



April 2023

PTC	Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc.)
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Committee					
Trip Planner 1	Diane Mellish	337 5530	Editor	Kerry Moore	359 5069
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Treasurer	Mike Bourke	332 7097	Committee	Dan Pryce	027 384 7065
Secretary	Merv Meredith	322 7239	Committee	Graeme Nicholas	027 504 7726

New Member Enquiries: Contact a **committee member** to request an info-pack.
You will also receive three complimentary newsletters.

Our Club

The PTC caters for people of all ages who tramp for recreation. We run trips regularly, ranging from 'easy' to 'hard', day trips to long weekends. In addition to the monthly club meeting, a variety of social events are held every month.

Club Nights

Club Nights are held on the **second Tuesday** of the month at **Oxford Terrace Baptist Church Hall, 286 Oxford Terrace (corner of Madras St and Oxford Terrace)** at 7.45pm. Doors open 7.30pm.

Tuesday 11 Apr



Treasures, Artifacts, Memorabilia and Mystery Objects

Bring along items of interest that have a little story attached. You will give a one or two-minute talk telling of its provenance and may show a photo to explain. Items can relate to tramping or travels or just be a mysterious thingamajig that we'll have to identify.

Tuesday 9 May



Himalayan Adventures

Step back into ancient history as Terry Thomsen recounts his experiences on the Annapurna Circuit in 1984 and the Karakoram Highway in 1993.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Tuesday 18 April Huntsbury Circuit and Dinner

Join us for a wander around the Huntsbury area. Dinner at 7pm at **The Brickworks** in the Centaurus Shopping Centre, 69 Centaurus Road. [Menu](#). **Meet outside The Brickworks at 6pm.**

Please let Margot know if you are coming to dinner. 03 332 7020, margot.bowden@gmail.com

NOTES

Membership: We welcome **Jax Morren** and **Cary & Clare van Vosselen**.

Committee: We are happy to have an active, skilled tramper, **Sonja Risa** joining the committee.

Trip Planning Evening: Have your say on the trips we do. Attend the planning night, **7pm Wed 19 April** at Merv's, 49 Sabys Road. If you can't attend, give your suggestions to Diane or Sonja, mellishdiane@gmail.com
sonja.risa@gmail.com

TRIPS

9 Apr **Halswell Quarry – Ohinetahi**

Sun **Merv Meredith 322 7239**

- An easy-moderate walk from Halswell Quarry, up to the Summit Road along Kennedys Bush Track then visiting Ohinetahi Reserve on the harbour-side.
Meet 8am Halswell Quarry carpark near the coffee cart

15-16 Apr **Bealey Spur - Blind Spur - Bruce Stream**

Sat-Sun **Kerry Moore 359 5069**

- A moderate circuit camping near Bealey Spur Hut then continuing up the spur and dropping into Bruce Stream to return to the cars.
Book by 9 April

16 Apr **Mt Cass**

Sun **Awaiting leader**

- Easy-moderate circuit, seaward from Waipara beside this impressive limestone scarp to 525m Mt Cass. The farmland we walk on is notable for its self-shearing Wiltshire sheep.
Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St

22-25 Apr **Rees River--Dart River**

Sat-Tues **Dan Pryce 027 384 7065**

- A classic valleys and passes circuit from Glenorchy in the mountains behind Queenstown. Dates flexible to allow for weather and river conditions.
Bookings closed 31 March

22 Apr **Manuka Hut**

Saturday **Graeme Nicholas 027 504 7726**

- An easy, flat walk to this hut on a Hakatere section of the Te Araroa Track.
Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd

- 29-30 Apr** [Harper River--Hamilton Hut](#)
Sat-Sun **Awaiting leader**
 ●● A pleasant, flat, easy-moderate, 17km walk up the Harper River from the Coleridge area to this comfortable hut. On the return we will visit the Harper Pinnacles.
Book by 23 April
- 30 Apr** [Whitewater Stream - Thomas Stream](#)
Sun **Honora Renwick 942 8368**
 ● An easy-moderate circuit from Castle Hill Village via attractive streams and a steep climb to a low saddle just west of Leith Hill. Great variety of terrain.
Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd
- Apr** [Old Ghost Road](#)
 ●●●● **Sonja Risa 028 8517 3969, sonja.risa@gmail.com**
 The old gold miners' trail that has been revived as a popular mountain-bike and tramping track connecting Lyell to the Mokihinui River in the north. We plan to leave the cars at Seddonville and get a shuttle to Lyell. Easy-moderate.
Bookings closed 31 March
- 6-7 May** [Hope Kiwi Lodge](#)
Sat-Sun **Graeme Nicholas 027 504 7726**
 ●● Easy-moderate tramp in Lake Sumner Forest Park, overnighing in Hope Kiwi Lodge. Good track all the way through beech forest and along river terraces.
Book by 30 April
- 7 May** [Doctors Hills](#)
Sun **Awaiting leader**
 ● So-named because a local doctor used to wander there, this easy-moderate trip inland from Waikari is near Pyramid Valley and Moa Swamp.
Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St
- 13-14 May** [Hawdon Hut](#)
Sat-Sun **Awaiting leader**
 ●● An easy, flat walk up the beautiful, wide Hawdon River Valley to this spacious hut.
Book by 7 May
- 14 May** [Mt Oxford--Ashley Saddle](#)
Sun **Merv Meredith 322 7239**
 ● A moderate circuit to Mt Oxford then east over Oxford Hill, Ashley Saddle and down a handy spur to the cars.
Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St
- 11-14 May** [Milford Track](#)
Thurs-Sun **Diane Mellish 027 413 6468**
 ●●●●●● The classic Great Walk in the off-season.
Trip is fully booked
- 20-21 May** [Lake Man](#)
Sat-Sun **Kerry Moore 359 5069**
 ●● A moderate trip up Doubtful and Kedron Rivers to Lake Man Biv. Day 2 we visit Lake Man then retrace our steps, or exit along the Doubtfull Range.
Book by 14 May

- 20 May** [Knowles Top](#)
Saturday **Awaiting leader**
 ● An easy-moderate walk up to this 835m hill, along a forest track that connects to a spur that takes us onto the Ashley Gorge waterfall track, then to the gorge picnic ground. The waterfall is a 10 minute side-trip.
Meet 8am Placemakers, 119 Cranford St
- 27-28 May** [Otehake Hot Pools](#)
Sat-Sun **Sonja Risa 028 8517 3969, sonja.risa@gmail.com**
 ●● Moderate walk from Aickens, up the Taramakau Rr and past Lake Kaurapataka, dropping to the Otehake Rr. We'll camp at the hot springs further up the Otehake.
Book by 21 May
- 28 May** [Hinewai Reserve](#)
Sun **Merv Meredith 322 7239**
 ● The reserve occupies most of Otanerito Valley in south-east Banks Peninsula, accessed at the top of Long Bay Road. The circuit through regenerating bush has a number of interest points and options.
Meet 8am at the Halswell School fence on the bend in SH 75.
- 3-5 Jun** [Reefton--Big River Hut](#)
Sat-Mon **Graeme Nicholas 027 504 7726**
 ●●● Easy-moderate walk to large comfy hut near Reefton. A great area for those interested in the local mining history. The middle day will allow us to visit the once-thriving mining town of Waiuta. Lots of relics to fossick around.
Birthdays **Book by 28 May**
- 4 Jun** [Kowai River](#)
Sun **Awaiting leader**
 ● An easy wander up a flat section of the Kowai Valley from the bottom of Porters Pass to the hut. Those who are keen can carry on and explore the upper valley.
Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd
- 10-11 Jun** [North Opuha Valley](#)
Sat-Sun **Awaiting leader**
 ●● An easy valley walk takes us to the little Spurs Hut with good tenting areas around the hut for camping. On Sunday we can explore the valley environs or climb along Walkers Spur onto Ben McLeod Range.
Book by 4 June
- 14-18 Jun** [Mataketake Hut](#)
Wed-Sun **Sonja Risa 028 8517 3969, sonja.risa@gmail.com**
 ●●●●● A moderate trip to a comfortable new hut (must be booked) on the range above the Haast-Paringa Cattle Track. Tussocky tops with great views. For those interested, we'll combine the Mataketake trip with the Welcome Flat Hut trip. Refer below.
Book by 21 April
- 18-20 Jun** [Welcome Flat Hot Pools](#)
Sun-Mon **Sonja Risa 028 8517 3969, sonja.risa@gmail.com**
 ●●● An easy-moderate walk to this popular large hut in Westland beside the famous hot pools.
Book by 21 April

