



The Official Newsletter of
THE OVER FORTIES TRAMPING CLUB INC.

Going Places.....



Newsletter 349

March 2010

Mt Cook Base camp: An entirely factual account of five days in Heaven
There are strange things done in the rain and the sun by the folks who walk the tracks.
The Aoraki trails have their doubtful tales where fiction vies with the facts.
The occasional fib may escape the nib to provide what veracity lacks
But that truth will out you should never doubt... unless it's a tale of Jack's?! *Aps to Robert W. Service

The Angelic Host comprised Neil and Liz (leaders), Helen, Karyn, Angus, Steve, Ian, Don, Murray, Dennis and Recording Angel Jack. The story has to start with the weather. The spring and summer had dragged on drab and drizzling. We left all that behind at Burkes Pass. From then on it was sunshine for 5 days, with little wind. Mount Cook at its very best.

We stayed at Unwin Lodge on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights. Good backpacker accommodation. Being a base camp accessible by car, we dined in potluck opulence in contrast to hut food. On the Wednesday night it was on with the Glad Rags and off to the Old Mountaineer Restaurant, where Angus was informed by the bar staff that he did not need an ID card.

And, oh, I nearly forgot, we did some tramping. Monday afternoon, Mt Sebastopol's high steps and steep slopes soon separated the sheep from the goats. A high price was paid for Christmas over-indulgence. Superlative views. Tuesday it was Mt Wakefield, steep at first through sub-alpine scrub, then upwardly undulating and eventually rocky. An 8-hour day of views all round. Nobody reached the final summit, some got closer than others but all were satisfied. Karyn proudly rang her mother to say she was high on Mt Wakefield: Mother replied that she had never bothered with Wakefield as it was "too piddling".

Wednesday was the rest day: an 8km walk up the hot Tasman Valley and another steep climb on to the Ball Ridge for lunch and many photos against the backdrop of the Caroline face of Mt Cook, with all its glaciers. On the way in, a pair of falcons gave us a display of high speed aerial warfare. It only took a few seconds until one got a strike on the rival and knocked him out of the air into the bush, alive or dead.

On Thursday any fondly imagined new-found fitness was tested in heaving big packs up to the Mueller Hut at 1800m. Steps again, followed by rocky track. Don led Angus, Dennis, Ian and Neil to the Annette Plateau in good snow and on to the summit of Mt Annette at 2235m. Others climbed the rocky Mt Olivier, 1930m, just behind the hut. Jack minded the hut. The Mueller hut looks out on the whole array of glaciers on the NE side of the Mt Sefton range, not to mention Mt Cook. We sipped Pinot Noir as we watched Mt Cook merge from white to gold to rose, then finally grey as the sun set behind us. We were lucky enough to catch the last of the season's Mt Cook lilies and the white native gentian on our way down next morning. Thanks to Neil and Liz for the meticulous planning and patience in herding cats for 5 days. A fabulous trip: heavenly you might say.



NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY 23rd MARCH 2010 at 7.30PM
HORTICULTURAL HALL SOUTH HAGLEY PARK
32nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- Confirmation of the minutes of the 31st AGM
- Annual Reports
- Election of Officers and Committee

Following the business part of the evening, a photographic presentation of 'tramping highlights' will be shown.

Deadline: by 20th March please for April newsletter

Newsletter to Liz Griffiths at 351 4501 lizgriffiths@clear.net.nz and copy to mavis.airey@xtra.co.nz.
 Trip Planners deadline 15th March : Saturday and Sunday trips to Judy Miles at 327 9010 garyjudy@kol.co.nz
 and Wednesday trips to Marj Pollock at 389 4059 marjpol@xtra.co.nz.

Please note — address all correspondence pertaining to Club business to the Secretary

**Over Forties Tramping Club, P O Box 6505, Upper Riccarton,
 Christchurch 8442**

Established 1978 Affiliated to the Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ
www.oftc.org.nz





Committee Reports



Chairman's Report

When the majority of people join our club, they come with some previous experience of tramping, whether it be from teenage years / university days, or in some instances, times of raising a family and introducing youngsters to the outdoors. In those situations there are many opportunities for tramping on land administered by the Department of Conservation or Local Authorities.

