



The Official Newsletter of  
**THE OVER FORTIES TRAMPING CLUB INC.**

# Going Places.....



Newsletter 339

April 2009

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Welfare	Everyone		
See your Committee's individual profiles on the website - Reports Page, Committee Profile			



Mount Herbert, March 8—photo by Wendy Hughes

## NEXT MEETING

Tuesday March 31 at 7.30pm  
Horticultural Hall South Hagley Park  
**31st Annual General Meeting**

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Tuesday April 28 at 7.30pm  
Horticultural Hall South Hagley Park.  
**Speaker: Michelle Cahill**  
Creative Memories Consultant

'Teaching how to preserve your photos for a life-time (generations to come) with traditional scrapbook methods and digital albums'.

### Deadline: by 20th April please for May newsletter

Newsletter to Liz Griffiths at 351 4501 or Mavis Airey [editor@oftc.org.nz](mailto:editor@oftc.org.nz). Trip Planners : Saturday and Sunday trips to Judy Miles at 327 9010 [garyjudy@kol.co.nz](mailto:garyjudy@kol.co.nz) and Wednesday trips to Marj Pollock at 389 4059 [marjpol@xtra.co.nz](mailto:marjpol@xtra.co.nz).

**Club mail to the secretary.** All correspondence pertaining to Club business is to be addressed to the Secretary

**Over Forties Tramping Club, Box 6505, Upper Riccarton, Christchurch**

Established 1978 Affiliated to the Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ

[www.oftc.org.nz](http://www.oftc.org.nz)



OFTC





## Committee Reports

### Club Captain's Report



#### Guidelines for Leaders and Rules of the Club: Reasons for making changes

Earlier this year it became very clear to the Committee that the Guidelines for Leaders as set out in our Handbook **needed updating to reflect what was actually happening in practice. It also was clear that some of the Rules of the Club would be better if they were Guidelines and vice versa.** Both the Guidelines and the Rules have been updated and the Guidelines have been in use for several months now. The proposed rule changes require approval of a General Meeting of the Club which is why it is intended to present these proposals for approval at the AGM on Wednesday 31 March.

#### Training

There has been a great response to the recently advertised courses in First Aid, River Crossings and Navigation. As well as this we will be having a brief "dry run" of river crossing techniques and packing a pack at our next Club night on April 28. On June 23 Club night we will have a brief H&S session with Mary Miller and a demo. on what to carry in our First Aid Kits.

#### Next year's emphasis for the Club Captain (who ever it is )

Watch out for more stuff on training and in particular ensuring that Trip Leaders have the resources to enable them to do the job with confidence. Also watch for developing leadership skills by appointing co-leaders for every trip to help to expand our skill base.

#### Big Thanks

Just like to say a real thanks to everyone who has helped make my job easier this year. I have sought advice and opinion on many matters from quite a few of you and always got an answer that has guided me. This is a great Tramping Club which provides all of us with a huge amount of satisfaction from the trips we do with the people we are. Enjoy the autumn weather, watch your step and remember life's too short not to go tramping!

—Stu McHugh

### Membership Report - April 2009

#### Changes of address and telephone number

Mike Hughes & Gendie Harcourt	03 314 4595	P O Box 88, Hawarden 7348
John & Margaret Hayman	335 0984	10 Yelverton Place, Cashmere, 8022
Jill Lyall	358 1115	24A Elwyn Place, Avonhead, Chch 8042

#### Re-joining Members

Andrea Fisk	357 8443	6A Rubens Place, Burnside, 8053
Sharon Gibb	388 4085	28 Palmers Road, New Brighton, Chch 8083

#### New Members

John Cameron	386 2060	28 Landy Street, Dallington, Chch 8061
Selena Chan	342 5014	58 Russley Street, Russley, Chch 8042
Russell Hignett	355 5670	2/160 Knowles Street, St Albans, Chch 8052
Brian Johnson	387 0469	3 Nederland Ave, Marshlands Chch 8083
Tony MacRae	359 8486	11C Cam Place, Harewood, Chch 8051
Wendy MacRae	359 8486	11C Cam Place, Harewood, Chch 8051
Maureen McHenry	322 9963	12 Brigham Drive, Halswell, Chch 8025
Peter Nelson	358 8227	64 Merrin Street, Avonhead, Chch 8042

Congratulations to these people have completed their overnights in the last 2 months, and we hope they have many interesting trips with the club.

