



# ***THE CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPER***

Published by CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPING CLUB INC  
PO Box 527, Christchurch. [www.ctc.org.nz](http://www.ctc.org.nz)

Affiliated with the Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc.

Any similarity between the opinions expressed in this newsletter and Club policy is purely coincidental.

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*Laurent checks the ice. Travers-Trovatore trip – photo credit: Bryce Williamson*

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. We have a club hut in Arthurs Pass and have gear available for hire to members. Membership rates per year are \$50 member, \$70 couple, \$30 junior or associate, with a \$10 discount for members who opt to obtain this newsletter electronically.

For more about how the club operates, see the last two pages.

## **Calendar of trips and Social Events**

**Trips:** Unless otherwise stated, club trips depart either from 'Z' Carlton Corner Service Station (formerly Shell) at 1 Papanui Road (next to Liquor Land and opposite Derby Street) or from Caltex Russley on the corner of Russley Road and Yaldhurst Rd. If the departure point is not specified in the trip schedule, you may assume it's 'Z' Carlton. Day trips usually depart at 8am on Saturday or Sunday. Weekend trips may leave on either Friday evening or Saturday morning.

New or prospective members intending to go on any trip must sign up at club night or contact the trip leader in advance.

**CTC OVERDUE TRIPS:** Members/family/partners or a nominated person concerned about a trip being overdue should firstly discuss this with a Club Officer when they feel that the trip is delayed. Refer to the list of Club Officers on the back of the newsletter and on the club website. Club Officers know where to obtain copies of the Trip Lists containing the names and addresses of the party members with their vehicle registration details etc. This will greatly assist Police Search and Rescue. The Club Officer can then contact the Police

directly. Concerned people should keep trying different numbers until they actually contact a Club Officer (DO NOT LEAVE MESSAGES). We recommend that concerned people start with the Club Captain, then the Gear Custodian, then the Presidents, then the Trip Organisers, then people listed under Our Club Hut - if no contact can be made then the Police. Members (particularly Trip Leaders) please discuss this arrangement with your loved ones so they are aware of this procedure.

**Social:** We meet on Wednesdays 7:30 pm at the CMLC (Canterbury Mineral & Lapidary Club) building at 110 Waltham Road, Waltham. This new building, beside and on the south side of Waltham School, is about 100m south of the Brougham St/Waltham Rd intersection. Waltham Road is the southern extension of Barbadoes Street. For a map go to [www.ctc.org.nz](http://www.ctc.org.nz) and click the *Social Calendar* link. A variety of social functions are organised, the atmosphere is informal, and tea and biscuits served. If you can give a presentation or have ideas, please phone Kay Taylor 03-3584580 or email [kaytaylor30@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kaytaylor30@xtra.co.nz). Please note that formalities start at 7:50 pm sharp, and if there is a guest speaker, he/she will start at 8 pm sharp.

Wednesday 28 June		Club Night
<p><b>Newsletter Folding Evening:</b> Newsletter Folding and a general catch-up at the club rooms. The suggestion is we use newsletter night to have "lightning" talks: one or two short talks showing photos from a (fairly) recent trip by a club member. This is designed for members who just want to show a few photos of a recent trip in an informal way, after newsletter folding. The evening's topic will be sent to club members via email by Monday night. Please contact me if you'd like to talk.</p>		
Saturday 1 July		Leader: Kay Taylor 03358-4580 <a href="mailto:kaytaylor30@xtra.co.nz">kaytaylor30@xtra.co.nz</a>
Departure point: Sequoia Restaurant, Redwood Hotel, 340 Main North Road or contact leader		
<p><b>Mid Winter Breakfast Buffet Buster:</b> Breakfast Cost :\$19.90 Followed by Loo-Loo Award and an easy Buffet Buster walk. Aiming for Pines Beach/Woodend Beach area for the walk. Easy grade, flat walking. Option to meet us at start of walk. My contact details: 03 3584580 or 0221526158</p>		<p>Grade: Easy/Social Closes: 29 Jun Map: Approx: \$5</p>