One of the great benefits of joining a club such as ours is the accessibility we have for tramping on privately held farmland in addition to DOC and Council sites. Budget constraints for maintenance of tracks, directional signs and noxious plant control is often a factor in some tracks becoming close to overgrown. Groups of volunteers are often involved in regular maintenance to permit a higher standard of track for public usage than would normally be the case if authorities were totally dependent upon the 'public purse'.

In the near future members are encouraged to help where possible in the clearing of weeds and noxious plants on the Port Hills tracks and similarly in the clearance of wilding pines within the high country. On the Port Hills, a dedicated group of volunteers do regular weekly track maintenance and it is the club's intention to provide some extra help, considering the number of our tramps which are based on the Port Hills throughout the year. Similarly, ECAN has requested our assistance in the removal of 'wilding pines' from an area near Flock Hill station. Please assist in this work if you are able, as not only is it a worthwhile exercise in pest control, but for each club member who participates we receive \$20.00 which helps fund our training programme.

Many of you will have noticed the publication of recent critical comments by David Barnes of FMC about Castle Hill Station. Because we are affiliated to FMC, as a club we were implicated and your committee considered the comments to be unwarranted. A letter has been written to FMC, disassociating ourselves from the sentiments in the letter and a letter has been written to Mrs. Fernyhough expressing our appreciation of access to the land.

Regards to you all,
Warwick Scadden

Club Captain's Report

Here we are in March already and we are still waiting for the weather to really settle down. Mind you, the weather hasn't been so bad that it has stopped many trips from going ahead and some "jaunts" have had marvellous days .

The **great reports and photos** of some of the recent trips show just how much interest and enjoyment we are all getting from our tramping. Thanks to all of you who make it all possible.

Thanks particularly this time to **trip leaders** who put their hands up and take responsibility for us while we are out there. And thinking of leaders, hands up those leaders who have read the **Guidelines for Leaders** within the last 3 months? And hands up again those who have followed the Guidelines ?

And thinking further about leading and being led, do you (leaders or not) have any thoughts on how trips are led? Which trips went well and why? What are the responsibilities of the group? Are we doing it right 85% of the time? Could we do things better?

These are questions we need to think about and at our Club Night on 27 April we will spend a bit of time sharing our wisdom, to see if we need to adjust the way we do things. I would like as many leaders as possible to come to this meeting to share your experience, but if you cannot come and you'd like to offer advice or suggestions give me a ring or email me sometime beforehand.

And for everyone, have a look at the **Training programme** advertised in this issue and make a note to do something this year to keep your skills up. For example: navigation, because without skills in this area we could finish up taking Yogi Berra's advice, when he once said, "If you come to a fork in the road (track) take it " !!

Incidents/ Accidents - I want leaders to advise me early (within 24hrs) by phone at least of any incidents that occur on trips, so that we can react properly and if need be, warn other members of ways to prevent harming ourselves. Incidents include such things as serious navigation errors, losing contact with parts of the group, injuries more than scratches and minor sprains - anything which may be possible to prevent from happening again. Thanks

Very happy tramping—keep safe
Stu

Membership Report

There are two changes to the address list this month.

Elly Freeman 027 370 5784 4 Buckley Street, Cheviot 7310
Elly has changed her address.

Tony & Annette Clayton 338 8979 19 Sandalwood Place, North Shore, Chch 8083
Tony and Annette have rejoined the club.

DAY TRIP PROGRAMME

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 means that this tramp is not a qualifying tramp for prospective new members.
All other day tramps are qualifying tramps

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

Also **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

Note — Please forward your draft list to the Club Captain by the 15th of each month

Saturday		Colin Garthwaite	360 3770
Wednesday	Veterans	Pat Tapper	348 5553
		Heather Spence	337 1690
	Middle	Anne Fullerton	339 2448
		Clive Morriss	358 2753
		Cathie Graves	339 0881
	Hard	Beverley Ruddick	337 3390
Diana Kirpensteijn		332 7534	
Sunday	Easier	Mary Brinsdon	366 9119
		Carolina Kol	03 3127970
	Middle	Steve Dakin	329 6695
		Alison Chambers:	332 9755
	Hard	Ian Fussell	358 3724

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

Phone Newstalk ZB

phone (03) 340 1098—for all trips—before 6.45am,
and state the destination. Our club code is 47.

LOCATOR BEACONS.

Collect and carry these. **Please note** — they are collected from the Shell Petrol Stations at Belfast or Yaldhurst, or at 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

MARCH 10**Aidanfield - Westlake NQ**

Cost : nil

Explore a new housing development, the future Southern Motorway and the upper Heathcote River.

