was not quite enough to get everyone under.

A couple of people needed a bit of assistance to get up that hill. The top of course was rewarding and we really enjoyed the views to the north. We could see Mount Watkin to the south. Lily was heard to enthuse about the tops of hills...We followed along a fence with a bit of a road and a water line, before heading down the hill back to the cars. Another group photograph at the end was taken to show the somewhat 'differing' condition of all of the walkers. We headed back to the delightful Riverview Haven where we were camped, after we visited Hampden for ice creams.

It had been a very successful day. People looked forward to a shady walk, through bush the next day. Most of us on the trip really enjoyed swimming in the river after the ice creams and before dinner with wines and beers.

Richard & Tracy, for the whole team listed above



Mandie and Michael beginning the descent into the Waianakarua Scenic Reserve. Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.



*Left Above: Tina in the very pleasant bush in Waianakarua Scenic Reserve.
Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.*

Above right: Approaching the very new Kahikatea Lodge, with Michael and, taking photos, Brendan. Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.

Newcomer Michael Priestnall added the following;
The Riverside Haven camping ground at Herbert is just 80 km up SH1 from Dunedin, just past Moeraki (where I was lucky to find the fabulous Fishwife open on the way home). Herbert was a last minute but lovely option for day walks and evening swims when the planned OTMC Waitangi weekend trip on the East Matukituki was rained off. This was my first trip with OTMC and what a nice bunch you are.

Saturday was blisteringly hot. First, a 4WD adventure in convoy through Glencoe farm to the road end. Poor Mandie - Andrew promised it was just a gravel road. It wasn't a long distance - we could see the new Kahikatea Lodge, our halfway point, amongst sunny tussock across the valley - but it was tough and slow going. The consensus was to start our loop walk downhill through the bush and in the shade, and to return via the ridge above the Herbert Forest. Nine-year-old Lily led us off, full of energy and chattering all the way [less so as the tramp progressed]. Humid, narrow, very steep and slippery on the way down to a small stream crossing; then hauling and sweating our way up the equally steep tussock bank for a welcome lunch stop at the hut - most in the shade and a few of us soaking up the sun on the veranda. Brendan, well in the lead, made it his mission to photograph everyone as

they struggled up to the hut. Only Brendan had energy to dash up to the summit above us for more photos.

Then, onwards and upwards, tussock-bashing to the ridge and views out to sea. Finally, the track opened up and flattened out for a lovely ridge walk in the sun and gentle descent to the parked cars. A good day's exercise in fine company topped off with huge ice creams at the Hampden Night & Day (thanks Mandie), a soak in the Waianakarua and drinks before dinner.



“Onwards and upwards” above Kahikatea Lodge; Tracy and Maree. Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.

Mandie added the following about her 4WD fun (a “first”)

I did not know what was ahead. I thought I would be driving on an ordinary road in ordinary traffic, but no. Andrew might think so, but... it was fab. It was quite fun. It was good to meet a challenge, that last muddy pool was quite deep. Brendan took my car through on the way back, with Saskia holding on tight.



Mandie's 4WD, with Mandie walking behind, at the deep and tricky puddle. Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.

029B: Tracy's Choice: Podocarp and Swallows Loops

After yesterday's walk in the heat, we needed to have a day in the bush away from the glaring sunlight. So, we chose to walk the Swallows and Podocarp tracks. We started off by walking from the campsite half an hour on the road. When we got to Graves Dam, Andrew, Lily and Mandie decided to spend a day in the river. We carried on, on our original intention and sometimes the signs were a little ambiguous and didn't quite match the map that we had with us.

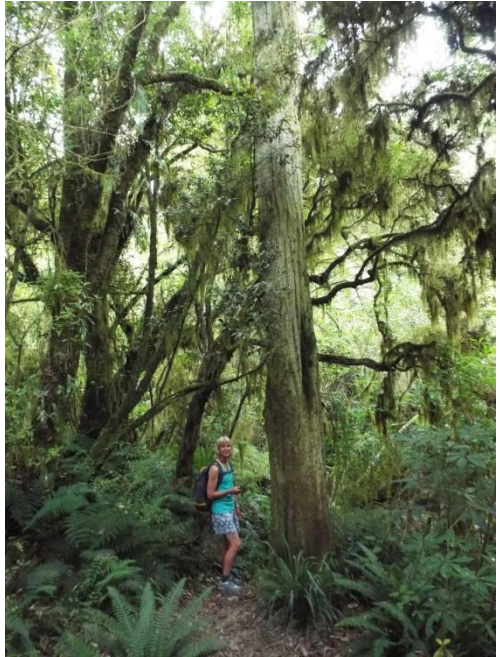
The day was still warm but we didn't need sunblock and we were happy to be in the bush. There were a couple of showers passing over but we hardly noticed them. Of course, we were in a forestry area here and part of the walk was along forestry road but when we got into the bush it was quite beautiful. Remnant forest with huge podocarps: Rimu, Matai, Tōtara, Kahikatea you name it; they were magnificent trees. There was a perfect place for lunch and we sat and reminisced and chatted to our new friends and listened to the birdsong, marveling at the trees. We found the cave, that was mapped, on the way back on the Swallows track. That was interesting and quite picturesque and a good bivvy rock.