on Josh's Waiuta - Big River Hut trip – photo credit: Jonathan Carr

Saturday 1 July

**Mid Winter Breakfast Sequoia Restaurant 7.30am:** Hi Everyone, pencil this date into your calendars. It's time for a hearty breakfast together followed by the awarding of the Loo-Loo Trophy!. An easy "Buffet-Buster" walk to follow. The Mid Winter Breakfast Venue is Sequoias Restaurant, Redwood Hotel, 340 Main North Road. There is parking accessed off Preston's Road in the Redwood Tavern car park (turnoff is by Liquorland). There is also parking, including disability, in front of the Hotel reception, accessed off the Main North Road. The cost is Adults \$19.90. Children 5-12 yrs \$9.90 and under fives are free. The menu covers both cereal and buffet options, and you aren't limited to either/or: you can have cereal and buffet! Please sign-up for the breakfast by any of the following means: trips online, club night list, e-mail me at kaytaylor30@xtra.co.nz, or ring me on 03 3584580 or txt 0221526158. Please sign up by Wednesday 28th June, so I can let the hotel know approx numbers. Don't forget the Loo-Loo awards are deliberated on and awarded after the Breakfast. There is a "Buffet Buster" easy walk afterwards. We'll be leaving from Sequoia's and heading northwards to the Waimak area. Hope to see lots of club members up early and socialising!

Weekend 1-2 July

Leader: Eric Skea skea.eric@gmail.com

Departure point: Caltex Russley

**Pfeifer Biv, Mt Pfeifer:** Pfeifer Tops, Pfeifer Biv: A trip close to the road but with a real back-country feel. You start at the Deception swing bridge on the Highway 73, follow Paratu stream up to Waharoa Saddle before climbing to the tops on a recently cut route. Then easy tussock tops are followed to Pfeifer Biv which has good camping beside it. Day 2 is a little harder, up and around Mt Pfeifer before descending the long spur to Lake Kaurapataka. Some bush bashing required. The track is then followed back to the road. A good trip with lots of variety and great views.

Grade: Moderate+  
(requires  
snow skills)

Closed: 22 Jun

Map: BU20 BV20  
BV21

Approx: \$40

Wednesday 5 July

Club Night

**Guided Cycle Touring in India, Japan and Peru with Geoff Gabites:** "Tonight we're lucky to have well-known mountaineer Geoff Gabites, who is the co-founder of Macpac, one of NZ's most iconic outdoor equipment brands. Geoff and his wife Shelley founded Dunedin company "Wilderness Equipment", then merged with "Macpac" in 1980 to form "Macpac Wilderness Equipment". Their classic pack the Torre Egger was the first internally framed pack. Geoff has moved away from tramping and climbing over the last 20 years into guided outdoor adventure pursuits. He founded cycle touring, trekking and hiking company "Adventure South" and more latterly "Cycle Journeys", which offers a range of NZ cycle tours including the Alps 2 Ocean cycle trail. Geoff has the pedals turning in stunning overseas locations. Tonight he'll cover fully guided cycling on the 470 km long Leh to Manali Highway in Northern India, over high passes up to 5,000m, and closed by snow for 8 months a year. He'll then take us cycling in Japan and Peru. Come along for a great evening on the bike seat through some fabulous scenery and different cultures."

Saturday 8 July		Leader: Michael Newlove 355-8360 newmike@slingshot.co.nz	
<p><b>Tiromoana Bush:</b> This easy trip follows a walkway to the east of the Kate Valley Landfill. The track loops around from the Mt Cass Road to a cliff lookout, ( Tiromoana means "view of the sea"). We will go to a beach - Mackintosh Bay - and then up to Ella Peak, 346m. Return via the Ella Ponds Wetlands which are being protected and restored.</p>		<p>Grade: Easy Closes: 6 Jul Map: BV24 BV25 Approx: \$15</p>	
Wednesday 12 July			
<p><b>"High Places": Trekking in Nepal, India and Bhutan.:</b> "High Places" is an independent trekking company based in Nelson and run by Bob and Mary Lancaster. Their company offers treks in many parts of the world, and tonight Mary will talk tonight about the treks she has done in Nepal, Bhutan and India, including the Everest 3 Passes trip.</p>			
Saturday 15 July		Leader: Alan Ross 384-6425 alan_sue@xtra.co.nz	
<p><b>Mt Thomas Circuit:</b> The usual up the steep way to the tower, then traverse the open tops and down the less steep way. All on track</p>		<p>Grade: EasyMod Closes: 13 Jul Map: BT23 Approx: \$15</p>	
Saturday 15 July		Leader: Bryce Williamson 021-0232-2310	
<p><b>Porters Pass - Rabbit Hill - Trig 1660 MacFarlane Stream Circuit:</b> Interesting circuit south of Porters in the Korowai Torlesse Tussocklands Park. This area is considered a key site for the protection of high country landscapes and ecosystems. The trip makes a 19km circuit with a long initial climb, and a further climb at the end out of MacFarlane Stream, earning its moderate hard grading. Leader needed.</p>		<p>Grade: ModHard Closes: 13 Jul Map: BW20 Approx: \$15</p>	
Weekend 15-16 July		Leader: Natasha Sydorenko 0223140684	
<p><b>Lake Man Biv, Doubtful Range:</b> Lake Man &amp; Doubtful Range: Meet at 7am. Drive to just past the Engineers Camp on SH7. Ford the Boyle, Doubtful and Kedron Rivers to Lake Man and the Doubtful Range (about 13km with a height gain of 1000m). Enjoy the magnificent views of the range. Camp next to Lake Man if the weather is good or next to/in the bivouac if it's not (space is limited around the biv). Return via the the Doubtful tops (~13km).</p>		<p>Grade: Moderate Closes: 6 Jul Map: BU22 BU23 Approx: \$40</p>	