Depart : Broken Rd (off Wigram Rd - check with an up-to-date road map) at 9.30am

Time : 3 - 4 hrs

Leader : Alf Farrant 342 6094

Sumner to Taylors Mistake with a twist

Cost : nil

Walk familiar tracks but with a few surprises

Grade : 2

Depart : Sumner Surf club carpark at 9am

Time : 5+ hrs

Leader : Anne Fullerton 339 2448

Mt Aicken APNP W44

Cost : \$ 22

Steep climb to tops for rewarding views

Grade : 4

Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 7.30 am

Time : 5-6 hrs

Leader : Mary Miller 942 6371

WILDING PINE DAY

Saturday 20th March 2010

Flock Hill Station on Constitution Hill

This is an excellent opportunity to help in ridding part of the 'high country' of wilding pines.

All equipment and tools are supplied by ECAN, as is transport from the Yaldhurst Pub carpark to the site.

Meet at the Car park at 8.00am, with food and drink for the day. Names please to Warwick Scadden Ph 3519779 or Scaddens@xtra.co.nz

WEDNESDAY TRAMPS**MARCH 3****The Rapaki Ramble NQ**

Cost : nil

Follow river to beginning of Rapaki Rd. Optional - 30 mins up Rapaki, then down Rogers track (very narrow zigzag to valley carpark) - or - down Vernon Tce to carpark and wait 30 mins. Then slow climb up Dry Ridge to plane table. Return via farm track and the Crescent.

Depart : Footbridge at cnr Mackenzie Ave/Richardson Tce (park in Mackenzie Ave) at 9.30am

Time : 3 - 4hrs Leader : Diana Dryland

Oashore - Te Oka, from Birdlings Flat BP 11

Cost : \$ 9

From Birdlings Flat walk across the shingle bank to steepish initial climb, then down to Oashore Bay site of early 1800's whaling station. Thence via farm tracks to rocky outcrop at Trig Point (420m) with great views. Keen trampers have option of climbing Mt Te Oka. Return via Oruaka, Maori Pa site.

Grade : 2

Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 8.30am

Time : 4.5 hrs Leader : Bruce Stanton 338 1909

Mt Fitzgerald from Kaituna Valley BP06

Cost : \$ 9

From head of valley climb to Walkway and on to Mt Fitzgerald (713m)

Grade : 3

Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 8.30am

Time : 5 - 6 hrs Leader : Lois Prebble 325 5995

Mt Cheeseman 2031 to Mt Izard 2019 W68

Cost : \$ 18

Climb to Mt Cheeseman then traverse along ridge to 1959 then to Izard & down

Grade : 4

Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.00am

Time : 6-7 hrs Leader : Brent Smith 377 7925



MARCH 17

Cashmere Hills NQ

Cost : nil

Walking in the lanes and by-ways on the hill.

Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 9.30am

Time : 3 - 4 hrs

Leader : Heather Spence 337 1690

Bridle Path, Chalmers Track, Mt Pleasant

Cost : nil

*Initially a steep walk up the Bridle Path, then onto the CRW and other tracks with great views, returning via John Brittan**Reserve. In honour of St Patrick's Day wear something green!*

Grade : 2

Depart : Bridle Path carpark at 8.30am

Time : 5.5hrs

Leader : Joan Cornish 376 5146

Timu Timu Heads, Akaroa Heads BP 18

Cost : \$15

Walk over farmland to Scenery Nook for lunch. Great views of spectacular cliffs. Possibly seals. Then to Timu Timu Heads with some steep pieces before returning to cars over farmland.

Grade : 3

Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 8.30am

Time : 4+ hrs

Leader : John Hayman 335 0984

MARCH 24

Ferrymead Area NQ

Cost : nil

Easy walking on familiar paths - with a difference. Bring your gold card or \$3.

Depart : Carpark by estuary end Linwood Ave at 9.30am

Time : 3 - 4 hrs

Leader : Norma Powell 384 1397

Mt Donald (491m) near Waipara N33

Cost : \$11

Gradual climb on farm track to good viewpoint on Mt Donald. Descend via limestone valley to complete the round trip.