When we got to the river by the Dam, some of us wanted to walk back down the river as Mandie and the McConnells had planned for their day trip. We weren't quite sure if we would be able to paddle all the way or if we might have to swim. So other people kindly walked the road and took some packs and important equipment that

we didn't want to get wet, like cell phones and cameras. They got roadside apples as compensation.

The walk down the river was really excellent with the rock formations Rodger had shown the OTMC on a previous trip. Some were a bit like Moeraki boulders or bathtubs. The river was beautiful and only came up to our knees so we could have made the walk down with packs. The three on their separate trip had visited Glencoe and came down the river a little later than us, having had a fantastic time as well and then a lot more swimming was had.

Tracy, for Lynda, Richard, Maree, Brendan, Mark, John, Michael, Bridget, Saskia



Saskia and a very friendly tree
Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.



The team at the start of the Forest tracks: Lynda, Richard, Maree, Tracy, Brendan, Mark, John, Michael, Bridget, Saskia. Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.

029B2: Very Rivery

What a day trip it was when we left Tracy and instead went very rivery. It was very long and we went up the river to the Glencoe camping ground. It is a nice campsite and there weren't many people. It was not so hot.

It was actually cold at first and I was sort of swimming to get across different parts of the river. It was lovely company, lovely walk and we got to see the most amazing formations down the river with boulders coming out of the rock. It was good. It was a long walk and I think we did about 13 kms, which was two times what day trip number two that Tracy had done and two times what we had all done yesterday. But we were back feeling a lot fresher than we did yesterday. It was so much cooler and lovely and beautiful and there was a lot of little fish. We started at the Graves Dam and walked up there and then we came all the way back down to the Riverview campsite. We turned a corner and the air was suddenly a hot blast. That's it.

Lily McConnell



Mandie, Lily and Andrew at the end of the "Rivery" daytrip. Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.

029C: Trotters Gorge

On the way back to Dunedin, it seemed only sensible to do a couple of walks that we haven't been able to do recently.

Trotters Gorge was a fabulous trip that has been done in the last year or so, but sometimes life gets in the way of tramping and here was a second opportunity.

We parked cars near the picnic area, before the river, and set off walking. This was another trip of hiding from the sun as much as possible.

There are caves and unusual rock formations on this walk. Around almost every corner was something new and exciting.

Unfortunately, Lily had lost her enthusiasm for walking upwards and had to be enticed by Andrew to get to the top. But, when we got to the peak, wow, did she get her enthusiasm back in spades. There was a bit of rock clambering on the tops, which needed careful thought. The longer your legs are for this bit, the better. So, 9-year-old Lily did extraordinarily well to get there. The rocks! The views!

Almost as good as the East Matukituki.

After a careful clamber down, we headed to the University Hut. Andrew knew there was a great swimming hole there and we were all keen to give it a try. We had lunch and headed off for a dip. This is not the usual order of eating and swimming, but the water wasn't deep, and the swimming wasn't serious. The water was colder than the Waianakarua though. Only Lily, Andrew and John went in properly. Others paddled. Some watched. Then it was hey ho. Back to the cars and the next adventure!



Tracy for Richard, Andrew and Lily, John, Lynda, Maree, Mark, Saskia with Barry Monk joining us for the day. Photo Credit: Tracy Pettinger.

Andrew, Barry, Saskia, Lynda, Mark, Maree on the Trotters Gorge trip

029D: Puketapu Afternoon

Sometimes we drive past a place of significance because we don't have time to stop. We're on our way in our busy lives and we think that one day we'll swim in that beautiful lake or climb that small hill.

Puketapu in Palmerston is one of those places that we drive past.

Saskia, Mark, Richard and I just wanted to bag one more hill, despite the heat of the day. What a glorious summer Dunedin has had. We set off from the official start of the track which is just above the township of Palmerston. It's an up-hill slog for 36 minutes and the track winds around the slope, so you get to take in the views from all directions. You can definitely tell which direction the wind is blowing from.