#### Resignations

Robert Beduhn	960 9344	22A Ontario Place, Wainoni, Chch 8061
Margaret Coburger	384 9419	14 Michael Ave, Mt Pleasant, 8081
Duncan Lindsay	980 3501	5 Pahau Place, Cracroft, Chch 8025
Gladys Norrie	981 8442	17 Beach Road, North New Brighton, 8083

Gladys has been a member for 24 years.

#### Thanks

Members will have noticed that the council has bought land to add to a delightful little reserve near the Heathcote River due mainly to the prompting of Biddy Pollard. Biddy would like to thank all those veterans who signed the petition to save the historic Thorrington woodland. This team effort helped to persuade the Council to buy the property with lake and surrounding gardens, to add to the adjacent Ernle Reserve. You have all helped to improve the environment for future generations. —Biddy

**DAY TRIP PROGRAM**

The tramps are listed in order of difficulty, with the easiest first, then moderate, then harder.  
If you are unsure of a tramp please check with the tramp leader.

**NQ** indicates that it is not a qualifying tramp.

All other day tramps not so designated are to be considered as qualifying tramps

**Please note** : It is club policy that the tramps and the tramping programmes in the newsletter are for members only.

Also note—**times given are indicative only** and do not include car travel to and from the tramp.

**CANCELLATIONS**

**Listen to  
NewstalkZB 1098  
after 7am.**

**TRAMP PLANNERS**

<b>Saturday</b>		Colin Garthwaite	360 3770
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Veterans</b>	Jane Gimpl	382 4075
		Heather Spence	337 1690
	<b>Middle</b>	Joan Cornish	376 5146
		Clive Morriss	358 2753
		Sandra Knox	339 2997
	<b>Hard</b>	Elizabeth Griffin	355 7609
Diana Kirpensteijn		332 7534	
Ted Shields		3843 403	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Easier</b>	Mary Brinsdon	366 9119
		Carolina Kol	03 3127970
	<b>Middle</b>	Steve Dakin	329 6695
		Will Teeuwen:	332 8236
	<b>Hard</b>	Steven Sheen	03 3179291

**IMPORTANT: Reminders to Tramp Leaders****TO CANCEL A DAY TRAMP**

**Phone Newstalk ZB (ph 379 9600 Wed) or (ph 3401098 Sat and Sun) before 6.45am**, identifying the destination. Our club code is 47.

**LOCATOR BEACONS.**

Collect and carry these. **Please note**—they are collected from Shell Petrol Yaldhurst, Shell Petrol Belfast, or Princess Margaret Hospital - at front vestibule desk. And for any private use of these beacons please contact the Club Captain to arrange.

**AT THE END OF THE TRAMP.**

Please send list of participants and numbers to Mary Brinsdon at 33 Hewitts Rd, Chch 8014, or [brinsdon@clear.net.nz](mailto:brinsdon@clear.net.nz)

**Also Tramp Planners—please forward your draft list to the Club Captain by the 20th of each month.**

**WEDNESDAY TRAMPS**

APRIL 1

**Mt Cavendish & CRW Wander****NQ**

- Cost : \$2

*Take cars to gondola carpark on Summit Rd. Walk around Cavendish Bluffs track, then on CRW up to Castle Rock. Return on mountain bike track and CRW to Pioneer Memorial. Slowly climb up to restaurant for coffee and down to cars.*

- Depart : Carpark eastern end McCormacks Bay Rd (near Rugby fields) at 9.30am
- Time : 3 - 4hrs
- Leader : Diana Dryland 981 4843

**Heathcote Quarry, Castle Rock.****PH04**

- Cost : Nil.

*From quarry via Morgans Track to Castle Rock & back through John Brittan Reserve.*

- Grade :2
- Depart : Heathcote Quarry, Bridle Path Road at 9 am
- Time : 4.5 hrs
- Leader : Joan Cornish

**Mt Guy near Lake Clearwater new**

- Cost : \$ 28 Map J36

*Climb up Mt Guy 1312m for great views of new Hakatere conservation park, the Heron Basin & D'Archiac*

- Grade : 3+
- Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.00am
- Time : 5 hrs plus long travel
- Leader : Robin Mears 355 8676

APRIL 8

**Poynter's Track****NQ**

- Cost : \$3

*Easy walking on the stop bank and tracks from Kaiapoi to the Waimakariri, and back to Kaiapoi.*

