



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.

Vol. 76

August 2006

No. 4

President	Richard Wills	389 8671	Club Captain	Craig Beere	374 2392
Vice President	Warwick Dowling	366 2045	Trip Organiser(day)	Bernard Parawa	981 4931
Secretary	Jenny Harlow	349 2280	(weekend)	Jeff Hall	332 9251
Treasurer	Malcolm Carr	332 2581	Hut Convener	Dave Watson	981 7929
Editor	Alastair Brown	343 5111	Gear Custodian	Ken Brown	359 2000
Social Convener	Sue Napier	338 8926	New Members	Craig Beere	374 2392
				Susan Pearson	337 4914

The **CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPING CLUB** has members of all ages, and runs tramping trips every weekend, ranging from easy (minimal 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. The Gear Custodian is Ken Brown 359 2000. 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 Dave Watson 981 7929; or if he's away, Rex Vink 352 5329; or if they're both away, Andrew Wrapson 980 6006. 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 Dave.

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 Sue Napier 338 8926 or email social@ctc.org.nz. Please note that formalities start at 7:50 pm *sharp*, and if there is a guest speaker, he/she will start at 8:10 pm *sharp*.

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.

Rates:	Tent	\$3/person/night
	Ice axes, crampons	\$4/weekend
	harnesses, snow shovel	
	Large/small weekend packs	\$2/weekend
	Mountain radio	\$30/weekend
		\$40/week.

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 .

New Members: Please welcome the following new members - Julie Haywood and Kay Taylor (nee Cooper). Kay was known to members years ago and is keen to re-establish old friendships.

Membership Database: If you know of any updates, errors or omissions, email Susan Pearson susan@toniq.co.nz or phone 337 4914.

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 or email ian.dunn@paradise.net.nz .

Club Hut: 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.

P.S.: The club Hut is fully booked with a group from the Over 40's Tramping Club on the weekend of the 26-27th August.

Committee: The Committee meets from 7.30 pm 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 (secretary@ctc.org.nz or 349 2280).

DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS PERSON?

Christchurch Tramping Club
75TH Anniversary
Weekend after Easter
2007
(14/15 April 2007)

Keep this date free and
make sure you are on the
mailing list for more
information

Phone (03) 352 5329

PO Box 527 Christchurch

Email greta-vink@clear.net.nz



Newsletter Online: There is a new members-only area of the club web site. At present it contains Word and PDF versions of all club newsletters from 2002 onwards. Each time a newsletter comes out, it will be made available in the members only area and an email will be sent to the club mailing list alerting members to this, and supplying login details. On the CTC home page there is a link to the members-only area, as well as contact addresses for those needing login details (who aren't on the club email list, or who can't wait until the next newsletter comes out to get login details). If you haven't got login details already, get them from Jenny Harlow (secretary@ctc.org.nz or 349 2280) or Susan Pearson (susan@toniq.co.nz or 337 4914).

Crampon Retention: Just a wee reminder that stuff attached to the side of your pack is liable to come off, if not securely attached, especially when bush bashing. Many CTC members have bitter memories of having lost valuable stuff in such a way (editor included). Remember that crampon patches are not necessarily to be trusted, and anything tied on needs at least one backup connection point in case of failure.

Mountain Radio: The Canterbury Mountain Radio Service has changed its address to c/- Ballingers Hunting & Fishing, 173 Montreal Street, P.O. Box 22-342, Christchurch, New Zealand.

New Fridge: Thanks to Doug and Nellie Napier for the donation of their much loved but too smaller Fridge for our Club Hut at Arthur's Pass. Much appreciated as our existing fridge suffered under the hands of someone forgetting to remove their food from the freezer when departing! The new fridge will be going up the Pass in a couple of weeks.

Cycling and canoeing around the world. (On at club on the 3rd August)

Martin Lunz is no ordinary German tourist. He and his partner Nadine Puschkasch are half way round the world on a five year cycling and canoeing odyssey that started in their home town of Limburg, Germany, in 2003.