At the summit, there is the tower with the ladder up inside. The only other time I've been up there it was foggy, so this was great, although windy weather was a cooling but blustery bonus. We climbed the ladder and gathered around, shouting at each other about what we could see!

We descended Puketapu on the quick, steep track. It is so much shorter than the up-hill track, but it still took us 22 minutes to get back to the cars, so only 14 minutes quicker!

As we were decidedly hot and sweaty, we deserved the ice cream at the local dairy. The queues were long. The ice cream scooper's arms all gained extra muscle this weekend. Phew!

So, if you have a spare hour on your way somewhere and the weather is cooler, surprise your eyes!

Tracy in a breezy spot, Puketapu summit monument

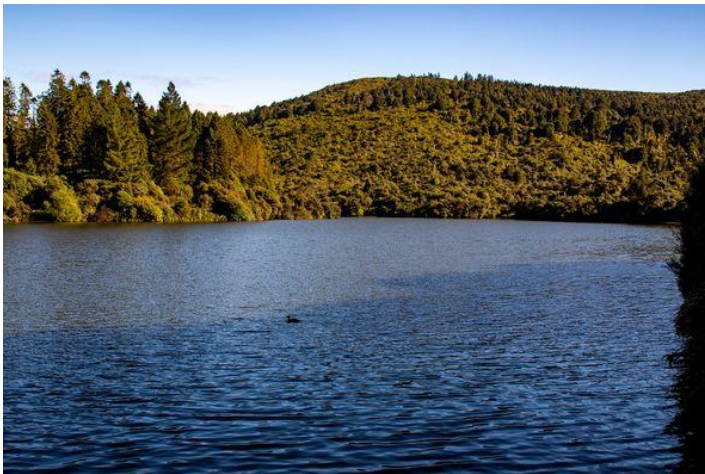


Left. Tracy for Richard, Saskia and Mark. Right. Tracy with Palmerston behind. Photo Credit: Richard Pettinger.

4th (100 Trips 030) Cloud Forest Of Leith - Escarpment Track - Three Peaks Track (circuit). Antony Pettinger.

When the thermometer hits more than 30°C the most sensible thing to do would be a swim at the beach, instead we opted for a walk - up a hill from Sullivans Dam up to Mt Cargill / Kapukataumahaka via the Cloud Forest and Escarpment Tracks and return via the Three Peaks Track.

Maybe it was the heat or maybe it was the reputation of the notoriously muddy Escarpment Track but whatever the reason, there ended up being only two of us brave enough to face both the heat and the Escarpment Track. We started our adventure by walking around Sullivans Dam with the surrounding hills reflected in its dark and tranquil waters. We stopped for a few minutes at the outlet of the dam to enjoy the calm and peace of the place before following the track into the relative cool of the bush and continued around the side of the dam to the start of the Cloud Forest of Leith Track.



Sullivans Dam. Photo Credit: Antony Pettinger.

The Cloud Forest of Leith track has become overgrown in places with ferns covering the board walk making it difficult to see where to put your feet, although mostly this part of the track is relatively straightforward and easy to negotiate. Despite being in the shade of the native bush the temperature was rising and the sweat was starting to flow with the constant uphill gradient. Emerging from the bush, into the full sun at the power lines we were rewarded with great views towards Waitati and Warrington and around to Mihinwaka and Mt Kettle.



View from the power lines. Photo Credit: Antony Pettinger.

After a short drink stop we crossed the open ground under the power lines before heading back into the bush and onto the Escarpment Track. The condition of the track hasn't improved much since our last visit in November. The undergrowth of ferns is quite thick along the track, making it difficult to see your feet along with the track and the ever present obstacles of tree roots, fallen trees and mud. Thankfully with all the dry weather recently there was only minimal mud and what mud there is, is firm and porridge like so we clambered up Pigeon Rock with relatively clean boots. As always Pigeon Rock is a perfect place to stop for a drink and snack while taking in the uninterrupted views of Swampy Summit and around to the northern Silver Peaks, Mt Watkin, Blueskin Bay and the Kakanuis in the distance.



View from Pigeon Rock. Photo Credit: Antony Pettinger.

The next part of the track involves finding your way through the pine plantation which is not as easy as it once was. The pine trees are now a few years old and being taller than a person means that you need to keep a close eye on the markers to ensure you continue in the right direction. It feels a little like walking in circles but by sticking to the makers we were rewarded with arriving on the Mt Cargill road with no wrong turns.