- Depart : Belfast Hotel carpark at 9.30am
- Time : 3 - 4hrs
- Leader : Bev Macdonald 381 4911

**Mystery Trip, Banks Peninsula**

- Cost : \$8
- Grade : 3
- Depart : Carpark opp. PMH (river west) at 8.30 am.
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : Bruce Stanton 338 1909

**Mt Evans BP 49**

- Cost : \$ 10 Map N36

*Climb through farmland; reasonably steep at first to ridge and peak at 703m. Views of Purau, Port Levy, and Lyttelton*

- Grade : 3
- Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 8.30am
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : Jill Goddard 337 1846

**PLANTING DAY- BOWENVALE**

Last year a team of Club people planted 200 small trees on a ridge in the Bowenvale valley as part of a City Council plant regeneration project for the Port Hills. It was a greatly satisfying day. This year it is proposed to weed around those trees and do some more planting on the same day. A "walk before the work" is proposed – more details next month.

**Date: Wednesday 20 May  
Contact Gavin Hampton 3431291**





APRIL 15

**Omahu Bush NQ**

- Cost : \$3

*This 146 reserve contains a wide variety of native trees, ferns and birds. Steep sections taken at a slow pace.*

- Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 9.30am
- Time : 4 hrs
- Leader : Jane Gimpl 382 4075

**Gebbies Pass to Sign of the Packhorse. BP12**

- Cost : \$4

*An easy walk across farmland and through plantations to the Sign of the Packhorse.*

- Grade : 2
- Depart : Carpark opp. PMH [river west] at 8.30 am
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : Peter Crawshaw 359 2662

**Red Hill & Lyndon Hill W 01**

- Cost : \$ 15 Map K35

*Climb Lyndon Hill from L Lyndon then traverse along ridge to Red Hill. Great views. Return down scree & Acheron Valley over low pass to L Lyndon*

- Grade : 4
- Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.30am
- Time : 5-6 hrs
- Leader : Charlie Ledbrook 347 9463

APRIL 22

**Taitapu Ramble NQ**

- Cost : \$3

*Walking from the Tai Tapu church, along the river, through the Domain and surrounding area.*

- Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 9.30am
- Time : 3 - 3.5hrs
- Leader : Peter Oxenbridge 329 6617

**Peak Hill, Lake Coleridge. W42**

- Cost : \$20 plus \$5 for afternoon tea.

*Travel to Millar homestead and tramp across farm to make ascent to Peak Hill summit at 1240m. We will split into groups for maximum enjoyment. Afterwards we can view the homestead garden where afternoon tea will be served. If the weather is unsuitable we have a backup tramp organised at Middle Rock Station.*

- Grade : 3
- Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.30am
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : Clive Morriss 358 2753

**Mt Bradley Zig Zag BP09**

- Cost : \$6 +\$2 entry Map M36

*Starting at Orton Bradley up through the Eye in the Needle & back along top to loop back. Gerry guarantees no gorse.*

- Grade : 3+
- Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 8.30am
- Time : 6hrs
- Leader : Gerry Burgess 351 9883

APRIL 29

**Mt Vernon Park hill walk NQ**

- Cost : nil

*Walking up Mt Vernon track and returning on Rapaki track.*

- Depart : Mt Vernon carpark off Hillsborough Tce at 9.30am
- Time : 3 - 4hrs
- Leader : Norma Powell 384 1397

**Whaka Terrace, CRW and beyond**

- Cost : Nil

*To top of Whaka Terrace up walkway and then steady climb to CRW and tracks around Sugarloaf and beyond.*

- Grade : 2-3
- Depart : Leave cars at bottom of Whaka Terrace, around corner from Centaurus Road for 8.30am start.
- Time : 4-5 hrs
- Leader: Dahya Budhia 337 0894
- Co Leader : Elizabeth Griffin 355 7609

**Little Mt Peel SW 07**

- Cost : \$ 28 Map J37

*Up SE ridge to top & shelter & down Deer Spur.*

- Grade : 3
- Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.00am
- Time : 5 hrs plus long travel
- Leader : Don Mee 359 8605

## SUNDAY TRAMPS

APRIL 5

**Vets walk**

- Cost : \$ nil

*Pleasant walk around the river to Risingholme Community Centre and return*

- Depart : Corner of Colombo St and Hunter Tce at 9.30am
- Time : 2 ½ hrs
- Leader : Pat Tapper 348 5553