Wednesday 19 July		Club Night
<p><b>The Larapinta Trail, MacDonnell Ranges, Central Australia:</b> Tonight Sue Piercey, from the Peninsular Tramping Club, is talking about her hike along the spectacular Larapinta Long Distance Trail in the Northern territory of Australia. For 200 km it winds its way along the backbone of the MacDonnell Range, north of Alice Springs. This is a shared evening with members of the Peninsular Tramping Club.</p>		
Long Weekend 21-23 July		Leader: Ivo Rongen Bill Johnson
<p><b>Mueller Hut:</b> A trip to the popular Mueller Hut, in Mt Cook National Park. Depart Fri evening for Mt Cook Village and spend the night at one of the club lodges and head up to Mueller Sat morning. Option to build snow shelters in the afternoon then have a pot luck in Mueller Hut and warm up before spending the night in our igloos / snow caves / the hut. As this trip is weather and avalanche conditions dependent, the trip may change/cancelled as a result. The trip leader will confirm the status of the trip closer to the time.</p>	<p>Grade: Moderate+ (requires snow skills)</p> <p>Closes: 13 Jul</p> <p>Map: BX15 BY15</p> <p>Approx: \$50 + hut fee</p>	
Saturday 22 July Departure point: Z Station Papanui		Leader: Bernhard Parawa 337 3125 gerryparawa@hotmail.com
<p><b>Mt Bruce:</b> Mt Bruce via Cora Lynn station. Head up to Mt Bruce from car park &amp; return via Lagoon Saddle. ice axe &amp; crampons and knowledge of how to use them required</p>	<p>Grade: Moderate (requires snow skills)</p> <p>Closes: 20 Jul</p> <p>Map: BW20</p> <p>Approx: \$25</p>	
Weekend 22-23 July		Leader: Steve Bruerton 322-6196
<p><b>Snow shoes and crosscountry skiing at Snow Park NZ:</b> Do you enjoy tramping around snow clad mountains but hate having to plug steps? Then this trip is for you. Staying at a comfortable warm lodge at Snow Farm we will hire snow shoes and do day trips over the Pisa Range. You can also bring ski touring gear if you prefer. Leaving Friday night. Early sign-up essential. A deposit will need to be paid prior to departing on the trip.</p>	<p>Grade: Varies: Depends on how hard you want to go</p> <p>Closes: 13 Jul</p> <p>Map: CB21</p> <p>Approx: Car \$35 + Hut fee \$30 + Gear hire</p>	

Sunday 23 July		Leader: Michael Newlove 355-8360 newmike@slingshot.co.nz	
<p><b>Kaka Hill:</b> From Harper Road, pick up a 4WD track off to the left just past Lake Georgina adjacent to a swamp. Follow the left hand track up and along the ridge line over Point 994, Kaka Hill and Point 959. Follow the track down to a fence line, then out to the road.</p>		<p>Grade: Easy Closes: 20 Jul Map: BW20 Approx: \$25</p>	
Wednesday 26 July		Club Night	
<p><b>Newsletter Folding Evening:</b> Newsletter Folding and a general catch-up at the club rooms. The suggestion is we use newsletter night to have "lightning" talks: one or two short talks showing photos from a (fairly) recent trip by a club member. This is designed for members who just want to show a few photos of a recent trip in an informal way, after newsletter folding. The evening's topic will be sent to club members via email by Monday night. Please contact me if you'd like to talk.</p>			
Saturday 29 July		Leader: Alan Ross 384-6425 alan_sue@xtra.co.nz	
<p><b>Mt Oxford:</b> Just up and Down. Ideal for an Easy Mod person to push them selves</p>		<p>Grade: Moderate Closes: 27 Jul Map: BW22 Approx: \$15</p>	
Weekend 29-30 July		Leader: Shaun Wong 021 234 6847	
<p><b>Double Hut and Mt Taylor Special:</b> Double Hut and Mt Taylor Special: We'll leave Christchurch on Saturday morning then take a leisurely walk into Double Hut along the Swinn River Track, starting by Lake Hill carpark. We'll establish camp at Double Hut, enjoy the view and look for the rumoured Sir Edmond Hillary's graffiti in the character rustic muster hut with a wood burner heater. On the following day the Mod/Hard group will make an early start with light packs to Mt Taylor (2333m) with a vertical gain of 1450 m. The easy group will take the track back past Isolated Hill. Two separate car groups and a second leader (any volunteers) would be ideal.</p>		<p>Grade: Easy and Mod/Hard Closes: 20 Jul Map: BX19 Approx: \$30</p>	