By now the sun was high in the sky and the temperature was pushing into the 30°C's and we had a kilometre or so of road walking ahead of us but on the plus side - we had done all the uphill and there was only downhill ahead of us now. Not wanting to be longer than necessary in the full force of the sun we turned right and walked down the road 15 minutes to the Three Peaks track. The first part of Three Peaks track is a lovely section with the trees interlocking branches overhead creating an open green tunnel to walk through. Eventually we reached the end of the tunnel and emerging back into the sun, on another four wheel drive road which we followed back to the power lines

Now we had completed a large loop and were on the final home stretch so we stopped for a short drink stop and then back into the shade of the bush. Going down through the ferny undergrowth is no easier than going up, still can't see our feet but at least we had gravity on our side. Before we knew it we had reached Sullivans Dam and then it was a short walk around the outside of the dam to complete another loop and we were back at the car, happy to finish a very hot 10.5 km walk in 3.5 hours.

Debbie Pettinger for Antony Pettinger

11 (Saturday) (100 Trips 031) OTMC Half-Marathon (or Powder Ridge / Long Ridge / Pulpit Rock / Green Ridge / Swampy circuit). Sharen Rutherford

Silver Peaks Half Marathon 11 February.

Ross Davies

Heralded as a return of the OTMC Silver Peaks Half Marathon of the olden days, it seemed fitting to include a survivor of the original Silver Peaks Marathon in 1971. The original marathon was a creation of members Al Smith, Bruce Clark, Colin McKenzie (The ABC of ABC Cave) and Ken Calder. Obviously after too many beers one evening the question was asked whether the whole of the Silver Peaks could be circled in a day. The question was answered when two of them set off clockwise and the other two anticlockwise (passing in the middle somewhere) and they all made it back to the bottom of the Pineapple Track after a very long day. The clockwise route was chosen for a Club challenge and dozens started in 1971. Dick Brasier and Al

Smith arrived back first in 10 hrs 30 minutes. Margret Gilchrist and I set a record of the longest time of 32 hrs 30 minutes. It remained a significant challenge for decades. Eventually a shorter version was offered as an alternative, with a short-cut via Long Ridge from Boulder Hill to Pulpit Rock. The full version got from Boulder Hill to Pulpit Rock via Poplar Hut, Christmas Creek, The Gap and Rocky Ridge. Even then the “half” was more like two-thirds.



Sunrise. Photo Credit: Antony Pettinger.

The new Half is an excellent idea. It's a bit less than the old Half, at around 38 kms and 1,700 m. of ascent, but still a good test. Eight of us set off from the bottom of the Pineapple Track a tiny bit after 6am. A beautiful sun rise greeted us above the bush and by the time we reached the top of Flagstaff at 7.20am it was a gorgeous day. At the ford down towards Whare Flat we remembered club member Trevor Mason who drowned there starting out on the Marathon course some years ago. The climb up Powder Ridge was mostly sheltered from the sun and we paused for a break near the top at 11.30am. From then on we were mostly in the sun and it was getting warm by the time we hauled up to Pulpit Rock.



Lunch Stop. Photo Credit: Caitlin Robertson.

Time for lunch and refuelling and then we were heading for home, descending towards the old Green Hut site.



Team at Green Hut site. Photo Credit: Nameless hiker/Antony's camera.

There were lots of stops from there on, to allow everyone to regroup. We had started together and were determined to finish together. The endless climb up Swampy Ridge has seemed endless for more than 50 years and this time was no exception. Then there's the sting in the tail of the climb while descending from Swampy. Finally we reach the Pineapple Track and the relief of knowing it's all down

from there. With varying mixtures of relief and exhaustion and pain and pleasure we all reached the bottom of the Pineapple Track at 5.30pm. A challenge well met. Starters and finishers: Antony, Debbie, Caitlin, Wendel, Ross, Brendan, Steffan & Tim Thanks Sharen, Jade and Wyn for support at the start, at Hightop, and at the finish.

12 (Sunday) (100 Trips 032) OTMC Picnic - Long Beach. Informal Long Beach (north end)

Traditionally a club picnic was on the day after the OTMC marathon and was a good way for those involved to relax and recuperate. In recovery mode from walking the Silver Peaks half marathon yesterday, I was looking forward to a day in the sun at the beach. The walk along the beach was relaxing and we stopped for a brief look at the rock climbers before making our way to the end of the beach near the caves. There was a sea lion who had taken up residence in the shade so we kept our distance and set up chairs and picnic blankets near the dunes.

The weather was perfect for the beach with sunshine and no wind so the 14 of us were able to sit and happily chat before some of the group headed into the water for a swim while others enjoyed a paddle or explored the caves. We watched the antics of another sea lion further down the beach lounging in the shallows before making its way into the deeper waves. Around mid afternoon people started packing up their picnic and headed back to the cars which left only a few of us to enjoy one last swim/paddle before walking back along the almost deserted beach.