TRIP REPORTS

Lyndon Saddle – Craigieburn Edge Track 29 January 2023

Ten enthusiastic trampers gathered for an 8am start at Church Corner. Showers were predicted for the morning, but didn't show. Instead, we were welcomed with fine weather as we set off from Craigieburn Campsite Shelter. Blue skies continued throughout the day.

The Mistletoe Track to Lyndon Saddle took us an hour and the short detour to 1256m Helicopter Hill was an ideal spot for a leisurely morning tea break.



On Helicopter Hill

Back at the junction, we took the Edge Track, passing some impressive screes, then into forest for lunch, away from the heat of the day. At the end of the Edge Track, we decided that it would be more interesting to return the way we'd come, rather than a long road walk.

The Edge Track has a connection to the ski road, so we had a mere 1km road walk to the Sidle Track. An hour's walk on the Sidle Track, alongside SH73 got us back to the cars at 3 30pm.

We were: **Wendy McCaughan, Dorota Giejsztowt, Sha SG, Cary & Clare van Vosselen, Dan Pryce, John Robinson, Ian Beale, Kyung Sang Lee and Norman Burden (leader, writer, photographer).** 🏔️



A gravelly stretch of the Edge Track

Olivine Ice Plateau 7-15 February 2023

On the 2012 PTC trip to the Olivine Ice Plateau the area was enveloped in cloud so Gary suggested a repeat trip to see the views. Geoff was not keen on repeating standard routes that he had done many times before but there was, however, another possibility. Years ago, Geoff had bashed his way down the Barrier Stream gorge to the Pyke River, but he had never been up Diorite Stream to the Barrier via Beresford Pass, so that became the trip plan. The only trouble would be the notorious Olivine weather. After much deliberation and a three-day delay to get a fine period, we headed for the area. We needed an early start from Christchurch to reach Glenorchy and place a car at Chinamans Bluff before flying finished for the day. A helicopter was the only practical way to get to the Olivine Hut at the junction of the Olivine and Pyke rivers, and it was an exhilarating ride along the Five Pass route of the Rockburn, Hidden Falls and Olivine Rivers.

Day 1 of tramping started with an exciting cable-way ride across the still-swollen Olivine River, then a bush lawyer and cutty-grass traverse to the base of the Olivine Falls. They were just as impressive in the relentless rain as the fine-weather view from the helicopter the day before. We swamp-bashed up the Pyke towards the start of the Diorite to commence the 800m climb to the upper basin—hard going with heavy packs. The rain made everything slippery, small cliff-lines barred the way and supplejack caught on every projection. We finally started to find deer trails but, every time they seemed to level off towards the flats, they would take an abrupt turn straight up the hill. We finally reached the magic 800m contour and traversed to the large, impressive flats, just as the sun came out. We hurriedly pitched tents in an open gravel area before rain come up the valley again.

Day 2 dawned misty as we headed for Beresford Pass into Barrier Stream, with only a 600m climb ahead but a 700m descent. Tough alpine scrub and long tussock slopes led to upper scree where an inquisitive chamois peered over the pass. The view into and across the Barrier River was welcome and impressive with bare, red ultramafic rock around Stag Pass. Navigation down was difficult. Faint deer trails petered out amidst large moss-covered boulders. It wasn't easy keeping close to the stream, heading to the crossing point at 840m

but finally we crossed to find old cairns and a well-defined deer trail down the prominent spur. Luxury! The flats provided somewhat swampy travel, while the forest sections were covered in gaiter-deep moss but were a relief after the day's ascent and descent. A delightful campsite at the Barrier Forks had to be cleared of deer before we pitched camp in heavy showers. We glanced uneasily at the high, discoloured South Barrier River that we would have to cross in the morning.

