



THE CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPER

Published by CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPING CLUB INC.
PO Box 527, Christchurch, www.ctc.org.nz

We are affiliated to the Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc.

Opinions expressed or events described in this newsletter might not actually represent Club policy – we can't be expected to be giving away our secrets.

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December 2004

No. 7

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|------------------------|----------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| President | Adrian Busby | 383 4046 | Club Captain | Honora Renwick | 942 8368 |
| Vice President | Rex Vink | 352 5327 | TripOrganiser(day) | Warwick Dowling | 366 2045 |
| Vice President | Nigel Watson | 981 7929 | (weekend) | Gareth Rapley | 03 363 0270 |
| Secretary | Jenny Harlow | 349 2280 | Hut Convener | Andrew Wrapson | 980 6006 |
| Treasurer | Kerrie Skinner | 349 2280 | Gear Custodian | Bernard Parawa | 981 4931 |
| Editor | Alastair Brown | 343 5111 | New Members | Alice Yung | 382 3988 |
| Social Convener | Alan Ross | 384 6425 | | Nigel Watson | 981 7929 |

The **CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPING CLUB** has members of all ages, and runs tramping trips every weekend, ranging from easy (no experience required) to hard (high fitness and experience required). We also organise instructional courses and hold weekly social meetings. Membership rates per year are \$35 member, \$55 couple, \$18 junior or associate.

Equipment Hire: The Club has a range of equipment for hire. Contact the Gear Custodian, Bernard Parawa 981 4931. Note: Club gear assigned to you is your responsibility; please take care of it.

Our **Club Hut** in the Arthur's Pass Township has the comforts of home but with the mountains at the back door. – Even better now with real showers and inside flushing loos (BYO toilet paper!). A great place for a few days away; take your usual gear and a pillowcase. **Please book** before leaving town to ensure there is a bunk available. For keys and bookings phone Andrew Wrapson 381 6003; or if he's away, Rex Vink 352 5327; or if they're both away, Dave Watson 981 7929 (or pager 026 252 3284). Hut fees are \$8 member, \$8 member's partner, \$15 non-member, \$4 kids under 12. If you find any problems or maintenance required, please tell Andrew.

Social Scene: We meet on Thursdays 7:30 pm at the Canterbury Horticultural Centre (Watling Lounge), Hagley Park South, 57 Riccarton Avenue (entrance opposite the hospital). A variety of social functions are organised, the atmosphere informal, and tea and biscuits served. If you can give a presentation or have ideas, please contact Alan Ross 384 6425.

Trips: Unless otherwise stated, day trips depart at 8:00 am and weekend trips depart at 7:00 pm on Fridays, from Shell Carlton Corner Service Station at 1 Papanui Road (next to Liquor Land and opposite Derby Street). If you aren't taking your car on the trip, park on one of the nearby side streets, otherwise it may be wheel clamped or towed. If you are taking your car please refuel at Shell Carlton, as they are kind enough to hold our trip lists. Every trip gives an indication of petrol costs per person. Please bring it in cash to help the leader divvy up at the end. If you have comments or suggestions for trips, please contact the appropriate trip organiser (listed at top of the page).

Leaders: Please ask for the trip list box (disguised as a shiny red 'Stanley' toolbox) and post the trip list into the locked box. If anyone turns up after this, the service station has a key to open the box. Spare key holders are listed on the box.

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| Rates: | Tent | \$3/person/night |
| | Ice axes, crampons harnesses, snow shovel | \$4/weekend |
| | Large/small weekend packs | \$2/weekend |
| | Mountain radio | \$25/weekend |

Notices

Email: The club operates a moderated email list, whose address is members@ctc.org.nz. This list is used to send out the newsletter, occasional tramping related messages and other invites, and from time to time a complete list of the email addresses of CTC members. Messages intended for the list, and requests to join or leave the list should be sent to the above email address. Note that the moderator will check as to the appropriateness of all messages.

CTC Stickers: The club has Christchurch Tramping Club stickers for members to stick in hut books when they visit. Please contact the secretary at secretary@ctc.org.nz.