"I wanted to attempt this as a challenge and as a way of seeing the world with my own eyes and meeting people," says Martin (33), an outdoors educator. His partner Nadine (25), a nurse, says "I had no experience in cycling or canoeing, and when I said I was going with Martin his friends said I wouldn't last more than a couple of weeks – but still we are together!"

The pair have travelled 43,000 kilometres through Eastern Europe, Turkey, the Middle East, Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, India, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia and across central Australia to New Zealand.



When not cycling they paddle their folding canoe, which can be towed on a trailer behind Martin's bike. On the water it has carried the adventurers plus their bikes and 100 kilograms of luggage, food and water 3000 kilometres on the Danube, Ganges and Mekong Rivers.

Asked which country they have enjoyed the most, Martin and Nadine say "We love New Zealand, but besides Northern India with its awesome culture and landscape our favourite country so far is Iran. The people there are the kindest, friendliest and most hospitable we have met; and especially in the north their land is green, fertile and beautiful."

Whether staying with a family in Georgia, riding through winter snow in Syria, camping in the Egyptian desert, haggling in the markets of Lahore, drifting down the Ganges, climbing volcanoes in Indonesia or riding through the dead heart of Australia, the two travellers have made hundreds of friends.

Classifieds

Classified Ads: Are available to CTC members at no charge.

Snow Chains: Feeling tired? Things just keep sliding past? Get a grip; Snow chains for sale, never used \$65 ono. Suit small to medium car ("Speedy 40" will fit 155-13, 165/70/-13, 175/65-13 etc) Please phone Jim Western on 337 1958.

External Events of interest

Locator Beacons: The current 121.5 MHz locator beacons (the type the club owns and probably the type you own if you have one) will be obsolete from February 2009, when monitoring will cease. The powers-that-be recommend that you are fully upgraded to the new 406MHz beacons well before then. See www.beacons.org.nz for more detail.

Calendar of Trips and Social Events

Thursday 27 July

Club Night

Newsletter / training night: This is the usual origami session, followed by a short discussion on trip grades. Do you know what to expect when you sign up for an easy, moderate or hard graded club trip? Come along and join in a discussion about what club members think the grades mean.

Weekend 29-30 July

Leader: Richard Wills 389 8671

Beginner Snowcraft: Get good t' go in the sno bro ya know! Come and learn the basic skills of using an ice axe and crampons for safety and tramping in the snow or on steep slopes. Based at the Club Hut at Arthur's Pass.

Grade: Training
Closed: 20 Jul
Map: K33
Approx: \$25

Sunday 30 July

Leader: Bryce Williamson 351 6366

Mt Harper: (near Lake Emma) In the Erewhon region. Walk starts near Lake Camp. The climb to the summit (1829m) offers changing views of the Rangitata River headwaters. The northern view takes in the Lake Heron Basin and the craggy Arrowsmith Range.

Grade: Moderate
Closed: 27 Jul
Map: J36
Approx: \$25

Sunday 30 July

Leader: Required

Mt Misery: Is the north-east toe of the Black Range near Cass railway station. It's name is a misnomer. At 1765m, and a mere 1250m height gain, it affords a great climb, and views over the Waimakariri River and Lake Grasmere. Set your mind at rest and enjoy a good day.

Grade: ModHard
Closed: 27 Jul
Map: K34
Approx: \$25

Thursday 3 August

Club Night

Martin Lutz – Cycling and canoeing around the world: Martin and his partner Nadine Puschkasch are half way round the world on a five year cycling and canoeing odyssey that started in their home town of Limburg, Germany, in 2003. The pair have, so far, travelled 43,000 kilometres through Eastern Europe, Turkey, the Middle East, Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, India, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia and across central Australia to New Zealand.
(See earlier in the newsletter for more details.)