Debbie Pettinger for Peter Loeber, Leonie Loeber, Lucy Jones, Jane Cloete, Lynda Langridge, Rodger Clarkson, Andrew McConnell, Shelley McConnell, Lily McConnell, Michael Prieslnal, Jade Pettinger and Antony Pettinger



Long Beach. Photo Credit: Antony Pettinger.

**19 (Sunday) (100 Trips 033) Rosella Ridge - River Track - Gold Miners Direct M
Mark Stephenson**

A large group met at 8am Woodhaugh, a few of us were cutting it pretty fine, arriving with 5 minutes to spare. In the group were Mark (leader) Debbie Antony, John, Victoria and Emilie, Sandra, Ash, Maree, Rodger, Sharon, newbies Jojo and Jeff(hope to see you walking with us again) and Debbie.

It was an already hot morning and forecast to reach 27 degrees, so heading up to Green Hut site and Pulpit was good to get done earlier in the day. As always the views from Pulpit and the track were just beautiful.

After Pulpit, we went back to the Rosella turn off, and went along the ridgeline. Again stunning views, some narrow bits of track and some short sharp inclines and descents. For a few of us this was a first time on Rosella. Once we got into the shade and breeze of the thicker bush we stopped for lunch. There were a lot of Tomtits and Fantails about.



Always Beautiful. Photo Credit: Mark Stephenson.

Continuing our descent we passed various tracks that also lead to the River Track, but we stayed on the main Rosella track. Eventually we popped out down by the river.

A lot of conversation was about the River Track and the recent walk along it and history of it's making. Incredibly well deserved thank you to Arthur Blondell for all the work. Such a useful and well appreciated track. Alot of work! As Antony commented, before it's making, the Rosella track would end in wading up the creek, making a very long end to an already big loop.



For the view. Photo Credit: Mark Stephenson.

Once we got to the head of the river/creek we used the Eucalypt Spur track and then Gold Miners Direct to the parked cars. It was very hot and sunny by then.

About 7 hours or so including breaks and photos.

Thank you everyone for a lovely Silverpeaks wander and thank you Mark for leading.

23-26 (4 Day Trip) (100 Trips 034) Milford Track MF Antony Pettinger



OTMC Day 1 on Milford track! Photo Credit: Antony Pettinger

Day 1

In the days leading up to this trip we were beginning to believe that we were about to win the weather jackpot. Antony had done such an incredible job of organising this trip (starting two years ago) that he had even gotten the weather on our side! Antony has certainly played a large part in developing the great relationship that exists today between OTMC and DOC.

DOC were treated to cake from OTMC which I am sure they really appreciated. One of the kind DOC staff took a photo of the assembled OTMC members outside the Te Anau Visitors Centre before we loaded our packs into the hold of the bus. We then climbed aboard, and headed off to Te Anau Downs. From there we had a great boat trip as the conditions were optimal for enjoying the scenery in clear, calm weather. We were dropped off at Glade Wharf, where we assembled for another photo. As soon as that was done, people were off. Everyone was super keen to start the much awaited Milford Track Trip.

People soon found their pace and space. Soon after the start we passed Glade House, the accommodation for the Guided Walkers. The drinks and canapés and premises looked very inviting! We were, however, on our mission and continued

over the first and longest of the suspension bridges on this track. Because the weather was so warm, many people swam at every opportunity. Tomas was the first to take a plunge. The route continued alongside the Clinton River which was incredibly beautiful. The water was sparkling clear, so much so that we could see trout swimming and the stones on the river bed. The river was a beautiful green.



Stunning colours of Milford. Photo Credit: Charlotte Hadley.

Apparently many people had been pondering which word best described the colour of the water. Just before reaching Clinton Hut most people took a side trip through a wetland, which presented a completely different palette of colours. Clinton Hut has an unusual and very user-friendly lay out. There is a large decking area, rather like a courtyard, between the bunkhouses and the kitchen. There were two large hoola hoops that Leonie, Tracey, Roger and others attempted with varying degrees of success. That night we had the first of three interesting DOC warden talks. We learned the name of the legendary Tu-te-raki-whanoa, an atua who shaped the fiords. Many of the people who got up during the night marvelled at the wide expanse of a most beautiful star-scape. The sky was that deep purple/black velvet studded with bright stars as well as the milky way. What a way to end our first day on the Milford Track.

Written by Charlotte and Chris Handley

Day 2

Milford Track, day 2 Friday 24th February
Clinton Hut to Mintaro Hut

After a lovely stay at Clinton the hut the party of 40 continued on to Mintaro Hut. Some woke early to get a head start and enjoy the walk, others had a relaxed start cooking breakfast and enjoying the surroundings. The track takes you along the Clinton River where many hoped to spot Whio feeding in the currents.