Photos: Thanks to the multi-talented Paul Ashton, we now have photos on the web page to accompany trip reports. Please email photos to paul@tourplan.com.

Membership Database: If you know of any updates, errors or omissions, call Rex Vink 352 5327 or email greta-vink@clear.net.nz.

Access Database: If you know of any new information that concerns obtaining access to the properties we tramp on (e.g. change of owner or phone number), please call Ian Dunn 343 2155 email ian.dunn@paradise.net.nz.

New Member: A big welcome to the following new member – Warren Reedy.

When using the **Club Hut**, please be careful when changing the taps when arriving and leaving. The consequences of cocking this up (no pun intended) could be severe, so please read the instructions carefully.

Committee: Frank King and Trevor Scott have resigned from the Committee so as to be able to spend more time on their other outdoor interests. The Committee thanks them for their contributions during the year so far. Responsibilities have been reorganised as follows: Weekend Trip Organiser Gareth Rapley; Permissions Ian Dunn; Trip Recorder Warwick Dowling; DOC/Conservation Officer Andrew Turton (Andrew will not be part of the Committee but will report when appropriate).

The **Committee** meets from 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of every month. The venue changes between committee members' homes. Club members may attend meetings to discuss matters. Contact the Secretary (349 2280 or secretary@ctc.org.nz).

We now have three flash new email addresses: secretary@ctc.org.nz, editor@ctc.org.nz and newmembers@ctc.org.nz. Thanks to Paul Ashton for sorting these out for us.

Bequest: As highlighted in a previous newsletter, the club has received \$2500 from the Estate of Colin McCallum. If you have any creative ideas on how it should be spent, please get in touch with someone on the committee, so we can spend it in the best possible way. We've had a few good ideas so far, and we'll vote on the best idea at the next AGM.

Classified ads

Pack for sale, Macpac, pursuit, size 3, excellent condition, ring Scott or Mandi on 349 6232 cost \$200.

Classified ads are available at *no charge* to CTC members.

External events of interest:

www.mountainz.co.nz: A new website that is a source of news, articles, trip reports, photos and forums. They're also keen to get material on your adventures. www.remotehuts.co.nz might also be of interest.

MSC courses: phone 351 0942. Check out the website for local courses on tramping and climbing related topics.

WCTC has a lodge on Mt Ruapehu - open all year -10 bunkrooms - 32 bunks in all - great winter base for skiing (just a few minutes walk from the slopes) or the summer for tramping, climbing, etc. Adult non-members pay only \$24/day winter \$12/day summer. Kids under 18 pay half the adult price. Or you can book out all 32 places at a flat rate. For CTC members, we offer a special rate in 2005, of 25% off our non-member rates. And of course, if any of your members find themselves in Wellington, we would welcome them on our tramping trips. No charge. If you would like more information, please email Andrew - trio@xtra.co.nz or phone 04 233 1867.

Calendar of Trips and Social Events

Thursday 9 December

Club Night

Newsletter Folding Night: the usual fun filled origami night.

Saturday 11 December (7am start)

Leader: Gareth Rapley 027 231 8568

Cass-Lagoon Saddle: Northern Craieburn area. This is normally a weekend tramp, following the Cass and Harper Rivers, but here it is being done in one long day – a day with attitude. So, get your skates on and whip through the sticks with Gareth in this pre-Christmas trainer.

Grade: Hard
Map: K34
Approx: \$25
List closes: 9 Dec

Weekend 11 – 12 December

Leader: Frank King 942 8368 or 021 102 6805

Mt Pfeifer – Pfeifer Biv: Rescheduled by popular demand (no nor'westers please). Sven called it hard – huh! – not now. Womble unrestricted up the staircase up Paratu Stream onto these golden tops. Camp in the tussock above Lake Kaurapataka. Complete the circuit down to Pfeifer Creek and the Taramakau.