Weekend 5-6 August

Leader: Richard Wills 389 8671

Intermediate Snowcraft: In-town training session to "Learn the Ropes" of belaying on snow, glacier travel and crevasse extraction. Practise these rope techniques in comfortable surroundings before heading into the snow for Part 2 of the course on 12-13 August. Also learn skills in glacier route-finding and assessing avalanche risk. Experience in the use of ice axe and crampons is required. Check with Richard for gear required. Contact Richard for the Venue.

Grade: Training
Closed: 27 Jul
Map:
Approx: \$50

Weekend 5-6 August

Leader: Susan Pearson 337 4914

Jollie Brook: Lake Sumner Forest Park. Gabriel Stream/Jollie Brook circuit. (~22km round trip ~250m height gain) Lovely winter tramp for those who prefer not to climb mountains but want to keep the legs moving AND have a social weekend with a night out in a cosy traditional forestry hut. A couple of side trips give this popular tramp added appeal.
Park at Little Sisters carpark. Tramp ~7km up the Hurunui River terraces to old Gabriel Hut for lunch. Here view seekers can take a side trip to Lake Sumner. After lunch we will enjoy a change of scenery as the track climbs gently for the next 2km through pleasant bush to Gabriel Saddle. It's only a short way from the saddle down to the 7 bunk hut by Jollie Brook. An afternoon option for the hill addicted, is to climb a spur behind the hut. On Sunday we will follow the Jollie Brook down to the Hurunui and back to the cars.

Grade: Hard
Closed: 27 Jul
Map: M33 M32
Approx: \$35

Sunday 6 August	Leader: Ruth Gray 374 4276
Mt Aicken: In APNP, Mt Aicken is on the summit ridge east of Arthur's Pass township. Views of Mt Rolleston and beyond. 7 am start. Crampons and ice axe required.	Grade: Moderate Closes: 3 Aug Map: K33 Approx: \$25
Sunday 6 August	Leader: Required
Steepface Hill: Steepface Hill is near Mt Hutt, overlooking the Rakaia River. This hill is about 1900m high and is well known for a long and narrow scree which speeds up the descent. Crampons and ice axe required.	Grade: ModHard Closes: 3 Aug Map: K35 Approx: \$25
Thursday 10 August	Club Night
Packs night: We will be looking at what to carry in the pack for day and weekend trips, and then how to pack it into the pack. Come along and learn a few new ideas / tricks, and put forward your own ideas on how it should be done.	
Weekend 12-13 August	Leader: Richard Wills 389 8671
Intermediate Snowcraft: "On the Snow" training at Arthur's Pass. Apply the lessons learnt in Part 1 and find out how to use these techniques in real alpine conditions. Stay at the comfortable club hut and have 2 great days in the snow. Prepare for those adventurous alpine trips you have planned. An action packed weekend full of challenges, discovery and fun.	Grade: Training Closes: 3 Aug Map: K33 Approx: \$50
Weekend 12-13 August	Leader: Jeff Hall 332 9251
Lake Florence: Commencing up the Rolleston River track to above the bushline, then cross the river and attempt to find a cunning route avoiding scrub and bluffs on to the ridge and up to a high camp at Lake Florence. Should be enough time to wander up Anderson Peak or even have a go at Mt Armstrong. Homeward via the ridge and basins of the Barron Range to Mt Barron then down the track.	Grade: Hard Closes: 3 Aug Map: K33 Approx: \$40
Sunday 13 August	Leader: Warwick Dowling 366 2045
Cass – Sugarloaf: Popular hike with views of the Waimak and Craigieburn areas.	Grade: Moderate Closes: 10 Aug Map: K34 Approx: \$15
Sunday 13 August	Leader: Bernard Parawa 981 4931
Crater Rim Walkway: Gebbies Pass to Sign of Kiwi. Part three of a four part series. Bernard continues his sojourn on the Crater rim. 14km, 400m, undulating tracked terrain.	Grade: Easy Closes: 10 Aug Map: N36 N37 Approx: \$15
Thursday 17 August	Club Night
Gareth Rapley: is doing a presentation on his tramping exploits over the past few months. This includes many of the popular tramps of the Lower part of the South Island, from Stewart Island to the West Coast.	
Weekend 19-20 August	Leader: Doug Forster 337 5453
Sphinx - Jordan - Avoca : Walk in to the Anti Crow Hut on Friday night (1.5 hrs max). Saturday up the Anti Crow River and over Sphinx Saddle (1549m), then a wee way up the Avoca to Avoca Hut for the night. On Sunday down the Avoca and up to Jordan saddle. Depending on the weather either stay on the tops to enjoy the views and out down Hut Spur, or out via Jordan Stream.	Grade: Moderate Closes: 10 Aug Map: K34 Approx: \$30