After an hour you reach Clinton Forks where there is a view up the North Branch of the Clinton River. Further up the track is a view of Hirere Falls and shelter for morning tea. Along this section many noticed a giant Fungi on the track (photo above) fallen from the tree above. There was also Hidden Lake and a short side trip to Mirror Lake for stunning photo opportunities (photo below).



Arriving at Mintaro Hut was amazing (photo below). This new build was a treat to stay in with a fantastic large deck where many enjoyed the evening sun. A swimming hole nearby was lovely and very refreshing. The evening was entertaining with an interesting hut talk about The Maori Legend of the area and a quiz night with yummy prizes.



Saturday 25th February - Day 3 Milford Track.

Mintaro Hut to Dumpling Hut via McKinnon Pass, with an optional side trip to Sutherland Falls.

Day Three was another pearler! After a good night's sleep on the best mattresses of the trip, everyone was up early and there was a lot of bustle as people prepared and departed. We farewelled Chris and Kathy, who were walking out via Clinton Hut due to a knee injury.

Our food group of Charlotte, Chris, Jane and Spen left at 7:50am in the cool of the morning.

Antony, Debbie and Jade lay in wait at the first zig-zag, cameras at the ready to document those passing. It's a steady plod through lush cloud forest, on a nicely graded track.



Old Man's Beard on the McKinnon Pass zig-zag. Photo Credit: Jane.
At the bushline we came across a family of kea entertaining Tomas – one posing for photos while the other sneaked behind him to investigate his pack.



Kea on McKinnon Pass track. Photo by Jade Pettinger

As we climbed upwards the sun rose with us, offering an ever-increasing vista of the Clinton valley and surrounding mountains.



Upper Clinton Basin, Mt Hart and McKinnon Pass at right. Photo Credit Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

After many zig-zags and lots of photos we reached McKinnon Pass at about 9:30am, to a light breeze and spectacular views. Rock wren were calling, and we soon saw them as they flitted about in the tussocks.



McKinnon Memorial, Mt Pillans in background. Photo Credit Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

After the obligatory photos at the McKinnon Cairn and geocache signing we walked a couple of hundred metres up the ridge towards Mt Hart to visit an area of panholes on the bare granite rock. These are an interesting geological feature formed when slightly acidic water is caught in a depression on flat rock, and slowly dissolves away the rock to form a circular pit. All the geocachers on the trip arrived

to examine the panholes and take measurements, in preparation for a planned earthcache.



Panholes in granite on McKinnon Pass. Photo by Charlotte Handley.

We had been told of this spot by Emily Gee, who worked several seasons as a Pompolona Lodge warden. This was her favourite place to come and enjoy the views and solitude. Morning tea by an alpine tarn with unbelievable views all around. The head of the Roaring Burn where we are going next, Mt Elliot with the Jervois Glacier (what's left of it), Mt Balloon, the Clinton Valley where we have come from.



View of Mt Elliot above the Roaring Burn at left, Mt Balloon, McKinnon Memorial, and Clinton Valley at right. Photo Credit Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

After more photos we headed to the McKinnon Shelter as the first of the dependent walkers caught up with us. Here Ross Davies had a billy going for hot drinks. He had plenty of customers.



Ross Davies' tea shop. Photo Credit Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

We started our descent from the pass as the day heated up. A nicely graded route amongst resplendent alpine vegetation. We found a cool spot for lunch on the side of the track in the shade of the cliff, plus reasonably flat with a wonderful view. Antony, Debbie and Jade, Dave and Penny and others passed us, heading for their own selected lunch spots. However we were joined by Tracy and Richard.



Lunch spot in the shade! Photo Credit: Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

Looking up Mt Balloon and the towering mountains surrounding us, it was easy to understand why this main track is closed after snowfall due to avalanche danger, and the steeper emergency track used instead.