Grade : 2

Time : 4.5hrs

Depart : Belfast carpark at 8.30am

Leader : Marie Woods 359 6325

Co-leader : John Gibb

Knowles Tops NW11

Cost : \$10

Round trip. Bush and open tussock tops. Initially a steepish climb, then easy grade. Short car shuttle required

Grade : 3

Depart : Belfast Hotel carpark at 8.30am

Time : 5 hrs

Leader : Bob Scott 348 4378

MARCH 31

Leithfield NQ

Cost : \$6

Pleasant walk along the banks of the Kowhai River to Leithfield Beach and the Domain.

Depart : Belfast Hotel carpark at 9.30am

Time : 3 - 4 hrs

Leader : Marion Macbeth 366 3076

Packhorse from Gebbies Pass BP12

Cost : \$4

Route: A fairly easy walk from the top of Gebbies Pass through plantation and farms to Packhorse for lunch.

Grade : 2

Depart : Carpark opp.PMH (river west) at 8.30am

Time : 4.5hrs

Leader : Peter Crawshaw 359 2662

High Bare Peak BP05

Cost : \$9

Climbing to 756 m via mostly steepish farm tracks to summit with all round views of Lakes Forsyth and Ellesmere. Return via adjoining farm to highway and along rail trail.

Grade : 3

Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 8.30am

Time : 5 hrs

Leader : Bruce Stanton 338 1909

SUNDAY TRAMPS

MARCH 7

Bridle Path - Quail Island PH 25

Cost: \$20 Ferry Fare*, \$2.80 Bus Fare or Gold Card
Via Bridle Path, Whakaraupo & Stan Helms tracks to Lyttelton to catch 12.20PM ferry. Tramp the circular track round the island, see historic places & the rejuvenation programme before returning on 3.30PM ferry. Bus back through the tunnel to Bridle Path carpark. If the weather is not great we shall do an alternative tramp from the same spot.

Grade : 1

Depart : Bridle Path carpark at 9.00am

Time : 4 hr tramp - 7 hrs total

Leader : Mary Brinsdon 366 9119

* If you have access to a Christchurch Entertainment Book, Black Cat Cruises have a 2 for 1 deal on E27 - team up with a friend and pay only \$10 each ferry fare.

Mt Torlesse - Combined Middle & Hard Groups

Cost : \$13

Walk up Kowhai river to hut where middle group can try some easier options. Top group climb up ridge to summit.

Grade : 3 - 4

Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.00am

Time : 7 hrs

Leaders : Steve Dakin 03 692 2931, Ian Fussell 358 3724

Stan Helms track and tors—photo Cathy Graves



MARCH 14

Sumner - Boulder Bay PH 08

Cost : Nil

Via Capt Thomas track to Rapanui Bush, then CRW to Boulder Bay to see historic cottages. Return via coastal track, Nicholson Park & Flowers track.

Grade : 1

Depart : Start of Capt Thomas Track in Wakefield Ave, Sumner at 9.00am

Time : 5+ hrs

Leader : Diana Penniall 358 8142

Lake Rubicon**W15**

Map: Cost: \$14

From near the fertilizer work on the Porters Pass road, tramp to this small beautiful lake then up to Bob's Knob

Grade: 3

Depart: Yaldhurst Hotel Carpark, 8.30am

Time: 4 hours

Leader: John Anthony (03) 312 2925

Mt Stuart/Hills Peak

Cost : \$24

Climb from near Pegleg Creek to Hills Peak onto Mt. Stuart (1,906m) with Hills Peak (1,640m) being a trig lower down the ridge. Some bush-bashing to start with.

Grade : 4 +

Depart : Yaldhurst carpark at 8.00am

Time : 7 hrs

Leader : Don Mee 359 8605

MARCH 21

Orton Bradley - Lookout BP 45

Cost : \$4 + \$8 per car, park entry

Tramp via Hunter Valley track to the Lookout. Last section is fairly rocky & steep so some members may have an early lunch instead. Return via Magnificent Gully.

Grade : 2

Depart : Carpark opp PMH (river west) at 9.00am

Time : 4 - 5 hrs

Leader : Carolina Kol 03 312 7970

Name: Mt Herbert from Orton Bradley Park

Cost: \$6 Map: M36

A round trip from Orton Bradley Park via tablelands under Mt Bradley and central valley. Steep in places to 919m peak. Great views. Lunch in shelter.