Sunday 30 July	Leader: Chris McGimpsey 027 657 3070 judychris@xnet.co.nz
<b>TORTIS tour #18:</b> beginners guide to getting lost and what to do about it, plus some general navigation & bushcraft skills. Bring your normal day pack & gear, a good lunch and a sense of humour - some pre-torn clothes may be useful as the trip does involve some bush bashing. Bring your GPS and/or compass if you have one , but it is not essential because they will be provided for the navigation part of the exercise. We will stop at the Rangiora pub for tea and a debrief on the way home	Grade: Moderate - easy pace Closes: 27 Jul Map: Approx: \$20
Sunday 30 July	Leader: Bryce Williamson 021-0232-2310 bryce.williamson68@gmail.com
<b>Winterslow Range:</b> The Winterslow Range is aligned east-west and immediately north of Mt Somers. From the Woolshed Creek car park, we will follow the Mt Somers Track north and then east, past the hut and up to the saddle above ~1150m. At the saddle we will leave the track and climb north to Pt 1625 m then turn west along the spine of the range towards Peache Saddle. Descent options back to the hut could be down to and along Woolshed Creek or to follow the ridge between Woolshed Creek and Morgan Stream. If people are interested, there is the possibility of walking into Mt Somers Hut on Saturday and overnighiting.	Grade: Moderate+ (requires snow skills) Closes: 27 Jul Map: BX19 Approx: \$35
Wednesday 2 August	Club Night
<b>Citizen Science Kea Project:</b> Tonight Mark Brabyn or another team member from the "Citizen Science Kea Project" is coming to talk to us about their work to stop the on-going decline of our unique, mischievous and highly intelligent mountain parrot. Topics will cover monitoring kea numbers in the back country, and educating people about the kea".	
Long Weekend 4-6 August	Leader: Adrian Busby 325-5001
<b>Basic Snow craft course:</b> Adrian will run Basic Snow Craft Course this year. Course will cover the basics of walking on snow & on ice, strapping on & walking in crampons, the basic uses of an ice-axe including self-arrest, types of snow, terrain & avalanche awareness, and more. We will stay in the club hut on Friday and Saturday nights 4 & 5 August, returning home 7 pm Sunday 6 August. Come to a club meeting and put your name down early on that list or you can contact the leader to book your place in the list as numbers strictly limited and this course always fills up fast!! This course is for club members only and \$30 advance hut fees deposit required.	Grade: Training Closes: 27 Jul Map: BV20 Approx: \$40-\$70

Saturday 5 August		Leader: Michael Newlove 355-8360 newmike@slingshot.co.nz	
<p><b>Rakaia Gorge Walkway / Terrace Downs:</b> Starting at the gorge bridge, follow walkway. Half way along, over a stile, through a horse paddock, then a 4WD track up to Terrace Downs itself. From there, skirt round the edge of the golf course and a farm track to the end of the walkway which is followed back to the gorge bridge.</p>		Grade: Easy	Closes: 3 Aug
		Map: BX20	Approx: \$30
Weekend 5-6 August		Leader: Eric Skea skea.eric@gmail.com	
Departure point: Contact Leader			
<p><b>Mt Guinevere:</b> A beautiful little peak in Arthurs Pass behind Crow hut. Leave at a sociable hour on Saturday for a nice womble in to the hut. Climb the peak on Sunday morning before walking out in the afternoon. Plan B if only Saturday has good weather: leave straight after work Friday night and walk in to Crow Hut in the dark, then do the climb Saturday morning.</p>		Grade: ModHard (requires snow skills)	Closes: 27 Jul
		Map: BV20	Approx: \$20 + Hut Fees
Wednesday 9 August		Club Night	
<p><b>Snow/Winter Training Evening:</b> Tonight club member Adrian Busby, an active member of Land SAR and a long time alpine skills instructor, is talking about equipment and safe travel in the winter alpine environment. More details to follow.</p>			
Weekend 12-13 August		Leader: Bill Johnson 022 049 3453	
Departure point: Contact Leader			
<p><b>Igloo and Snow Cave Experience:</b> Learn to build an igloo or snow cave and sleep in it! Dinner and breakfast at Mt Cheeseman Lodge</p>		Grade: EasyMod	Closes: 3 Aug
		Map: K34	Approx: \$25
Tuesday 15 August		Leader: Manpreet (Mani) Singh	
<p><b>Trip Leaders Course - CMLC clubrooms:</b> Are you already leading CTC club trips or are you thinking about becoming a trip leader or do you lead or organise private trips for your tramping buddies? Well this is the course for you. It only takes an evening and covers CTC trip leading procedures, leadership styles, available club resources and equipment, risk management and more. Put your name down on the list. Venue: CMLC Clubrooms, 7 pm - 9.30 pm approx. The course will be flexible for dates, timings and venue depending on the group. If you are interested please contact Manpreet (Mani) Singh preet323@gmail.com</p>		Grade: Training	Closes: 10 Aug
		Map:	Approx:

Wednesday 16 August		Club Night
<p><b>Denali/Mt McKinley, Alaska:</b> Club member and mountaineer Bill Johnson is talking about his recent trip to climb Denali. Bill bivvied at 19,600 m, just 700m below the summit at 20,320 m. Although his gear was rated to -40° C, he says temperatures were around -60° C and the extreme cold a real challenge to deal with. While summit day was thwarted by the weather, Bill had a great trip and has some fantastic photos to show us.</p>		
Weekend 19-20 August		Leader: Andrew Tromans 337-3925
Departure point: Contact Leader		
<p><b>Mt Greenlaw:</b> Mt Greenlaw is the second highest in the Arthurs Pass area and sits in a fascinating area. The approach route is still to decided but will most likely involve walking in on Saturday and climbing early on Sunday morning. More details in next months newsletter</p>	<p>Grade: ModHard (requires snow skills)</p> <p>Closes: 10 Aug</p> <p>Map: BV20</p> <p>Approx: \$25</p>	
Wednesday 23 August		Club Night
<p><b>Dusky Sound Track, Fiordland National Park:</b> Club member Gort Stephan is talking about his trip to FNP and tramping the Dusky Sound Track. More details to follow.</p>		
Weekend 26-27 August		Leader: Manpreet (Mani) Singh
<p><b>Intermediate Snow craft course:</b> Aug-Sep Date TBD: External Instructor: Returning by popular demand, we will be running an intermediate snow craft course. This is a great opportunity for members who want to improve their alpine skills, learn proper rope skills for glacier travel, crevasse rescue and how to safely tackle steeper snow routes. Please note that there is an approximate cost of \$250 per person for the course on top of travel and accommodation costs. This is not a beginner's course - you must be confident in using ice axe and crampons. The date has not been confirmed with the instructor but if you are interested, please contact the trip organiser asap - first in first served. Last year this course filled quickly!</p>	<p>Grade: Training</p> <p>Closes: 17 Aug</p> <p>Map:</p> <p>Approx:</p>	
Sunday 27 August		Leader: Chris McGimpsey 027 657 3070 judychris@xnet.co.nz
<p><b>TORTIS tour #19:</b> beginners guide to getting lost and what to do about it, plus some general navigation &amp; bushcraft skills. Bring your normal day pack &amp; gear, a good lunch and a sense of humour - some pre-torn clothes may be usefull as the trip does involve some bush bashing. Bring your GPS and/or compass if you have one , but it is not essential because they will be provided for the navigation part of the exercise. We will stop at the Rangiora pub for tea and a debrief on the way home</p>	<p>Grade: Moderate - easy pace</p> <p>Closes: 24 Aug</p> <p>Map:</p> <p>Approx: \$20</p>	

Multi day trip 2-10 September Departure point: Contact Leader		Leader: Bill Johnson Tom Hu 022 049 3453	
<b>Mt Taranaki and Mt Ruapehu Ascent:</b> Tom and I sharing a rental car from Wellington for a winter ascent of Taranaki via Syme hut. We have room for 2 more in our rental car. Afterwards Tom will attempt Mt Ruapehu or just Tiki tour around the Central Plateau. Departing Jetstar Sat 2 July 7am for Wellington. Returning Jetstar Sunday 10 September 8.20am from Wellington. You may join us for part or all of the trip.		Grade: ModHard (requires snow skills)	Closes: 24 Aug Map: BJ29 BJ34 Approx: \$unknown
Weekend 9-10 September		Leader: Natasha Sydorenko 0223140684	
<b>Mt Wakefield:</b> Departing on Friday night, climb Saturday via the standard route. Either head back on Saturday night or cruise back on Sunday		Grade: ModHard (requires snow skills)	Closes: 31 Aug Map: BX15 Approx: \$60 + Camping or Hut Fee
Long Weekend 22-24 September Departure point: Contact Leader		Leader: Bill Johnson 022 049 3453	
<b>Almer Hut   Franz Josef Glacier:</b> Over night trip to historic Almer Hut overlooking the stunning Franz Josef Glacier. Well leave Fri evening and stay at a backpackers or camp in Franz Josef. Sat morning we'll helicopter up to Almer Hut. Options from there include climbing St Mildred or Drummond peak (hard option) or just hanging out at the hut and enjoying the view (easy option). Other options depending on what the group wants.		Grade: Moderate Hard Challenge plus Easier options	Closes: 14 Sep Map: BX16 BX15 Approx: Contact Leader