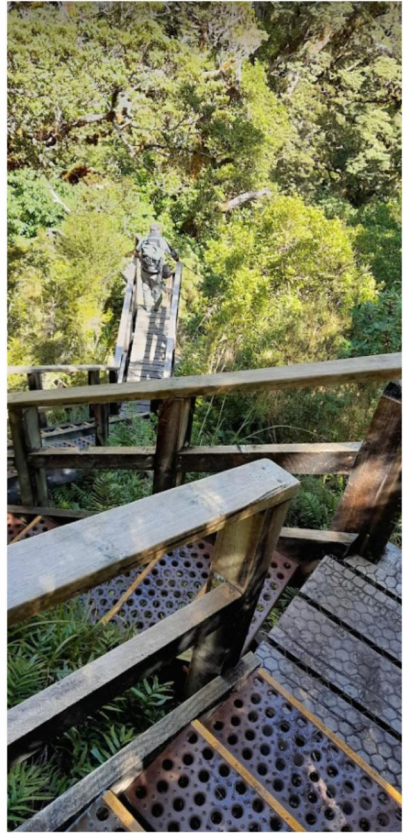
The track takes a wide curve around the basin, crosses the Roaring Burn, and descends into the subalpine scrub and bush. We stopped at the signposted viewpoint to get our first sight of the Sutherland Falls.

The next highlight was the impressive Andersons Cascades, with a very long staircase taking you down beside the swirling water. Time for a muesli bar at the Anderson Cascade Shelter along with a smattering of dependent walkers. Some were older people, but there were also quite a few much younger and fitter than us.

The final drop to the Arthur River is a bit rocky and slippery in spots, and the zig-zagging track has concreted areas to reduce erosion.

Once at the Arthur River T junction, about a third of us on the trip turned right and went directly to Dumpling Hut, with time to enjoy the river there.

The rest of us stopped for a drink at the Quintin Day Shelter, where there is a hot water urn, tea, and coffee courtesy of Ultimate Hikes. This was much appreciated. We left our packs at the shelter while we did the 1.5 hour return side trip to Sutherland falls.



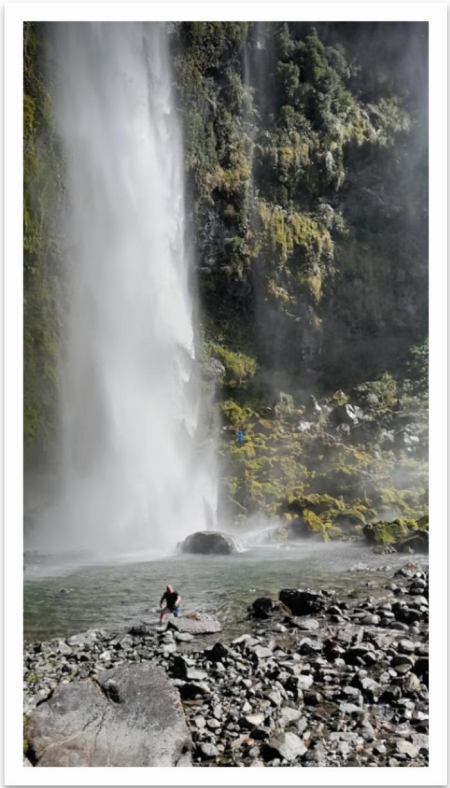
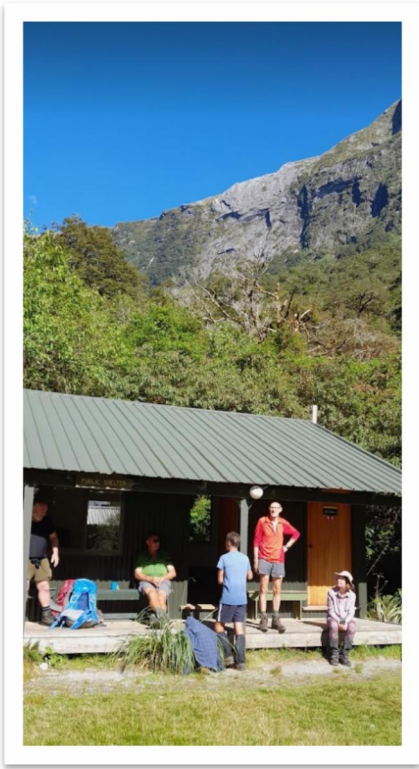
Andersons Cascades and staircase. Photo Credit Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

The solid climb up the valley to the falls was a shock to the system. Wet people were returning as we went up, Rodger among them.

The 580 m high falls are a marvellous sight with three leaps. Though not the highest falls in NZ they are the highest easily accessible water falls for trampers and sightseers.

People were taking the plunge or were standing around in undies drying off in the sun; some had simply got wet traversing behind the falls.

Rodger turned up again! after getting back to Quintin Shelter and realizing he had dropped his camera amongst the rocks behind the falls. We saw him reappear and raise his arms triumphantly before taking more photos.



Quintin Day Shelter, with the sheer granite cliffs of McKinnon Pass behind. Photo Credit: Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

Rodger taking photos after emerging from behind the falls; Ivan the sealion.