**Halswell Quarry to Bellbird PH 46 D**

- Cost : nil

*Skirt quarry rim to Kennedy's Bush track to crater rim and walk to Sign of the Bellbird for lunch. Return mostly the same route.*

- Grade : 2
- Depart : Halswell Quarry main carpark RH side (Kennedy's Bush Road) 9.00am
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : Joan Stevenson 388 0227

**Halswell Quarry, Governors Bay, Bellbird**

- Cost : nil

*From Halswell Quarry, skirt quarry rim up to Kennedys Bush Spur track to crater rim. Drop down to tracks on the Governors Bay side, return via Bellbird.*

- Grade : 2
- Depart : Halswell Quarry carpark at 8.30am
- Time : 4 - 5hrs
- Leader : Sandra Knox 339 2997

**Mt Evans from Port Levy**

- Cost : \$10

*Start at Old Port Levy. Climb to summit Mt Evans (703m) mostly on farm tracks. Then follow ridge, rough, no track at times, to Adderley Head. Return via tracks to Old Port Levy. Great views of Lyttelton Harbour, Pegasus Bay and Port Levy.*

- Grade : 3
- Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 8:00am (Beware, daylight saving ended, so old 9:00am)
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : Paul Cragg 326 6250 (note that route and destination may change on the day)

## APRIL 12 (EASTER SUNDAY)

**Mt Brown – Randolph Downs NZ 54 Z**

- Cost : \$ 11

*A steady climb to Mt Brown along ridge with views of the Deans. Beautiful rolling countryside.*

- Grade : 2
- Depart : Belfast Hotel carpark at 9.00am
- Time : 4-5 hrs
- Leader : Bruce Stanton 338 1909

**Bus Stop, Mt Somers**

- Cost : \$23

*Starting from Woolshed Creek, middling to steepish climb to Bus Stop. Return either by same route or via Woolshed Creek hut.*

- Grade : 3
- Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel caarpark at 8.00am
- Time : 4 - 5hrs
- Leader : Jill Goddard 337 1846

**Hard Group: no trip organised**

*Anyone wishing to lead a trip of their choice and wanting to form a party should contact S Sheen on 03 317 9291 or email sheen@xtra.co.nz and a message will be sent to the usual suspects.*

## APRIL 19

**Orton Bradley – Herbert Dress circle BP 51 G**

- Cost : \$ 4 plus park entry fee \$8 a car

*A steady climb through eucalyptus to the Tablelands and the packhorse track towards Mt Herbert. Descend down the Mt Herbert walkway track back to the cars.*

- Grade : 1+
- Depart : carpark opp. PMH (river west) at 9.00am
- Time : 4-5 hrs
- Leader : Carolina Kol 03 312 7970

**Mt Richardson - round trip**

- Cost : \$11

*Invigorating climb through pleasant beech forest up Blowhard and Bypass tracks to summit Mt Richardson (1047m). Return via Richardson track. Good views across Lees Valley to Puketuraki Range*

- Grade : 2
- Depart : Belfast Hotel carpark at 8.30am
- Time : 4 - 5 hrs
- Leader : Helen Conroy 337 4354

**Mt Aicken**

- Cost : \$ 29

*Route Start from the Punchbowl Falls track and climb to the ridge and the twin summits of Mt Aicken (1859m). Rock ridges above the bushline.*

- Grade : 4
- Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.00am
- Time : 6 hrs
- Leader : Don Mee 359 8605

## APRIL 26

**Gebbies Pass to Ahuriri Bush PH 09 E**

- Cost : \$ 4

*From Gebbies Pass gradually up towards the lookout and Ahuriri Bush. Great views. Return over the same tracks with some deviations.*

- Grade : 1+
- Depart : carpark opp. PMH (river west) at 9.00am
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : John Hayman 335 0984

**Mt Karetu**

- Cost : \$10

*Steady climb on farm tracks from the turnoff to the Okuku Pass road - to the open top at 972m. Good views of surrounding hills and plains. Some steep patches on the descent.*

- Grade : 3
- Depart : Belfast Hotel carpark at 8.30am
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : Anthony and Clare Clayden, 337 6621