Day 3 delivered fine weather and crossing the South Barrier proved easy, some distance above the forks. The vista from the head of the Barrier Flats was inspiring. Darkness Peak was prominent and we could see the full extent of our route underneath Ark, providing access to the Plateau. The bush-line on the ridge that we had to climb didn't look too far, only 400m but it was a steep 400m and the alpine scrub proved as resistant to pushing as the supplejack climb up the Diorite. Gaining the bush-line was a relief, and gave views of the Furies and Darkness Peak. Traversing and climbing brought us to a campsite above the large tarn at 1400m with impressive views down the Barrier and across to Intervention Saddle and the promise of fine weather for the climb to the Plateau.

Day 4 started with thick cloud on the Plateau that would make navigation difficult and ensured a slow start while we debated the options. It finally started to clear and up we climbed, first along a tussock ridge, then a rocky terrace below bluffs, ending in a dramatic break in the ridge with no obvious way down. The ridge was our only route, so we backtracked, down tussock ledges to finally gain the gully, then up again to slabs on the ridge. The snow route that we could see from the Barrier flats was reached, then it was up into the thickening cloud for the traverse under Ark. Mist had turned to drizzle as we reached the ridge, directly under Ark, too high to descend directly to the Plateau. Threading our way past spires dimly seen in the mist, we reached Pic d'Argent Col, the door to the Plateau. Unfortunately, it was impassable as the snow had retreated, leaving a 20m cliff separated from a 10m wall of snow. Geoff went prospecting left amongst the rock spires, but returned without success. He then joined Raymond, who had found a rock bench higher up the ridge towards Ark. It was steep but provided a route down the cliff face, with some pack-passing and bum-sliding and led to the inside of the snow wall. Step cutting and belaying up the steep face finally gave us access to the Plateau.

Navigation was then an issue through the maze of crevasses in fading light and thick cloud, with GPS, compass and dead reckoning finally leading to rock ledges and camping possibilities. Multiple camp possibilities were viewed and discarded before pitching tents near a small tarn, then enjoying Peter's dinner, well past our normal bed-time.



Contemplating Barrier Ice Stream and Intervention ridge from near point 1499. Photo by RF



Mt Gates and Climax Peak across Derivation Neve. 8:50pm. Photo by GS



Memorial Icefall, Passchendaele, Destiny and Climax Peaks. Photo by GS

Day 5 was an unforgettable delight. Clear blue sky and views in every direction we turned elicited “wow” reactions. The ramparts of Ark loomed behind us, the Darkness Peak face dominated across the névé of the glacier that dropped in fascinating patterns of ice towards the Andy Glacier with Mt Aspiring always a landmark to the east. What a breakfast spot. It took a long time to soak in the atmosphere before packing up and starting the traverse of the Plateau. First, was the strenuous climb up Little Ark before the jaw-dropping descent to the main Plateau. Lunch was enjoyed before the panorama of Gable, Passchendaele, Destiny and Climax Peaks, bisected by the Memorial Icefall. We dropped packs to inspect Forgotten River Col, the entry point of the 2012 trip, surprised to find covering snow had vanished, leaving only ice. Then the climb to the col at the head of Blockade Stream, for a campsite with views down Forgotten River to 2736m Mt Tutoko and Madeline in the Darran Mountains.

Day 6 started slowly after a windy night. An overcast morning cast doubt over the wisdom of navigating the high route through Desperation Pass, but fortunately, the cloud cleared to sway the decision. The descent into the head of Blockade Stream was steep and brutal to about the 1400m contour, but not as bad as the climb back up the scree slopes to Mt Gates. The best thing that could be said was that there was an end to it. We sidled below the peak, found our 2012 campsite but decided to go further and start the descent to the Derivation névé. Geoff made the inspired decision not to follow our previous route but swing far right near the cliffs. Possible campsites were investigated but a rock bench 80m above the névé provided a vantage comparable to the first night on the Plateau. Looking back up Mt Gates, over dinner we could see our footsteps and the crevasse maze that we had avoided on our descent.