Grade: 3

Depart: Carpark Opposite PMH West, 8.30am

Time: 4 hours

Leader: Eileen McGrade: 942 7380

Mt Oakden Map K35

Cost : \$23

Hard, steep in places but a superb climb and views. Travel along Algidus Road to 5 kms beyond Mt. Oakden Station, cross ford over small stream and leave cars there.

Grade : 5

Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.00am

Time : 6 hrs

Leader : Neil Climo 03 312 4822. Pick up beacon at Shell garage, meet Neil at Hororata

MARCH 28

Groynes, Waimairi & Clearwater Walkways C 06

Cost : Nil

A flat tramp from the Groynes incorporating Waimairi, Clearwater Golf Course, Rural Farm & Otakaikino Stream Walkways plus a new extension. These areas have been extensively developed for public recreation and feature wetlands, increasing bird life and pleasant picnic areas.

Grade : NQ

Depart : Groynes No 2 carpark - off Johns Rd at 9.00am

Time : 4 - 5 hrs

Leaders : Dianne & Don McCormack 359 6708

Middle Group Half Day 'Pot Boiler'

Cost: Nil

Likely: taking the valley track from the car park to the Summit Road and Mt Vernon - carrying on using the Crater Rim Walkway, loop around Sugar Loaf and return to the car park via the Dry Ridge Track.

Grade: 3

Depart: Mt Vernon Farm Park Car Park, (Hillsborough Terrace), 8.30am

Time: 4 hours approximately, aiming to be home by 12.30-1.00pm

Leader : Karyn Brookes 354 0113

Mt Philistine

Cost : \$24

From the Upper Otira R climb to ridge west of Warnocks Knob, then up the bluffs (courage required) and on to the top by ridges and basins. Magnificent views of the Roll-eston area from an unusual angle.

Grade : 4-5

Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8:00am

Time : 6 hrs

Leader : Leader Stephen Sheen 03 317 9291 Contact the leader before the trip to confirm numbers and arrange to collect a beacon

SATURDAY TRAMP

MARCH 27

Cass Saddle (1326m) K34

Cost: \$24

The Cass Saddle track follows DOC markers through scrub land to the riverbed, then up river for approx 3/4 hour to a marked track on the true right bank. Track enters bush and starts a steady climb for about 2 hrs to the Cass Hut. Continue above bush line in alpine meadows to the Cass Saddle with good views of Craigieburns and the Hamilton Hut below.

Grade : 3

Depart : Yaldhurst Hotel carpark at 8.00am

Time : 6 hrs

Leader : Colin Garthwaite 03 360 3770





Base Camp & Backpacking Programme 2010

Month	Venue	Days	Grade	Leader
Mar 10-17	Heaphy Track & Karamea \$25/night. 5 day Heaphy Track tramp and 1 day for Karamea tracks. Fully booked / waiting list.	8 days/7 nights	Moderate	Mary Brinsdon 366-9119 John Cameron 980-6703
Mar 20-24	Camp Sutton Base Camp near Middlemarch. \$20/night. Optional cycling Otago Central Rail Trail Mar 16-20	4 nights	Easy/mod	Howard Harvey 342 9377
March 29- April 2	Five Passes , anti-clockwise. Fully booked / waiting list.	4 nights tenting	Hard	Angus Macdonald 349 7109
March 26-29	Lake Clearwater Base Camp . Explore new Hakatere Conservation Park. Many options from climbing to fishing. Fully booked—standby names taken	4 days Incl travel	Various	Robin Mears 355 8676
April 10-17	St Arnaud Base Camp . Red Deer Lodge, well-equipped comfortable. Half day and full day tramp options. Also options for longer trips using huts. Bookings from 01/09/09	8 days	Various	Warwick Scadden 351 9779 Co-leader Anne Dolan
April 12—15	Te Kahui Kaupeka (Mt D'Archaic) Conservation Park. Bush stream, Mesopotamia to head of Lake Tekapo or reverse. Part of proposed Te Araroa walking trail from Cape Reinga to Bluff. Fully booked—standby names taken.	4-5 days Incl travel	Moderate	Robin Mears 355 8676 Co-Leader John Wisker 960 8323
Late April Early May	Motatapu Track . Lake Wanaka to Macetown and Arrowtown. Steep tussock country.	4 days	Mod/hard	John Wisker 960 8323

NOTE: It is essential that leaders of backpacking and base-camp tramps confirm their safe return with the holder of the Help Form. Otherwise the form holder will call out police and Search and Rescue.