Grade: Moderate
Map: K33
Approx: \$30
List closes: 2 Dec

Sunday 12 December

Leader: Mike Newlove 355 8360

Mt Thomas: Canterbury foothills NE of Oxford. Can be done as several different loops. A common route is up the Wooded Gully Track to the ridge to meet Track 1 that is followed to Mt Thomas. Height gain of 700m. Continue along Track 1 down to the cut area and through it to the cars.

Grade: EasyMod
Map: M34
Approx: \$15
List closes: 9 Dec

Thursday 16 December

Club Night

Tips and suggestions for how to pack for a Xmas trip and to keep the weight down as much as possible.

Saturday 18 December

Leader: Andrew Turton 332 8275

Dome: Arthur's Pass National Park. The unmarked but generally straightforward route starts from near the Bealey River railway bridge and follows the long western ridge to Dome Peak (1938m). Sweeping views from the easy ridge.

Grade: ModHard
Map: K33
Approx: \$30
List closes: 16 Dec

Sunday 19 December

Leader: Dave Henson 942 3954

Mt Evans from Port Levy: Banks Peninsula. The approach from Port Levy provides new scenery. The route is via a farm road leading to tussock slopes to the summit of Mt Evans. From here there is mostly untracked ridge northwards before returning to the start point.

Grade: EasyMod
Map: N36 N37
Approx: \$10
List closes: 16 Dec

Thursday 23 December (note early start)

Club Night

Annual potluck dinner: From 6pm, eating at 6:30 (formally known as the plate and crate). Bring food for at least 4 people. You will need your own eating tools + liquid refreshments.

This is the last Thursday night of the year and one not to be missed!

Friday 24 December

Social Event

Xmas Eve meal out: As usual we dine at Brogues on Worchester (Worchester St, the Square). Meet at 7:30 (families may wish to go earlier). Mains near \$22. As usual Alan must give the restaurant confirmed numbers, so please put your name on the trip list or phone 384 6425 before the 21st.

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| Thursday 30 December | No Club Night |
| Long Weekend 1 – 4 January | Leader: Gareth Gilbert 355 7697 |
| Lake Chalice, Goulter circuit: A good four day circuit over the tops and down valleys in the Richmond ranges. 6 huts on the circuit. | Grade: Moderate Map: N28 O28 Approx: \$60 List closes: 16 December |
| Long Weekend 2 – 4 January | Leader: Alan Ross 384 6425 |
| Mystery Trip: We will go where the weather is good and the team wish to go. Come with me and enjoy my three-day pass to somewhere. | Grade: Moderate Map: TBA Approx: \$TBA List closes: 16 December |
| Monday 3 January | Coordinator: Warwick Dowling 366 2045 |
| Arthurs Pass? Lewis Pass? Suggestions welcome: Contact me after Christmas with your suggestions. Some that I am throwing into the pot are: Rome Ridge and Avalanche Peak loop, Mt Te Kinga at Lake Moana, Mt Faust near Lewis Pass. | Grade: Moderate Map: TBA Approx: \$TBA List closes: Sat 1 Jan |
| Thursday 6 January | No Club Night |
| Weekend 8 – 9 January | Leader: John Henson 342 3311 |
| Lewis Tops, Lucretia: Join John on a visit to one of his favourite spots. From Lewis Pass, along the tops, and a high camp before descending Lucretia stream to the Nina and out to the highway. | Grade: Moderate Map: M31 Approx: \$35 List closes: 16 December |
| Saturday 8 January | Leader: Paul Ashton 358 5570 |
| Mt Potts: Erewhon country, at the confluence of the Clyde and Havelock Rivers. Mt Potts (2184m) stands some 1500m above the carpark point. Magnificent views. A good workout guaranteed. Paul wants to try a route off the tops that he hasn't done before. | Grade: ModHard Map: J35 J36 Approx: \$30 List closes: 6 Jan |
| Sunday 9 January | Leader: Adrian Busby 383 4046 |
| Montgomerys Road Little River to Hilltop: Banks Peninsula. Adrian has a weekend bach in this area and knows it well. Join him in an easy tramp up to and across some easy peaks to arrive at Hilltop. Expect at least 500m height gain. Perhaps finish at the café at Little River. | Grade: Easy Map: N36 N37 Approx: \$12 List closes: 6 Jan |
| Thursday 13 January | Club Night |
| Social night to hear about all those Christmas trips. Who went where, what happened and why. | |
| Saturday 15 January | Leader: Andrew Wrapson 980 6006 |
| Ashley Gorge: Starting from the Lees Valley bridge, walk down the Ashley River to the Ashley Gorge motor camp area. Put a waterproof pack-liner in your pack and fill the pack with clothing (light and airy) so that you can use your pack to float with. A great summer river trip. Come prepared to get wet and have a fun day in the river. | Grade: Easy/Wet Map: L34 Approx: \$15 List closes: 13 Jan |