Sunday 20 August	Leader: Bruce Miller 349 3611
Mt Oakden: Prominent stand alone peak beside Lake Coleridge. Mt Oakden provides superb views up the Wilberforce and Rakaia Rivers and to the main divide from Mt Cook to Arthur's Pass.	Grade: ModHard Closes: 17 Aug Map: K34 Approx: \$25
Sunday 20 August	Leader: Ken Brown 359 2000
Mt Plenty: An accessible tussock covered knob on a ridge leading up the Torlesse range from the west. Stunning views of the snow draped Cragieburn range. 6km, 600m height gain, untracked steep tussock mountainside. (Ice axe probably required this winter)	Grade: Easy Closes: 17 Aug Map: K34 L34 Approx: \$30
Thursday 24 August	Club Night
Nathan Watson is taking us to South Africa and Namibia: He will showing us an insight into the life of an instructor at Outward bounds in South Africa, and hopefully photos of his travels through Namibia.	
Saturday 26 August (or Sunday 27)	Leader: Philip Tree 349 3670
Akaroa to Purple Peak and Hinewai: Purple Peak overlooks the Akaroa settlement and Harbour. It's a reasonably friendly 646m height gain, from there it's on to Hinewai, a 1050ha private reserve for the protection and restoration of native vegetation and wildlife. See if you can spot the Tui.	Grade: Easy Closes: 24 Aug Map: N36 N37 Approx: \$20
Weekend 26-27 August	Leader: Andrew Wrapson 980 6006
Crow Hut: An easy winter weekend trip to the beautiful Crow Valley. The trip will go and return via the Waimakariri and Saturday will be spent in the new Crow Hut under the imposing face of Mt Rolleston. 13km, 350m height gain, untracked river bed, river crossing, tracked valley.	Grade: Easy Closes: 17 Aug Map: K33 Approx: \$25
Sunday 27 August	Leader: Required
Mt Taylor: Lake Heron region. Mt Taylor (2333m) is the highest point in the Canterbury foothills. Enjoy views of the lake and the Arrowsmiths. This will be a long day with long access requirements – note there will be an early start.	Grade: Hard Closes: 24 Aug Map: J35 K35 Approx: \$30
Thursday 31 August	Club Night
Newsletter folding followed by "Tramp Wise": After origami we will be having an informal discussion on "What happens if the trip does not go according to plan"? We will consider the options open to you, and then how you might put them into action.	
Saturday 2 September (or Sunday 3)	Leader: Bernard Parawa 981 4931
Crater Rim Walkway. 4) Sign of the Kiwi to Godley Head: The final installment of life in the backyard by Bernard. Crest the crater eastwards on easy tracks, past memorial shelters and popular climbing crags, to arrive at the breathtaking conclusion to this epic march. (GPS recommended and don't forget to spit on the Gondola.) 18km, 400m height gain, undulating tracked terrain.	Grade: Easy Closes: 31 Aug Map: N36 N37 Approx: \$10
Weekend 9-10 September	Leader: Jonathan Carr 351 1574
Lake Mavis: Lake Mavis (above Goat Pass) in the winter! Come and visit this very accessible mountain gem when it's all covered in snow. A winter wonderland and it will be a full moon as well , this should be magical. Ice axe and very warm winter gear will be needed. It's upgraded to ModHard only because of the need to camp in snow in the winter (talk to Jonathan if in doubt).	Grade: ModHard Closes: 31 Aug Map: K33 Approx: \$30