## SATURDAY TRAMPS

## APRIL 18

**Redcliffe and Glenrock K35**

*On true right of Rakaia (opposite to Coleridge) are two stations - Redcliffe and Glenrock. Climb from river level up to plateau valley, follow farm tracks across plateau before dropping down a long slope to the road. Good views across Rakaia and south.*

- Grade : 3
- Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel Carpark at 8am
- Time : 5 hrs
- Leader : Peter Street 352 5526

## APRIL 25 (ANZAC DAY)

**Mt Hutt from the Rakaia**

- Cost : \$18 ex Yaldhurst, \$9 ex Hororata

*Climb to the summit of Mt Hutt (2185m) by ridges starting close to the Rakaia R. A good steady climb all the way. Route to be taken depends on permissions yet to be obtained.*

- Grade : 4
- Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 7.30am (collect a beacon from Shell Garage, Yaldhurst), and roundabout at Hororata at 8:00am to collect your leader
- Time : 7 hrs
- Leader : Murray Adams 03 318 0831

**RIVER CROSSING COURSE**

**Saturday 4th April**

**Adrian Busby, Club Captain of the Christchurch Tramping Club, a very experienced trumper and climber, has kindly agreed to run this training session for us.**

Come along and take the plunge – the Waimak river water is warmer than the air at the moment.

A River Crossing course is essential training for new trampers and a good refresher for the more experienced. Bring boots and warm tramping gear to wear while training. Also bring a large pack with a water-proof pack liner filled with spare clothing etc to bulk it up. This is for pack buoyancy while in the river. Bring also a complete change of warm clothing to wear afterwards, and a good lunch and thermos with a warm drink. This is fun as well as instructional.

Meet at corner of Johns Road and McLeans Island Road. Cost \$10.





# Base Camp & Backpacking Programme 2008-9

Month	Venue	Days	Grade	Leader
Mar 30- Apr 4	Lake Ohou South Temple-Arahuriri-Valley -Visit these two interesting valleys plus Canyon Creek and Watsons Creek.	4-5 days	Hard	Don Mee/ Angus Macdonald 349 7109
Mar 30- Apr 2	Matiri Valley Kahurangi NP. Tramp up the attractive Matiri Valley to Lake Matiri Hut, Climb up to Thousand Acre plateau, visit the Haystack and Larrikins Hut. Over ridge to Makiri River and follow river down to road.	4 Nights	Hard	Neil Climo 03 312 4822
Mon Apr 27-Thur Apr 30 or Fri May 1	Nelson Lakes-Lake Angelus via the Bushline Hut,Angelus Hut (possibly for 2 nights,then down to Speargrass Hut and out and home. Please indicate interest asap.Further details will be sent out to participants regarding costs etc early next month. This is an opportunity for those who are unable to attend the forthcoming Basecamp and the trip to Lake Angelus/Sabine etc.	3/4 nights	Easy/ Mod	Sandra and Paul Knox 339 2997
May 25- 29	Milford Track—out of season and in reverse!! And by-passing a night at the Mintara Hut.Some bridges will have been removed, and no cooking or heating provided by DoC. Trip fully booked—stand-by names only.	3 days tramp + 2 days travel	Moderate	Charlie Ledbrook Ph 347 9378

**This is the 2009 programme to date. Please note there will be additions, confirmation of dates and alterations as we go along. So watch this space. My thanks to all those who have so willingly offered to lead these trips— it makes my job so much easier. I can assure members the backpacking activities of the club are in good heart with a strong following. —**  
**Angus Macdonald Base-camp and Backpacking Co-ordinator**

## Backpacking Tramps Confirmation System

Due to members withdrawing from backpacking tramps at late stages the Committee decided the following conditions shall apply :

- That a deposit of \$25 be paid to the leader no later than 3 months prior to departure if advertised more than 3 months ahead, otherwise at the time of booking.
- The deposit will be non-refundable except in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the leader.
- Although the confirmation date will be advertised the actual tramp date will remain sufficiently flexible to allow changes to be made on account of the weather etc.