*on Josh's Waiuta - Big River Hut trip – photo credit: Jonathan Carr*

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## Trip Reports

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23-24 May 2017

### Waikiti Hut

The track up to Waikiti hut is a nightmare. There's nothing wrong with the track per se, it's just a relentless slog up a rough track which is constantly climbing or dropping and sidling and is over grown with bushes and roots. Rapid travel in this area seems impossible. There are two sections where we need to use fitted chains, once to climb over a house size rock and a second time to scramble down to the bridge spanning the river. Soon after the bridge there is a flat section of track where we are able to walk normally and quickly and it seems to offer hope that the track will finally settle down and there is easy walking ahead. But no, this a trap! Designed to raise your hopes only to smash them to pieces. All too soon the track starts to climb and we are forced to resume the painful grind up and down, clambering over tree roots and around holes. There are also a number of large slips that need to be negotiated as well.

After what seems like an eternity, but in reality is only about seven hours, we come out into the top of the valley. It is a beautiful place in the evening light and, after passing a noisy blue duck, we reach the hut. Jeff gets the fire started and we cook dinner and discuss our plans for the next day. Reading the intentions book we learn that Logjam creek and Crane creek are both rough and make for slow travel and we reason we would probably not have

enough time to complete the trip as planned in daylight. It says something about the day's travel that Jeff and Max are very reluctant to return the same way we came along the track and they cook up an idea to climb onto the East ridge and follow it back to the car. In their minds, a thousand metre drop off a ridge through scrub and untracked bush at the end of a day is preferable to the track. Lynette is non-committal, but I don't like the idea of facing that track again either, so we agree to take the alternate route.

We leave soon after dawn and begin by dragging ourselves up through steep untracked bush to reach a spur that will lead us up to our chosen ridge. Once on the spur, the gradient backs off a bit but we are still forcing ourselves through west coast bush. Eventually we enter the alpine scrub zone and are able to follow a deer trail to a high point where we have great views in every direction. The idea was to maintain this altitude and sidle along under the high points in the ridge, a plan which worked well for the most part. Given the participants in this trip, it was not surprising that I was the slow one in the group, but at least the others had time to admire the views. All I could do was keep moving, pausing briefly to drink or eat, before continuing the march. Eventually we reached the end of the ridge and our drop off point back to the road.

We drop directly off the ridge and plunge immediately into thick west coast scrub. It was the familiar routine of squeezing around, climbing over and sliding underneath the slightly less dense areas of vegetation – the usual scrub-gymnastics. Eventually the scrub gives way to bush and the gradient very gradually becomes less steep. But it is getting dark and we need to pull out our headlamps. Eventually, and with great personal relief, we encounter farm fences and soon after, a dirt road.

Now there is only a few kms walk back along the farm road to where we left the car. Jeff, with boundless energy, marches ahead while the rest of us follow more sedately. We get most of the way before we met Jeff driving back along the road to meet us. We finish walking just before 9pm which made it a 13 hour day and which left me wondering if the track was really that bad after all?

Participants; Jeff Hall, Lynette Hartley, Max DeLacy, Andrew Tromans

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3-5 June 2017

## Royal Hut via Stag Saddle

57.7 km and 2750 m total ascent. Eight participants: Andrew Tromans (leader), Max De Lacy, Jack O'Connor, Lynette Hartley, Tomyu Hu, Dayle Drummond, David Selway and Bryce Williamson.

**Day 1: Mt Gerald Station to Royal Hut via Meuzenberg Peak -- 19.5 km and 1370 m total ascent over 8 hours and 20 minutes.**

Initially it was suggested that this trip would involve a Friday-night departure, camping overnight in the Tekapo region for an early Saturday morning start. But Andrew changed his mind and decided on a 5 am departure from the Caltex Russley – which meant getting up at the ungodly hour of 4 am!

Seven of us met at the petrol station, well before the sun had even thought about rising, and headed off down SH1 in two cars and in almost no traffic. We regathered briefly in Tinwald before heading through to Fairlie for early morning pies and a rendezvous with Max. The weather was calm but with thick, low cloud. We were expecting a transformation to clear blue skies after Burkes Pass, but were wrong – the clouds descended further to form a dense fog. In Max's car there was grumbling about Andrew having not put enough effort into arranging the weather. However, soon after we turned

right onto Lilybank Road we popped out into clear, cold, high-country air. Andrew's efforts were not to be doubted.