Sunday 10 September	Leader: Malcolm Carr 332 2581
Lake Rubicon: Out west past Springfield. A pleasant day hike that leads in over rolling farm land and on up the valley to the little gem that is Lake Rubicon nestled in the foothills. A perfect place for lunch. Further ramblings may be possible up the valley. 12km, 200m height gain.	Grade: Easy Closes: 7 Sep Map: K35 Approx: \$15
Sunday 10 September	Leader: Gareth Gilbert 355 7697
Mt White: Mt White stands above the Poulter River and Waimakariri in the SE corner of APNP. Some of the best views in the park.	Grade: Moderate Closes: 7 Sep Map: K33 Approx: \$20
Thursday 14 September	Club Night
CTC Photo Competition: It is back, after a break of several years. The categories will be:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landscape - Human interest - Humour - Flora / fauna 	
Prizes will be presented in each category, and the CTC photo competition trophy will be presented (if we can find it!!). Also your photographs - winners or not - could be selected (if you agree) for the club's 75th anniversary 2007 calendar.	
Entries close on the 7th , and must include a suitable caption, and the name of photographer. (Only 2 entries per category, per person allowed). Please get them to Sue Napier on or before that date. Prizes will be sponsored by Photo and Video International, Merivale Mall.	
Sunday 17 September	Leader: Required
Barnett Park to Mt Pleasant: Battlement Site to Evans Pass then to Barnett Park via Sumner. Meet at 9 am at Barnett Park to walk the new track to the Summit Rd.	Grade: Easy Closes: 14 Sep Map: K36 Approx: \$25
Sunday 17 September	Leader: Required
Mt Somers (1687m) via Pinnacles Hut: Walk starts at Sharplin Falls Scenic Reserve. From the summit of Mt Somers' prominent volcanic cone there's commanding views across the plains. Ice axe and crampons required.	Grade: Moderate Closes: 14 Sep Map: K36 Approx: \$25
Weekend 23-24 September	Leader: Warwick Dowling 366 2045
Black Hill Hut: Black Hill Hut is perched high up on the Puketeraki range with views as far as Christchurch. With good tracks and a cosy hut this is a great hut for a weekend away. There are good tops just above the hut to explore for the keen active party members.	Grade: Moderate Closes: 14 Sep Map: L34 Approx: \$30
Sunday 24 September	Leader: Required
Fox Peak: A high hill with wonderful views of the Mt Cook and Upper Rangitata regions.	Grade: Hard Closes: 21 Sep Map: I37 J37 Approx: \$40
Sunday 24 September	Leader: Bruce Miller 349 3611
Rabbit Hill: A prominent knob to the left of Porters Pass designed with day trippers in mind. Great country for rambling. The majestic Torlesse Range stands close by along with the café at Springfield.	Grade: Easy Closes: 21 Sep Map: K34 Approx: \$15

Trip Reports

25 June 2006

Foggy Peak

After the big snow, we knew that there would be lots of the white stuff up to Foggy peak and all the way to The Gap. The weather promised us a perfect day with lots of sun and minimal wind.

I was wavering between the challenge of keeping up with the moderate hard gang heading up to The Gap and the social pleasures of the easier trip to Foggy peak, when I learnt that Bernard was taking his toboggan. Well, that clinched it, there was no other activity available to us that day to rival the hysteria and hilarity of the toboggan.