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| Weekend 15 – 16 January | Leader: Honora Renwick 942 8368 |
| Koropuku Gorge: A chance to visit the amazing Koropuku/ Big Tops hut. It will then be river travel out to the Otehake. Great wilderness tramping in a remote area. Expect long days. | Grade: Hard Map: K33 Approx: \$30 List closes: 6 January |
| Sunday 16 January (Early Start/Must phone leader) | Leader: Doug Forster 337 5453 |
| Mt Stuart from Pegleg Flat: APNP. Starts at Pegleg flat with a short scrub bash followed by straightforward ridge travel to the summit at 1906m. Peek over the edge of the bluffs for spectacular views to the viaduct below. Descend by a spur and a track to Barrack Creek. | Grade: Moderate Map: K33 Approx: \$35 List closes: 13 Jan |
| Thursday 20 January | Club Night |
| Digital Cameras: We have Mathew from Photo and Video to show us and tell us what you need from a digital camera that is suited for tramping. A perfect chance to up-skill yourself on the way to buying a digital camera. | |
| Saturday 22 January | Leader: Flo Roberts 980 7913 |
| Torlesse Traverse: The day trip version will start at the railway end of the Torlesse Range and will follow the tops to Porters Pass (exclude Mt Torlesse itself). The day-trippers ferry the cars belonging to the weekend-version trampers to the southern end of the Craieburn Road that criss-crosses the Midland Line. The weekend trampers, in turn, ferry the cars belonging to the daytrip-version trampers to Porters Pass. It is highly recommended that drivers have at least two sets of keys of their own car with them at the meeting point in Christchurch – one set to swap in CHCH and one set to keep and use at traverse end. Need a set cut? | Grade: Hard Map: L34 K34 K35 Approx: \$25 List closes: Wed 19 Jan |
| Weekend 22 – 23 January | Leader: Gareth Gilbert 355 7697 |
| Mt Longfellow: Visit the highest named point on topomap M32. Travel is around Lake Sumner, up Evangeline stream to biv, over the tops and out via Gabriels stream. Views from the top will be over Lake Sumner and up the Hurunui to Harper Pass. | Grade: ModHard Map: M32 Approx: \$30 List closes: 13 January |
| Sunday 23 January | Leader: Dave Henson 942 3954 |
| Cannonball Gorge Circuit: This is immediately west of the three Deans and just east of the Ohuriawa Gorge of the Waipara River. Yes, your feet will get wet on this nearly flat trip. On the way, observe the Cannonballs which are “concretions” similar to the Moeraki Boulders. | Grade: EasyMod Map: M34 Approx: \$15 List closes: Fri 21 Jan |
| Long Weekend 26 – 30 January | Leader: Alastair Brown 343 5111 |
| St Arnaud to Lewis Pass: We’ll have a go at doing the classic road-linking traverse. Depending on numbers we’ll do a cross over trip or do something with public transport to link the ends some how. The leader is open to suggestions, give him a bell. | Grade: ModHard Map: N29 N30 M30 M31 Approx: \$TBA List closes: 20 January |