Further queries Angus Macdonald Backpacking Co-ordinator ph: 349 7109, email angusamac@vodafone.co.nz

## Training courses for 2009

Mountain Safety Canterbury is offering the following courses this year—if interested please contact Stu McHugh on 3236333

March, November : Outdoor First Aid - one-day validation  
 April, June, Aug, Oct : Outdoor first aid  
 May : Navigation - basic  
 October : Navigation for experienced trampers  
 November : Navigation for experienced trampers – alpine

## Hut Logbook Stickers

I have plenty of hut logbook stickers available for those of you who want them. If you're planning to go to any huts, they are a good way to make our clubs mark and are good advertising for us as well. Please contact me 339 2997 should you require some.—Paul Knox

**OFTC**

## MONTHLY BACKPACKING TRAMP

The programme is resuming later this year than originally planned, but the intention is to have a two- or three-day tramp each month from now until the end of the year.

### May 19 and 20 (Tuesday and Wednesday)

*Tramp to the Casey Hut in Arthur's Pass National Park*

- Leader: Warwick Scadden Ph: 351 9779
- Co Leader: Anne Dolan Ph: 332 8888

This is a good Grade 3 tramp to the Casey Hut, which has accommodation for 12 people. The intention is to tramp from the Andrews Shelter on Tuesday, on a good track over the Casey Saddle to the hut for the night. On Wednesday, we will return, again via a good track over the Binsler Saddle to the Andrews Shelter. Please register your interest in this tramp with Anne or Warwick.

### HARPER PASS TRAMP February 17-20 2009

Team:- John Wisker (leader), Harry Roberts, Dahya Budhia, Liz Taylor, Prue Fraser, Francis O'Hare, Peter Nelson, Sandi Leith, Colin Mackie and Don Turner.

Day 1: On the 17th Feb 2009, tramp – leader John Wisker gathered up nine well-over 40s members and set off to Aickens to start the tramp. First the ceremonial weighing of packs (pew) —the leader's prerogative we understand, and then across the Otira River and we were off up the Taramakau valley to the Locke Stream Hut. Less than 30 mins later tramp-leader John was on the ground with a nose damaged by rocks. First aid applied by two nurses and a frozen curry dinner were very effective! After six hours of wading through rivers and bush bashing, exhausted, we reached the hut.

Day 2: We started the second day around 7.30am. The morning was very cool but the weather outlook was fine. We were told that the climb to the Pass would be straightforward and without much trouble. Not so! Many large fallen trees lay across the track so the pace was slow as we crawled under, climbed over, or struggled round them to continue on the track. This made the going very tough. When we reached the top, the view of the Taramakau Valley below was magnificent. Then down the Hurunui Valley to No 3 Hut we headed. This had been a long day and we were all glad to reach the hut. Several DOC personnel were in the area monitoring the movement of kiwi nesting the surrounding valley.

Day 3: Away at 7am, without breakfast, we soon saw steam billowing up out of the bush – thermal pools – what joy after three showerless days! A highlight was enjoying breakfast on the river bed, with bush nearby, the sun rising on the mountain tops, and a little bank of mist just below. Off again and on to lunch at the edge of Lake Sumner and the Hope-Kiwi Hut for the third night. Walking through beautiful beech forest was stunning. The track was relatively easy — no fallen trees to negotiate. What a relief.

Day 4: Heavy rain meant that the final part of the trip was going to be very wet. Rivers would rise rapidly, so with a quick breakfast we headed towards our final destination of Windy Point. Persistent rain meant some tricky manoeuvres were required to negotiate a few streams that had become torrents (lesson learnt: always tie your pack cover securely to prevent it filling with water). Wet and cold we safely reached Windy Point around 2pm. Thank you John for your encouragement, understanding, wisdom and support to some of us who were novice trampers. We will be back for more! —Dahya and Liz (elected scribes)



The tramp team at the top of Harper Pass

### LAKE MINCHIN EXPEDITION March 1-4 2009

(An expedition that awaits an end!)

Day 1. Paul Knox (leader), Stephen Sheen (deputy), Charlie Ledbrook and Ian Fussell headed out from town late Sunday morning, picked up Gavin Hampton (somehow appointed scribe in his absence!) at Broken River and headed for the Hawdon shelter where we encountered the last people apart from our selves that we would see for the next three days. Up the Hawdon River in north-westerly drizzle to the Hawdon hut. First surprise of the trip – someone had forgotten to bring their evening meals – quick survey round found that we had plenty of reserves to meet all requirements. A review of the route and two games of cards saw us in bed early in preparation for a start at daylight. (Amazing how competitive “friendly” card games can be!).