When we arrived at Porters Pass, it was bitterly cold, so we got dressed up and headed up the hill as quickly as we could. It was a fantastic sunny day but our side of the hill was in complete shade. No matter, we soon warmed up as we pushed up the hillside through the snow. Luckily we were not the first and there were plenty of footsteps to follow so that we only 'fell through' infrequently.

Julie was a little alarmed at first, telling us that this was her first tramp in snow and it didn't seem that 'easy' to her. However, once she had warmed up a bit and slowed down a bit, we all got into a better rhythm and time passed and we got higher and higher.

Soon all the keen Gap trampers had passed us, attacking the hillside with will and determination. I was not envious, as their pace precluded any friendly chat and that was my mood for the day.



Before we knew it we were at the 1500m false peak, where we had a good scroggin stop and admired the incredibly snowy view. Lake Lyndon's curvy edges looked cold and icy, advancing evenly towards the Lake's centre. I do hope it freezes over again this year like it did a few years back, to make another free huge rink for the skaters.

At this height there was rime ice on cairns and posts pointing into the source of the snowy weather, and provided photographic opportunities.

The last 240m of grunt then got us to the top, to enjoy the sun which was, at last, bathing us with warmth as we ate our lunch. Some plucky skiers had climbed the mountain in their plastic ski boots and we watched as they unclamped their skis from their packs and whooshed off to seek their thrills.

Bernard had scouted around the peak and found that the slope leading off generally westwards had promise for tobogganing. A little way down the slope was a sort of gentle dishing in the hillside which lent itself, he felt to stopping. We watched, while he trialed the run 2 or 3 times, always swerving at the gentle dishing and bailing out into the snow. Then he generously offered the handsome orange chariot to me to ride.



I got in with adrenaline starting to flow, holding on tightly to the leash and listening to Bernard's directions to bail out when I got to the dimple in the hill.

"Don't hold onto the leash, hold onto the sides, its easier to steer." Bernard said.

"But won't the sled just keep going when I bail out?" I replied.

"No" said Bernard, "I've done it 2 or 3 times now and it was no problem."

So I obeyed my leader, I let go the leash, and held onto the sides.

"Whoosh!", I was off.

Almost immediately, I could see the depression in the hillside approaching faster and faster, I was breathless with excitement and the anticipation of my up and coming snow bath. I was, I remembered, at the top of a 1741m mountain and all ways led down – a long way down.

"Poof!", I was face down in the snow and laughing, then as I sat up, I just caught sight of the toboggan, which was still going, down the slope.....

I didn't need to go look further to know that this was the end of our tobogganing fun for this day.

Poor Bernard, his fun was over, poor Asami, Rene and Julie, theirs had not even begun and poor me, for not listening to my own advice, rather than Bernard's.

The toboggan probably ended up in the creek, somewhere between the Mt Plenty spur off Castle Peak ridge and Foggy peak. Maybe the club should mount an exploratory trip to go find it?

Would be tobogganers were: Julie, Asami, Bernard, Rene & Susan (scribe)

Reward

Offered for safe return of much loved family pet toboggan.

Taken for a run out on Foggy Peak on 25 June and last seen failing to self-arrest and heading into the far distance. Could be trying to head for home. Or maybe the West Coast. Or Iceland. No collar.

If you can help please contact Uncle Bernard

Castle Hill Peak (1998m)

And now from the group who forwent toboggans and conversation in favour of a little more altitude. Like Susan's party, we did not hang around at Porters Pass and warmed up chugging up Foggy Peak. The two CTC groups were by no means the only ones out there – there were more trampers around than I have ever seen in one place in New Zealand, and a few skiers and snowboarders as well. We kept up a steady pace and were grateful to the people ahead of us for the step plugging. Naturally we (well, Ian, mostly) tried our best to catch them up so as to be able to do our bit, but we arrived on the Castle Hill Peak to find them already ensconced. Plenty of room though, stunning views, sun, and a really good atmosphere as more people arrived and celebrated a great tramping day after so much bad weather.