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| Thursday 27 January | Club Night |
| Newsletter folding night + the famous cooker races: We will also compare the advantages and disadvantages of each model entered. Bring your cooker if you dare to try (and fail) to beat the famous "Ross" champion. The winner of the last 3 times in heated (pun intended) competition. | |
| Saturday 29 January | Leader: John Taylor 942 3012 |
| Glenafric Beach: East of Waipara, down the Mount Cass Road, is Glenafric Beach. John Taylor knows the area well and is enthusiastic about going back - there are fossils to be found. So, rockhound your way around these interesting beaches and cliffs with John. | Grade: Easy Map: N34 Approx: \$15 List closes: 27 January |
| Weekend 29 – 30 January | Leader: Tim Broad 365 8940 |
| Trip Leader Training Course: At Craigieburn Outdoor Education Centre. A great opportunity for persons new to leading to obtain the latest skills and knowledge; plus a useful update for those who have already lead some tramps. After completing a FMC Leadership course, Tim and others will be teaching everybody the skills necessary when leading groups into the hills. All current and prospective trip leaders should think about attending this weekend. | Grade: Easy Map: No Need Approx: \$30 List closes: 20 January |
| Sunday 30 January (Saturday night camp out/Must contact leader) | Leader: Ian Dunn 343 2155 |
| Mt Griffin: Mt Griffin (1516m) is west of the Main Divide and lies south-west of the Inchbonnie Bluff that is on SH73. There is a 1400m climb through scrub on an old track. Spectacular views, and nice green rock on top. Long day on the tops, therefore will travel to start point on Saturday. | Grade: ModHard Map: K33 Approx: \$40 List closes: 27 January |
| Thursday 3 February | Club Night |
| We have Jonathan to once again show us great shots from various club trips. YOU may feature in one of these so come along to an entertaining show. | |
| Saturday 5 February | Leader: Andrew Wrapson 980 6006 |
| Waipara Lakes: In the Waipara Valley area, a lovely day trip in good weather. This is a water trip, so come prepared to get wet. Can you climb the (optional) unclimbable scree? Can you swim to the (also optional) island? | Grade: Easy/Wet Map: M33 Approx: \$20 List closes: 3 February |
| Long Weekend 5 – 8 February | Leader: Keith Johnson |
| Havelock River, Disappointment Saddle: Join Keith Johnson and visit the Upper Havelock courtesy of the mechanical donkey. 4WD to Mistake Flats before walking to the upper valley and the tops beyond. Your chance to get close to the gardens in just a weekend. | Grade: ModHard Map: I35 Approx: \$50 List closes: 27 January |
| Weekend 5 – 6 February | Leader: Bernard Parawa 981 4931 |
| East Hawdon, Casey Saddle: A fantastic wee round trip in Arthur's Pass. Travel is up the East Hawdon and over the Savannah Range to Casey Saddle. A good chance to do a trip that is not often done. | Grade: Moderate Map: I35 Approx: \$50 List closes: 27 January |

Sunday 6 February

Leader: Warwick Dowling 366 2045

Woolshed Creek Bus Stop: This is a variant of the famous Mt Somers walkway, on the lower and western flanks of Mt Somers. Once the Mt Somers Hut is reached, return to the Woolshed Creek carpark by the Bus Stop route. Cool off afterwards with a delicious dip in a pool of the stream. A "must do" trip.

Grade: Moderate
Map: K36
Approx: \$25
List closes: 3 February

Saturday 12 February

Leader: Adrian Busby 383 4046

River Crossing Course: This is usually held close to CHCH in the Waimakariri River. It is an essential component of a new tramper's training, and a good refresher for those of some experience. Bring warm clothing plus a complete change of warm clothing. Bring a weekend size pack, preferably, with pack-liner and filled with spare clothing for pack buoyancy. Afterwards, there will be hot food at the BBQ (bring your own food).

Grade: Easy/Wet
Map: No Need
Approx: \$5
List closes: 10 Feb

Sunday 13 February

Leader: Gareth Gilbert 355 7697

Mt Binser: SE corner of Arthur's Pass National Park. This is usually a loop route. Go up the track to Binser saddle in the bush, and then strike up the ridge on the unmarked route to come out on the open tops. Awesome views from Mt Binser (1860m). A car shuffle to finish.