We parked at Coal Stream and by 9 am we were on our way across tussocky farmland, first quite flat, then up increasingly steep terrace steps to the 1300-m contour. We then turned sharply north and followed a farm track for about 1300 m to Rex Simpson Hut, a venue owned by Alpine Recreation, where we had first lunch. Just after 11.30 am, we started the steepish 200-m climb onto a razor-backed lateral moraine that goes by the unofficial name of Snake Ridge. Snake Ridge climbs steadily, about 750 m over six or seven kilometres, to Beuzenberg Peak (2070 m), which stands about 150 m above Stag Saddle, the highest point of the Te Araroa Trail.

With a stop for second lunch on Snake Ridge, we reached Beuzenberg Peak just before 3 pm. After about 20 minutes of lingering for photos and peak-spotting, we headed east down some jumbly, chunky, frozen scree, across a broad tussock basin and past a frozen tarn to join the Te Araroa trail for the five or so kilometres to Royal Hut on the upper flats of Bush Stream. The hut was empty, and since it was getting both cold and dark we occupied the eight bunks rather than pitching tents. After cooking and eating dinner, and finding that three of us had headlight issues, we hit the sack about 8 pm and at least some of us fell asleep very quickly.



*Mts Erebus (2311 m) and Sibbald (2811 m) on the Sibbald Range*

**Day 2: Unnamed hut in upper Bush Stream -- 4.8 km return and 75 m total ascent over 1 hour 35 minutes. Bullock Bow Saddle -- 14.1 km return and 600 m total ascent over 3 hours and 35 minutes**

The night was long, cold and moonlit. Very early, well before the sun rose, Tom got up for ablutions. His return prompted Max to arise for the same purpose. "I think you should put your boots on," said Tom. "Why?" asked Max as he opened the door – and then, "Oh, I see." A weather change was expected overnight, but we heard no rain, and it now became clear why there was so much light coming through the misted window – the overnight precipitation had fallen as about 5 to 10 cm of snow.

By about 9 am, everybody was up and fed, and thoughts were turning to what to do with the day. Eventually it was decided to head south, about 2.5 km to an unnamed hut further up Bush Stream.

The weather was calm, but with regular snow flurries, some quite heavy, between fleeting hints of blue sky and even some sun at times. The unnamed hut is about 1 km further up the valley than is shown on the map. It is small and quaint, with a very low door, four canvas and sacking bunks and a fireplace – not that there is anything to burn in the vicinity. After hanging around to regather and take photos we strolled at a leisurely pace back to Royal Hut for lunch.

Over lunch, half the team decided to spend the rest of the day at the hut, trying to stay warm. The other half of us, Max, Dayle, Lynnette and Bryce decided to climb to Bullock Bow saddle, a nearly 1700-m pass through the Sinclair Range to Forest Creek. As we left, at 1.30 pm, the weather had improved sufficiently for the hut-stayers to have moved a bench outside into the sun at the lee end of the hut – but I suspect that didn't last long.

We headed north for a couple of kilometres down Bush Stream before turning south east up a DOC-marked 4WD track, slowly climbing through tussock with many partly frozen tarns, one of which was occupied by a pair of black swans. At about 1450 m, Lynnette decide that she had taken all of the photos she wanted and would head back to the relative warmth of the hut. The other three of us plodded on up a steeper, sidling track carved into a huge scree slope, arriving at the saddle about 3.30 pm.

The wind at the saddle was light, but very frigid, despite quite a bit of blue sky. We scoffed some muesli bars and checked the view down Forest Creek to the Ben McLeod Range before retracing our steps. About an hour and a half later, we were back at the hut where the others had already started to prepare for dinner in the dimming light. This night we were all in bed by 7 pm, and with less daily exertion the hut chatter was more extensive, more coherent and more edifying. But by 8 pm the sounds of sleeping and other bodily functions had taken over.

### **Day 3: Royal Hut to Mt Gerald Station via Stag Saddle -- 19.3 km and 710 m total ascent over 8 hours and 30 minutes.**

With the snow that had fallen, and which continued to fall over the night, we knew that the walk back to the cars was going to be more arduous than the walk in a couple of days earlier. Andrew decreed that we should be on our way by 7 am, so everyone was up and preparing before 6 am. At some stage overnight the weather had cleared, which meant a very cold start and frozen boots for the majority of us.