Day 2. Up at 6am, out of the hut by just after 7am. Drizzle. Steady crossing backwards and forwards for about an hour of the Hawdon (no dry boots on this trip!) saw us tackling a scree slope up to Trudge Col, tricky in spots and special danger of rocks from those ahead. Up to the top of the Col by about 10.30 – 11 where we were hit by cold winds coming over the top and low cloud – except for a rainbow sitting over Hawdon Hut. As we progressed the weather started to clear giving tantalising glimpses of the views we were missing. Sidled along the tops under Mount Hunt before starting to do an at times quite gnarly (or at least it looked like it from below) descent on a ridge that would take us down to the Poulter River. Off the tops time to get rid of the layers. Whilst the leaders were discussing the route through the bush we were joined by three robins most interested in what we were up to. A walk along the Poulter River to the hut should have been straight forward if the scribe hadn't decided to ride a rock into the river! Dampness, bruising and grazing resulted. At the hut all well (apart from the sandflies). An honest day's 9-10 hours tramp. Two games of cards and another early night ensued.

Day 3. Up at 6am. Agreement that we had heard kiwis calling during the night. Away just after 7am. Lovely morning – high cloud on the tops looking to break. Through forest to and around Lake Minchin (lovely looking lake) and over flats before heading above the gorge for morning tea. On to Minchin Bivvy (well placed – pity about the empty whisky bottles) and towards Minchin Pass before turning left and heading above the Pass to about 1400m. By the time we got to the top and lunch the cloud had cleared for wonderful views. Sidle round over grass with gentians and Mount Cook lilies flowering to our highest point for 360 degree panoramas including seeing right down the Taramakau and the Tasman Sea in the distance. From here another sidle over grass and boulders before a drop down through bush to the Townsend Hut, the end of another honest 9 hours in the office. At this point the scribe took his boots off, the team leader looked at the big (and colourful) toe that had partially copped the rock the day before and decided the trip was being shortened by a day. Beautiful sunny weather (and a minimum of sandflies—Stephen tells us that 1100m is too high for them) allowed us to sit outside till sundown and watch and be watched by what I think was a Fern Bird (positive identification awaited). An old Forest Service Hut situated in a wonderful position under Mount Koeti. Two more games of cards and a late night – 9.30pm.

Day 4. Up at 6.30am, again kiwis heard during the night and away just after 7.30. Our route today was down to the Taramakau and out to Aickens. A bit of bush bashing through debris on the track (and a view of an opossum enjoying it self over the trees) saw us down to the river in about an hour and a half for a leisurely walk out along the river bed to Aickens where the Mountain Mule picked us up spot on the rescheduled time (thanks to Charlies satellite phone) of 3pm and a return to Christchurch.

An interesting trip, it certainly took me out of my zone of comfort, a shame about the views on the second day they looked temptingly amazing. The last two days still await to be done! Many thanks to my co trampers, your concern, encouragement and comradeship were appreciated. —Gavin Hampton



Heading up Lake Minchin Stream—there were no real tracks—photo Paul Knox



## CASCADE SADDLE—LAKE LOCHNAGAR—SHOTOVER SADDLE TRIP Feb 2009

Five members of the Club were on this most interesting and challenging tramp- Charlie Ledbrook (Leader), Paul Knox, Ray Twist, Dennis Logan and Rod Lewis.

On Day 1 it was still dark when we left from Charlie's heading to Raspberry Flat at the end of the road past Wanaka, on the Matukituki River. Much preparation and research by Charlie had gone into this trip, which was last done by our club by a party led by Bill Bews about 10 years ago. (That party included such notable trampers as Bill Pigeon, Alison Moore, Jill Goddard, Angus Macdonald, Gerry Burgess, Anton de Groot, Neil Climo and Dave Ross, so we felt were in for something of a challenge, given their formidable reputation!) To be doubly sure, Paul and Charlie entered all the route details into their GPS's which were used, to advantage, throughout this trip. We arrived at Raspberry Flat early afternoon to find it was nearly full, and we managed to get what was virtually the last car-park. Fortunately it seemed that most of the occupants of the cars had gone to Rob Roy Glacier rather than to Aspiring hut. We had a pleasant ramble up to Aspiring hut in superb weather and, on arrival, took over the side room. Some of us decided to fill the rest of the afternoon in with a very pleasant stroll up the valley and were rewarded with outstanding views of Mt Aspiring and French Ridge Hut.