Grade: Moderate
Map: L33 L34
Approx: \$30
List closes: 10 Feb

Trip Reports

12- 14 November 2004

Brodrick Pass Show

We left Christchurch at 7:30 pm Thursday evening from Alastair's; a group of eight. We arrived at road end past Lake Ohau about midnight. Steve found us a REALLY good place to sleep, yay! With a minimum of effort we were all soon comfy and asleep!

Next morning we were off to the Monument hut, Alan, Alastair Alex and I walked while others went in Steve's 4WD with all the packs. The advance party raced inside the hut to escape the sandflies to find an even more advance party Sue, Grubbie and Emma (who had driven up to the hut the night before) waiting for us. Then, while we waited for the walkers, Steve entertained everyone with commentary on the fascinating behaviour and tactics of a big, fat, spider which had spun a web across one of the hut windows and was enthusiastically eating and cocooning sandflies.

Precisely at 9:00am the walkers turned up. The early morning exercise had had an interesting effect on Alan who rushed off to the loo! It was then no-one's idea for everyone to bundle into the 4WD's and take off across the thigh deep and fairly wide Hopkins, park up, get out and wait, giggling childishly in expectation of Alan's dismay, (hey but it was very very funny).

Alan sauntered down to where his pack lay, making a show of noticing nothing amiss, put on his pack and proceeded across the river, pretending not to hear our hooting and clapping as the water lapped at his plimsoll line! Even funnier was that the track was on the hut side of the river (and as the leader shouldn't he have know that)! Whilst all this puerile hilarity was going on, Alex alone behaved like an adult and took off up valley, knowing that there was not going to be enough room for all of us in the 4WD's.

We met up again at the junction with the Huxley, Alex having been slightly delayed by the antics of a paradise duck with eight ducklings. At last it was time for us ALL to start tramping and it was to be a characteristic of the weekend, that such a diverse group of people showed such care for each other that they stayed together in a group and no-one overtook the leader (yeah right!).

Alan and I were at the back, and just before the swing bridge Alan was tempted by a very steep shortcut down to the river. I said "I will if you will" and began to follow him down, whoops, a bit

too steep with a heavy pack though, so I said "I'll throw my pack down" and I aimed it for some trees only to watch, as it bounced, missed them, bounced again and again and plopped into the river. Alan was half way down and quick as lightning had his pack off and bounced after it, into the river, the pack bobbing along just out of his reach, round a deep gorgy bit where he got his hat wet. I had got down by now and stood hand over mouth watching Alan swimming and pack bobbing, and "Oh no !" it went into the swift part and took off. Water too deep, Alan headed for the stony beach in slow motion, finally got there and off he went, cutting across at a run, out of sight. Meanwhile Alex and Steve had joined the scene with Steve taking off after Alan and Alex trying to convince me I wouldn't have to hitch hike home, that I could still do the trip, just share everyone else's gear. Hmm.. Happy ending though, because Alan turned up carrying the VERY heavy VERY wet pack, by now I was carrying Alex's pack and Alex was carrying Alan's pack.

We stopped and got sorted, but now I was definitely not quite walking upright with my own (heavy) pack back, so after a few more river crossings we took a break and dried out some of the wet gear. Alastair came back to meet us, (attracted by the billowing tent), he was also wet having fallen in when he got frustrated with the bush track and took to the river flats. I was wondering, was it necessary to tell everyone what I'd done, (after all I had promised to bake them a chocolate cake) but well it seems the answer was yes, a big YES in fact!

We caught up with the others at Huxley forks hut for lunch, and did some more drying out, things were everywhere, but sun and wind did a great job! Strangely as the tale was told AGAIN, it seemed the emphasis was "Why did Alan take a shortcut to the river instead of using the perfectly fine swing bridge?" rather than "Why did Kerrie throw her pack in the river?".