Ivan took Jade's Go-Pro for a swim to capture the falls from within the pool, risky if you felt the full force! However he came to no harm and cavorted like a sea lion. Plus he could give us an eye-witness answer to "how deep is the plunge pool" – amazingly shallow - mostly only 1.5 m with a lot of large boulders.

After another driver reviver at the Quintin Shelter we still had 1.5 hours to Dumpling Hut. A smooth flat track, but our feet were saying "are we there yet" a long time before our weary bodies arrived at 6:20pm. Four bunkrooms to choose from, but the mattresses weren't up to the standard of previous huts. A cluster of people at the dining room door were fishing for a fork lost down the gaps in the verandah floor. They got a fork back, but it wasn't the one they lost. The next morning, a headlamp went the same way, unretrievable.



Dumpling Hut – dining hall at left, bunkroom at right. Photo Credit Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

The evening was warm and it was exceedingly hot in the kitchen dining block. But we had no sandflies – NONE! So could enjoy the evening outside. While eating dinner (thanks C&C) we had an entertaining talk from the hut warden, an Aussie from Canberra. Kiwi were said to frequent the area at night, so some energetic people went out looking (without success).



Dumpling Hut warden's talk. Photo by Ivan Mason

As with the previous nights, some of us given upper bunks placed our mattresses on the floor and got some shut eye for a pre-dawn start the next day.
Spen Walker & Jane Bruce

Dumpling Hut to Sandfly Point 18km, flat (5.5-6 hours)

We were up early and out the door at 7.15am to a fine, warm but overcast day, with a 2pm boat transfer back to Milford Sound adding just a little pressure to the day. The mile markers (of which there are 33 in total over the whole track) helped us check on our progress although it seemed the distance between them increased as we progressed (mmmmaybe)? In summary from Dumpling Hut day 4 follows a fairly

flat track alongside the Arthur River past the historic Boatshed, further points of interest along the track are the Mackay Falls and then Bell Rock (with its inside cavern), then Giants Gate waterfall and beyond that man-made rock cuttings alongside the Arthur River and Lake Ada, before spending the last 3 km on a smooth, wide track apparently constructed by a prison labour gang between 1890 and 1892. A short boat ride from Sandfly Point (we made it by 1:45 for the second boat, thanks to a little help from our friends), takes you to the journey's end, with world-famous views of Milford Sound/Piopiotahi along the way.

By Barry Walker.



Upcoming Trips

OTC / OTMC Centenary - 100 Trips for 100 Years Celebrating 100 Years of Tramping and Mountaineering - 1923/2023

March 2023

- 4 (Saturday) (100 Trips 035) Mt Charles / Poatiri E Antony Pettinger
- 5 (Sunday) (100 Trips 036) Mt Watkin / Hikaroroa E Debbie Pettinger
- 11 (Saturday) (100 Trips 037) Saddle Hill (summit) E Antony Pettinger
- 12 (Sunday) (100 Trips 038) Seven Summits - The High Points Of The Silver Peaks
(named hills and points above 700m) M Rob Seeley
- 18-20 (3 Day Weekend) (100 Trips 039) Fiordland Weekend (East Eglinton to
Hollyford options) (Otago Anniversary 3-Days) All Wayne Hodgkinson
- 19 (Sunday) (100 Trips 040) Harbour Cone E Debbie Guthrie
- 25 (Saturday) (100 Trips 041) Beatties Beach, Fairy Grotto & Seal Point E Antony
Pettinger
- 26 (Sunday) (100 Trips 042) Heyward Point (from Aramoana) Gordon Tocher

<http://otmc.co.nz/tripcard.html>

As a reminder you must pre-register on the Weekend Trip Lists at the club rooms (or contact the leader direct) before the closing date (normally two weeks before the trip start). Members must pay before departure, non-members upon registering (non-members pay \$13 more than the members fee shown below. Vehicle providers may be exempt from the fee (check with the leader). Trip organizational details will follow by email. You are responsible for your gear and medical / first-aid needs (also see Gear Hire). (E)asy, (M)edium, (F)it required.

Note from the editor

The 100 year OTMC anniversary trips are finally here!

Get yourself on a trip to be a part of our great history

We will be running close to monthly bulletins during this time so please **email your trip reports** for the next issue to caitlinr007@gmail.com **within a week after the trip**. This is due to the sheer volume of reports.

The trip leader does not have to write the report so put your hand up to take some load off their shoulders! If you include a photo or two, please note appropriate captions (names of people pictured, names of land features, etc.)

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THAT CONTRIBUTE!

Our Club - the Highlights

Celebrating everything and everyone OTMC. Send your favourite hiking photos to the editor. I may even choose it as the front cover!

Picnic at Long Beach. Photo credit: Debbie Pettinger.