Lake Lochnagar—photo Rod Lewis

The Aspiring hut was fairly full and we retired early, so we could be fresh for the 8hrs + next day. It was cool when we left but not for long, as we immediately started to climb up to "The Pylon" on the way to the Cascade Saddle. 1200 vertical metres went by in 3 hours and, by the time we reached the Pylon, we were well warmed up and ready for a good break. And what magnificent views we had! The weather was glorious and we had a panoramic view of the Matukituki valley, Rob Roy Glacier, Mt Aspiring and much more. Simply outstanding! An hour or so later saw us at the Cascade Saddle, with wonderful views all around, especially of the Dart Glacier. A leisurely lunch was taken, along with many photographs, before we headed off down the valley to the Dart hut.

We were lucky enough to get a bed in the Dart hut which rapidly filled up after our arrival. (Thank you Jack Watt for the message you left for us about the beers-you'll keep!) Eventually there were 38 people in the 32 bed hut which meant some slept on the floor. Given the warm temperatures, we were somewhat surprised when another (overseas) trumper started to light the fire. We offered the "opinion" that a fire was hardly needed and this advice was heeded, fortunately. (Of interest was that of all the people we met on the trip, only about 5% were Kiwis, the rest mainly from Germany, Israel and Australia, in that order. Main reason it seems is that the route is in the Lonely Planet.) For the second night in succession, we amused fellow trampers by playing a card game (Crazy Euchre) taught to us by Angus M and Gerry B on a recent trip.

Next morning saw us head up to the Rees Saddle in fine weather before (thankfully) departing from the Rees-Dart track and heading up Snowy Ck. This involved a steep descent until we reached the creek, and then a nice stroll up to a waypoint where we were to turn right. In our enthusiasm, we turned before the waypoint and headed up the wrong spur before PK used his GPS to correct the situation. Spectacular, lunar landscape views greeted us on top, where we had our lunch, admiring the stunning mountain scenery. Lake Lochnagar was still some way away and we set off on the long side on steep, tussock covered slopes towards the saddle that would take us to Lochnagar hut. After a *minor* navigational hiccup, we climbed back to the correct contour and eventually, after a few slides, reached the saddle and could see Lake Lochnagar below. It didn't look too far but it took a long time as we had a frustrating bush bash most of the way. The weather had deteriorated and it was blowing hard, with some rain, when we finally got to Lochnagar hut — a fairly basic 2-3 person hut/biv. Camping out didn't seem much of an option so we managed to squeeze into the hut for the night while the ferocious winds tore at the hut most of the night. It was great to read the hut log and see the entry by our Club's group 10 years before. (This area doesn't get a thrashing, by any means.)

Dawn brought with it a cracker of a day and we headed off down the track, dodging thickets of speargrass, and made our way to the Tummel Burn hut. Most of this was easy going but there were a few interesting moments going through a minor gorge of what, by now, was the Shotover River. This was a shorter day so we had plenty of time to do some washing on arrival (of clothes and ourselves) and relax in the very warm afternoon. Charlie checked out the entry into the bush for the track for the next day and PK went exploring up the gorge of Tindal Ck before tea. Some of us opted to camp out that night as there were plenty of great tent sites. Certain softies decided the nice hut was a better choice.

It was cold overnight and, next morning revealed frost on the tents. Without any hanging about, we headed up the track towards Shotover Saddle. The initial part of the track wasn't easy to find and we had read all sorts of tales in the hut log of people who had got it wrong (along with unbelievable stories of a few who claimed to have done the trip on mountain-bikes, loaded down with equipment!). Eventually we got onto the open tops and, following a long side during which we had to be careful of bluffs etc, we eventually climbed up to the top of the Shotover Saddle. What a view from the top! Simply stunning! The weather was perfect and we had a panoramic view of mountains, river flats and glaciers while we had lunch.



On Shotover Saddle looking northwards—photo Rod Lewis

The descent to the Matukituki was steep and tedious and it was only our thoughts of the beers (and chips/crackers/cheese) that we were going to consume at Wanaka that spurred us on. It was 26 degrees when we reached the car after a 9hr30 day, somewhat weary but very satisfied with our trip. Needless to say that we did have one or three beers at Wanaka, followed by a great meal out, celebrating a great trip.

Thanks to Charlie for leading this tramp, to Angus for all his advice prior to the trip and to the rest of the party for their companionship and teamwork —a hard but memorable trip.—Paul Knox