Time to head to Brodrick hut, the party still (not) together. This part of the tramp was almost uneventful except that:

- a) Susan, Helen and John almost missed the next swing bridge (thanks Emma for calling them back) although John claimed he had deliberately walked past the bridge to 'bury a banana skin',
- b) Grubbie stood on a huge rock in the track, that dislodged as he stepped off it and crashed madly down a steep bit (the rock not Grubbie), leaving a large gap in the track,
- c) Alastair, walking up the river, missed the bush track up to the hut and headed off happily towards Brodrick Pass. We'd noticed he was missing and someone spotted him approaching the hut from the direction of the Pass itself. Alan made us stand in a line and sing very loudly "It's a long way to Brodrick Pa-ass it's a long way to go" just as he was arriving.
- d) Steve; who left Huxley forks hut *last* at lunchtime, thinking he'd give himself the challenge of catching up and overtaking Alex before the hut (Alex is much younger you see), ran upriver following footprints and completely stuffing himself in the process, only to find the prints belonged to Chad the Texan. Alex had followed the bush track and arrived a short while after Steve.

Alex bagged a bunk with the intention of 'selling it' and sleeping in a tent. Chad had one bunk, leaving 5 for our party of 11. Chad had been told by DOC that he'd almost certainly be up there alone, and got quite a surprise as we all trudged inside, in groups of two and three. Alex got a third of a packet of chocolate biscuits from Susan for his bunk and he seemed happy with that ! Four hunters arrived after us with only a tent fly, no mats. We lent them some mats for which they were very grateful. A little later Ian Dunn and Clare arrived as well. Tents here, tent there, tents everywhere!

At some stage, Alan decided to take desperate measures to regain some authority over his troops. He entered the hut, gun over arm and gave us all 'one more chance'. This was my first trip with Alan and I was really scared (Yeah right!). When this failed to impress, he tried another tack a little while later to gain some attention, he came into the hut ready for bed, dressed in his lovely green paisley shorty pyjamas, a must for every serious trumper! We were all really envious of his style, but as it didn't show, he left disillusioned to try his luck with the hunters. Goodness knows what they thought, but apparently they invited him to stay – or so he'd have us believe.

Most of us woke around six and prepared for an early start for Brodrick Pass and Mt McKenzie, as the weather forecast implied worsening weather.

As usual we were all (not) ready to leave together, Steve and Alex leaving at 7:15am keen to get out ahead and plug steps for the rest of us, Susan, Alastair and I left at 7:30am with Chad tagging along, Emma and Helen were not too far behind us. The zigzag track was clear through the scrub at the bottom of the pass and quickly passed from scrub to tussock and rock and then was finally obscured altogether under slow slopes. It was steep, but Alastair kept the pace and we were quickly at Brodrick Pass where he only paused for ½ a minute and I had to decide whether to run after him or wait for Susan. Since we were making great efforts to (not) keep together and I couldn't see Susan, I left a message with Chad (who was not going any further), and trotted off up after Alastair.

Alastair didn't stop at all..... and we soon reached a lot of steps nicely plugged into the snow for us up the dome just before the summit. At about 10:40, we joined Steve and Alex on the top, clear skies and beaut' views were all around. Then fog started to drift over so we headed down, meeting Susan all alone, nearly there. Steve and Alastair went back with her to the top (10 mins away) since she had become a bit nervous about the visibility and was going to turn back with us. Alex fair bounded down the mountain, in some places his steps were nearly 2 metres apart (no kidding!). He was off to try and catch Grubbie who he had heard was on his way up Mt Strauchon. I ran, hopped and slid all the way down, it was such fun and so quick! I met Emma and Alan on their way up and shortly before the Pass, I met John also heading up.

Meanwhile Grubbie got to about 2,150m and decided it wasn't wise to go further, Alex apparently caught him just as he has started to descend.