Backpacking Tramps Confirmation System

Due to members withdrawing from backpacking tramps at late stages the Committee decided the following conditions will 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.

Jack Watt—355 3493 at annejack@clear.net.nz is the Base-camp and Backpacking Co-ordinator

Waiuta Trip Report February 15-19

Arif Mathee (scribe), Judith and Brent Bruce, Peter and Ruth Mears, Bob Lysaght, Jan Leitch, Dave Collins, Charlotte Rivers, John Kelly and Mavis Airey.

Peter Mears had very good foresight by booking the Waiuta Lodge which was our home for a five-day base camp. This was gold mining territory! 600 people used to live here when gold fever hit New Zealand. Out of the whole township only the lodge we stayed at on the site of the hospital is still in use. The township used to have a number of shops, a post office, a swimming pool and a police station.

Six of us tramped to the Big River settlement in excellent weather and stayed at the Big River hut (30 beds), which we had all to ourselves. The composting toilet block received a unanimous 10 out of 10 rating with no smell and a solar powered fan and light! The effort that the gold mining community went through to extract the gold was truly amazing. We went to the top of the hill to have a look at the Big River Poppet head and mine shaft from where we looked back at the old township and hut. The hole into the shaft was covered with a metal grill and the whole structure fenced off to stop people getting too close to the shaft. Peter threw a stone into the shaft which set me off by throwing more stones into the shaft to judge how deep it was. One of the stones which was quite big ended on top of the grill instead of into the shaft and Peter started climbing over the fence. One of the ladies dissuaded him however and yelled "Peter don't be silly just for a stone!" and he retreated. "Your brother would definitely have persevered!" I joked.

Some of us also went on a guided tour to the Globe mine close to Reefton which is run by Oceana Gold. We all took a two hour walk to the massive gold extraction plant and powerhouse at Waiuta and these sight were quite dramatic.

Thank you very much Peter and Bob for such a memorable trip.
Arif Mathee



PHOTOGRAPHY

and how to improve your photos

The following article appeared in the February edition of the Wilderness magazine. I thought it was excellent and that the photographers in the Club would gain a lot from reading it and applying the techniques discussed.

As one of the web Administrators I get many photographs sent to me—many which could have turned out to be very good photos if perhaps some of the techniques covered in the article had been applied when taking them.

As someone who takes a lot of photos, I found this article most useful and it will make me think a lot more about how I compose my photos. I'm sure you will find it helpful also. My thanks to the author Peter Langlands and to the Wilderness magazine for generously allowing us to use the article.

Paul Knox

Photo by Paul Knox



Five tips to put that **wow** factor into your photographs

Considerations on perspective.

For me, taking a camera along on any tramp, or outdoor event, is second nature. It is fun to create a visual diary reminding you of the day. As we all know, no two days are the same. In fact I feel naked without my camera and often take two just in case one breaks down! With the advent of digital camera we are all taking a lot more photographs than in the past, but myself, like many people, find that out of multitudes of photos taken only one or two will stand out. OK, digital takes the cost out of getting "hit or miss photos", but with the sheer volume of photos being taken, some thought has to be put into getting the image that rises above the masses. I have listed some ideas to get that special picture that you may like to try.

1. Get low and dirty! - By taking a photograph of your subject from ground, or water level, and by looking back up at your subject you often will create a striking perspective. Most people take photos at eye level so by getting a different perspective you will get a more striking image. Also by looking up at your subject you can get a more intimate perspective. Photos taken at, or as close as possible, to water level also work, especially when looking across the water to mountains. For example when kayaking try placing your camera just above water level and take a photograph of the view. The challenge here is to get the horizon straight, but digital allows you to experiment. Conversely taking a photograph from an elevated position also works. I climb onto the top of my 4WD drive for such images. A stepladder can be used, or for trampers a rock stack or tree. Looking straight down on the subject matter also gives a different viewpoint. So remember to try to vary your perspective on the subject matter.

2. While on the subject of perspective, try taking photographs with as wide an angle as possible. If you use a SLR camera, then certainly trying 15-28mm wide angled lenses gives a spacious view to any photographs. Many people shoot photos from a standard camera setting of about 55-58mm, so by moving out of this range you will have pics with a different perspective. Wide angles are great for landscape shots and giving that sense of spaciousness. If you can anchor a wide angled photograph with something in the foreground, all the better. When using wide angled lenses you will have a lot of depth of field and you will also be able to take photographs in low light conditions. Full frame cameras allow a wider angle. Also if you combine a wide-angle shot, with the low angled idea, as outlined above, then you really hit the wow factor. Anchor the foreground with a tree or rock formation, a person, or some wildlife, and you have the image.