By 7 am we were on our way with cold feet and hands, and three of us with no headlights. We made good progress through a small gorge and up a tussock ramp and basin to Stag Saddle, which we reached just before 10 am. At this point, some of us had thought to sidle around the south face of Mt Beuzenberg to gain Snake Ridge and thereby avoid the deep tussock, snow and swampy ground of Camp Stream valley. But the wind was so bitterly cold that we decided that it would be much safer to stay in the shelter of the valley than to expose ourselves to a couple of hours of hypothermic wind. So down we headed in deep snow, but aided by gravity, heading for a gap in Snake Ridge about six or seven kilometres to our south west.



*Crossing Stag Saddle*

The snow and tussock made the going quite hard. There were also patches of snow covered moraine boulders and slippery, frozen swamp that caused a number of stumbles and falls. All through this, Max was up front plugging steps – but even Max admitted a hint of weariness at one stage. He convinced Jack to take over the plugging for about 15 minutes, but then couldn't help himself and retook the lead.

We got to the gap in Snake Ridge bang on 1 pm, having taken three hours to cover the very benign-looking terrain of camp Stream. Just through the gap we met a couple of blokes heading out on a day walk in the opposite direction from Rex Simpson Hut. Ten minutes later we were at the hut and enjoying a well-deserved lunch in the sun while being occasionally bombarded by melting snow sliding off the steep pitched roof.

From Rex Simpson Hut it took about two hours to get back to the cars, following well-marked farm tracks in increasingly pleasant, sunny weather. By 4 pm we were driving back down Lilibank Road with Fairlie pies on our minds. In fact, the Fairlie bakery had run out of pies by the time we got there, but they told us that the petrol station also sold them, which was much appreciated.

After the pies had been consumed Max headed off to Timaru. The rest of us arrived back in Christchurch in heavy drizzle to learn that it had been cold and wet for the whole long weekend. Somehow that sort of news always seems to make tramping feel even better.

Thanks to Andrew for organizing the trip and making sure we had such interesting weather; and to David, Jack and Max for driving. And thanks to everyone for the entertaining, far-ranging and occasionally animated discussions.

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# More about the CTC

## Club Officers

<i>President:</i>	Chris McGimpsey	027 657 3070	<i>Overnight Trip Organiser:</i>	Andrew Tromans	337-3925
<i>Vice President:</i>	Shaun Wong	021 234 6847	<i>Social Convenor:</i>	Kay Taylor	03358-4580
<i>Secretary:</i>	David Selway	03 326 3344	<i>Gear Custodian:</i>	Bernhard Parawa	337 3125
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Natasha Sydorenko	0223140684	<i>Editor:</i>	Eric Skea	021 0247 5473
<i>Club Captain:</i>	Alan Ross	384-6425	<i>Hut Convenor:</i>	Steve Bruerton	322-6196
<i>New Members Rep:</i>	Joshua Johnson	0278865868	<i>IT Convenor:</i>	Nick Edwards	027 365 6751
<i>Day Trip Organiser:</i>	Elizabeth Eadon	03 3764453	<i>Access Officer:</i>	Ian Dunn	0212141907

**Our Club Hut:** In the Arthur's Pass township, with all the comforts of home including real showers and inside flushing loos (BYO toilet paper!), but with the mountains at the back door. A great place for a few days away; take your usual gear and a pillowcase. Please book **and pay** before leaving town; the club bank account number is 38-9017-0279838-00 (Kiwibank/Christchurch Tramping Club). Include your name and the words "hut fees" in the particulars/code/reference fields. Phone Steve Bruerton 322-6196 for booking and key code; or if he's away, Chris McGimpsey 027 6573070; or if they're both away, Rex Vink 3525329. Hut fees are \$15 member, \$15 member's partner, \$20 non-member, \$5 kids under 12. If you find any problems or maintenance required, please contact the hut convenor, Steve Bruerton.

**Equipment Hire:** The Club has a range of equipment for hire. The Gear Custodian is Bernhard Parawa, ph. 337 3125. Note: club gear assigned to you is your responsibility; please take care of it. Please make sure you put tents inside your pack. Tents attached to the outside of your pack can be easily punctured when bush bashing or even lost. This may result in serious damage to your bank account! Please air and dry tents after taking them on a trip even if they are not used, and report any damage to the gear custodian.

### Rates for Gear Hire:

Tent	\$3/person/night
Ice axes, crampons	\$4 per weekend
Harnesses, snow shovel	\$4 per weekend
Large/small weekend packs	\$2 per weekend
Helmets	Free
Personal locator beacons	Free

Please have stuff for the next newsletter to the editor ([editor@ctc.org.nz](mailto:editor@ctc.org.nz)) by 20 July 2017 – Thanks.