Over lunch we had an extensive discussion about whether to aim for our original objective – The Gap - and head out down the Kowai to the Big Tree carpark, or go to the Gap and back the same way, or not do the Gap at all. What about access to the Gap given the soft snow conditions? What about the safety and comfort implications of a gully full of soft snow on the Kowai exit? Was there enough time? And, most importantly, who would be plugging steps for us since the other groups were going back the same way? By talking about it for long enough we were able to conclude that there was not enough time for the full Gap option anyway. Trevor and Scott were generously happy to go back the same way and pick the rest of us up if we chose a different route home, and leader Ruth eventually managed to get a consensus to head out down a northern spur in the warm sun.

Leaving Trevor and Scott we set off to point 1941 and then dropped down the spur to eventually meet up with Ghost Creek. Emma cautiously enjoyed her first bumslide on a nice bit of slope with a good runout, with Richard offering moral support. There was quite a lot of foundering in the snow in the gullies and we compared the performance of different brands of gaiter. Once down on the flat beside the creek the going was much easier. By then however we had lost the sun and for me at least it seemed a long walk down the creek and then Porter River to the road bridge (looking at the map I can see that it was not that far really). This route does make a good loop out of the Castle Hill Peak trip. Trevor and Scott were waiting with the cars, the sun was just going down – perfect timing to head to Springfield and the wonderful Kowai Café for pies, scones, and lots and lots of tea.

Trampers - Ruth Gray, Emma Richardson, Richard Lobb, Trevor Scott, Scott Fowler, Ian Dunn, Jenny Harlow

Trovatore (1737m)

Is there no limit to the opera range? Il Trovatore (Giuseppe Verdi, 1813-1901) is a mind-bogglingly complex tale of evil counts, gypsies, self-sacrifice, revenge and (as usual) various incredibly affecting operatic death scenes. Makes you think twice about going on a tramp there really. And, after that build-up, it was disappointingly uneventful – not a witch, count or gypsy in sight, wearing crampons or otherwise.

Five of us squashed into Bruce's car to head off from Christchurch at 6am on Sunday morning, spent most of the journey trying to adjust the middle passenger seatbelt, and met Jonathan at the Deer Valley carpark in Lewis Pass. From there we set off on the track up towards Travers (more trivia – named, like the Travers range, after William Thomas Locke Travers, 1819-1903, New Zealand lawyer, politician, explorer and naturalist who named the Ada, Henry, Boyle and Anne rivers and traced the source of the Waiatu) and made good progress until we got to the snow line and were hampered a little by some tree fall and soft drifts. At the bush line we emerged to a stunningly beautiful clear day and continued upwards to get above the bluffs and then traversed the snow basin between Travers and Travers and then climbed up on Trovatore itself. Clive did a great job plugging most of the steps – even Freddie was impressed (“you're plugging and I'm still having difficulty keeping up with you”) while Jonathan promised us a great descent into the stream running down from Henry saddle (had enough trivia? The Henry, on the other side of the saddle, is named after Travers' son apparently). After admiring the ice formations on the aerial on Trovatore we continue along the range to the north-east, towards Jonathan's bum-sliding mecca. In the event, the slope was a little hard at the top and only Freddie and Clive (with all due caution) started their slide from there while Jonathan encouraged me, David and Bruce to descend until the snow was a more friendly consistency. David opted to walk down in the end rather than endure the numb-bum side effects of bum sliding in shorts, but Bruce and I had a great slide down with a very safe run-out.

From there we rock-hopped down the stream/right branch Maruia to the St James footbridge and then took the track back to the Lewis Pass carpark, and then down the Rolleston track back to the cars well before dark.

Thanks everyone for another great trip.

Trampers - Alastair Brown (Freddie), Jonathan Carr, Clive Marsh, Bruce Miller, David Ellison-Smith, Jenny Harlow

Please have stuff for the next newsletter to the editor (editor@ctc.org.nz) by Friday, 25 August – Thanks.