3. Get as close to your subject matter as possible. Getting up close and personal will add impact to your pics. Often many people will simply take the photo too far away from the subject matter. The main subject only fills a small proportion of the photograph and in many cases has less impact than it would if you get as close as possible to your subject, aiming for a full frame image. Sometimes it is appropriate to have the main subject shown in the larger context, but if you want to emphasize the main subject matter aim to fill the frame.

4. Following on from the above why not try taking photographs of only part of the main subject. Often partial images will emphasize certain striking details that the subject has, and also the partial image will get the viewer guessing about the image is creating a sense of intrigue. By using a macro or telephoto lens you can further increase the amount of detail that you have when taking a partial photograph. For example the flash of orange against the otherwise green feathers on the kea's back. Capturing plant, lichen or feather details are my passions. Look for repeating patterns within the subject to add interest for the viewer.

5. Finally, when taking photographs of people try to take as many candid shots as possible. When in the outdoors taking photograph of people looking at the scenery or the subject matter makes a more natural image, rather than the more typical "mug-shot" of someone looking straight towards the camera. Sideways glances often will draw the viewer into the picture, along with the subject matter.

Try these different perspectives. A mix of all of the above will really help towards creating a photograph with passion that draws the viewer in. By taking the time to get a different perspective your images will be more eye-catching. Remember most people take 95% of their photographs with a camera setting of 58mm and at eye level. Break this mould and your photographs are more likely to have that wow factor. As a final comment, treat photography as a life long journey, with always something new to learn, and be receptive to others ideas and comments. Good luck!

Peter Langlands



Moa Saddle Trip 5-7th February 2010

The route for this tramp commenced on the bank of the Wilberforce River almost opposite the Moa Stream. After crossing the Wilberforce, the route went up the Moa Stream, then into the North Branch, over the Moa Saddle, down the Unknown Stream to the Wilberforce River and then back to the starting point. The group comprised Stu McHugh (leader) Claire Mateo, Charlie Ledbrook, Ray Twist, John Wisker, Angus Macdonald, Dave Collins, Mary Miller, Judith Berkett, and Neil Helson.

The first part of the trip involved a most interesting 9km 4WD drive from Glenthorne Station—which saved a hard hot slog across boulder streams and rocky river flats. Crossing the Wilberforce opposite the Moa Stream presented no problems, and there was time to divert along the true right of the Wilberforce to the Moa Hut, where some time was spent searching nearby for surveyors pegs which were used to mark out sections in 1885.

From there we headed up the Moa Stream (where some had a swim !) to the Moa Stream Hut (4 bunks) set back from the stream in the bush. Camp sites near the hut were not brilliant so a small group headed back to the stream to camp nearer the water.

The next day we entered the North Branch, which started with hard large boulders and then gave way to open tussock (Moa Basins). On the way Stu pointed out the location of the gold mining activity and explained a lot about the history of the area. There was a touch of déjà vu with the recent collapse of finance companies, in that none of the mining produced any gold - investors were told that the "quartz samples showed positive signs".

The climb up to the Saddle was very gradual, but the drop from the Saddle down to the Unknown Stream involved either a vaguely marked ridge route or a steep gut. After checking with Brabyn and Bryant, we opted for the gut which at times was quite exciting.

Then, after a hot walk down the Unknown Stream through waist high tussock and having a look at the Unknown Hut (4 bunks), we found a suitable camp site just after crossing Gibson Stream.



The next morning we headed for the Wilberforce, which now being less braided presented a more formidable river crossing.

After two brilliantly hot and sunny days, the third day soon veiled with high cloud which was ideal for the 14km walk back to the cars.

The trip was characterised by superb mountain scenery, a group who enjoyed each other's company, and tramping conditions which involved river crossings, valleys, steep rock sections, tussock flats and tenting.

Stu is to be thanked for his thorough organisation and excellent leadership and Charlie and John for the use of their 4WD vehicles.

- Neil Helson

Moa Saddle Trip—view of Wilberforce
Photo by Neil Helson

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Gannets at nesting site Pelorus Sound
Photo by Liz Griffiths