Somewhere along the way Alex joined Steve, Alastair and Susan and they made their way back. Steve and Alex were demonstrating their skills at glissading which turned into bumsiding when they fell over. Alastair (bare legged) and Susan mostly just ran down the snow. Susan watched Steve and Alex and secretly wanted to join in and go for it, but then she saw the schrund with a big rock at the bottom, that Steve and Alex narrowly missed dropping into and this was enough for her to give up all thought of super speedy out-of-control descent methods.

When they got to the bottom, Steve went for a wander up to the head of the valley, Alex and Alastair detoured about half way up a side stream on the true left. They explored this to about 1550m where they were visited by Keas, then they returned diagonally down the bluffs with a swinging/sliding style. They arrived back, around 4:30, wet, (it was raining by now), tired, hungry AND sunburnt.

The evening was entertaining with Sue, Alan and Steve reminiscing about past trips and parties. People played cards, Alastair leapt about when Alex spilt boiling hot soup on his bright red sunburnt legs, everyone got in everyone's way cooking tea, and Steve ruined Alan's night when he pointed out that despite his (Alan's) best efforts to sleep in a tent with 3 'wimmen', it was he, Steve who ended up with the 5 women sleeping with HIM in the hut (Chad had left by now). Alan was quite speechless as the truth of this dawned on him, and was not to be consoled by the fact that Alex, sharing his tent was actually younger and better looking than us (can't think why?). However....Susan did win a foot massage for services rendered to Alan the previous night (what were they ?) which she says is highly recommended.

We were woken early on Sunday by Alastair, dazzled by the red legs, and were all packed and away by 7:30am according to plan. The trip back to the cars was truly uneventful, if you forget about all that silly business of the latex foot and Susan falling on her bum in the mud and Alan washing it off. Everyone got back to the road end together (yeah right!)

I really enjoyed getting to know everyone, had a terrific time and lots of laughs. My first trip with many people and sadly my last tramp with Alex, at least until he comes back to NZ who knows when! Best of luck Alex on your travels and Thanks for a great trip Alan.

Advance Party: Sue Napier, Grant Piper (aka Grubbie), Emma. Main Party: Alan Ross, Helen Harkness, Steve Bruerton, Alex Banks-Watson, Kerrie Skinner (scribe), Alastair Brown, Susan Pearson, John Shrewsbury.

31 October 2004

Hawdon Hut Return

Seven were out on a beautiful day to walk into the Hawdon Hut. Take the road to Arthur's Pass SH73 and turn right at the Mt White Bridge sign. We collected Stephen at Springfield and after getting sorted at the Hawdon shelter, we started walking a little after 10am. Warwick almost lost his contact lens even before the start of the trip but this was retrieved without too much drama. Walking poles appeared to be the accessory to have on this trip although I confess that I have yet to become converted.

The first river crossing was less than ten minutes away and I was not keen to cross over by myself! Arif was new to river crossings so some of us linked up. Almost waist deep for me and there were plenty of crossings to go before the day was over.

Pretty easy walking and soon the party was split into 2 groups - a faster group and a not so fast group. There was a bit of a breeze as we wandered along the river flats, over rocks and boulders and then through some forest. It took about 2.5 hours to reach the hut and once there we flopped onto the grass and had something to eat. Others got their cameras out, explored, sun worshipped or went into the hut to read the paper.

Warwick entertained us by emptying out his pack - and modelling various types of headgear. eg., a neck warmer, a balaclava, not to mention several hats. - Arif who was on his first trip with the CTC probably picked up a few tips from our leader and others in the group.

The return was along a slightly different route and we made good time - about 2 hours. By this time Arif was confidently crossing streams on his own. A quick change back at the cars and Springfield café was beckoning. Warwick crunched the numbers while we indulged in a deliciously warmed scone with jam and cream, or a pie or chocolate fudge cake. Back to Christchurch again after a good day out.

Thanks to Warwick and the guys.

Warwick Dowling (leader), John Henson, Erik Norder, Stephen Heald, Brent Crammond, Arif Mathiee and Alice Yung (scribe)

Please post or email articles for the February newsletter to the Editor (Alastair Brown) by Friday 21 January 2004.

Email: editor@ctc.org.nz
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