Day 7 was the critical day to exit the Plateau. Desperation Pass had been our preferred route. The climb to Mt Watkins was easy by comparison with the 2012 trip, as at least we could see where we were going. The continuation of the route to the right of Stefansson Peak was obvious this time but the drop-off down to the Margaret Glacier looked precipitous. Geoff and Raymond went for a recce while the rest sat in the sun and baked, or moved to the shade and froze. Finally, the two appeared, but to the left of Stefansson Peak. They had climbed down the ice of Desperation Pass but, coming back, had investigated an alternative snow slope on the north side of Stefansson Peak to see if it linked up. It didn't quite oblige, but a rock gully did provide a connection that was vastly superior to the standard route. With a short traverse on snow, belay down the gully, traverse on snow and a few more gullies we were down, looking back at the ice swirls on the face of the pass. The traverse of the remaining Barrier Range along to Seal Col was almost trivial in comparison. Complacency led to an incident as we descended towards the tussock when Sonja fell into a snow-filled crevasse that Raymond had crossed. When trying to help, Gary also fell in. Fortunately, only dignity was injured. We were grateful to reach tarns and broad tussock benches overlooking the Dart Valley, to camp just as a heat-induced thunderstorm engulfed the range behind us.

Day 8 started with another photo-fest with the Barrier Range behind and the Dart River valley set out before us. Finally, it was time to descend to meet other people on the Dart River Track. The bush provided a challenge as deer avoid the bare rock slopes above the Margaret Burn, so don't make trails. Also, there were many small gorges concealed in the terrain. Reaching the Dart was a welcome relief but crossing the Margaret Burn was challenging due to flood damage since our 2012 trip in the area. We finally crossed the Dart on the three-wire bridge installed by the Back-Country Trust, into tourist territory. There was a lot of helicopter traffic as we proceeded down the Dart. An explanation came when a helicopter flew low overhead in the dark and landed next to our tents to enquire about a missing hunter.

Day 9 required a mere hour to reach the car near Chinamans Bluff.

This was a fantastic trip to a special area. Each valley had its own character that offered seemingly unsurpassed scenery, until the next valley was possibly better. The drama of the entry at Pic d'Argent Col and the exit over Desperation Pass, in hindsight, only added to the experience.

Trampers were: **Raymond Ford, Sonja Risa, Geoff Spearpoint (leader), Peter Umbers and Gary Huish.** 🏔️ GH

Mount Barron Sunday 19 March 2023

Due to dreary weather forecasts, an anticipated overnight sojourn to Hunts Creek Hut via Kellys Creek Track and back via Mount Barron was delayed a week. Weather concerns for Saturday meant the overnight trip became a day circuit, summiting Mount Barron via the Pipeline Track and a descent on the Mount Barron Route.

Our day began with a 6:30am departure from Christchurch. After a brief stop in Springfield to pick up Helen, we continued to the start, just south of Otira. We began the ascent up the Pipeline Track after placing a car at the base of the Mt Barron route. The climb was slow-going as the track was steep and overgrown. We bush-bashed our way up, following the occasional pink flagging tape and looking for breaks in the vegetation, only losing the track a few times.

We had a well-deserved morning tea break on the first knoll and basked in the lovely weather. Aided by the delicious coffee provided by Sonja, we continued the ascent, sidling just below the 1629m point along a wide, grassy bench, until we approached Barron Saddle.

Before the ascent to the summit, we decided to have lunch on rock slabs with views over Otira to the mountain ranges spanning east to north. After a lovely, if slightly windy, lunch we climbed over the saddle, dropped over to the western side and sidled below the summit along the boulder scree, before the final ascent along scree to 1730m Mount Barron. We were rewarded with spectacular views of Arthur's Pass, the Otira Basin, and the West Coast with Lake Brunner just visible. The only complaint was from Shana who was looking for kea, but none made an appearance.

The descent was via scree, then over to point 1569m where we encountered and befriended a stray tramper who joined us for the descent. We were grateful for the familiar orange triangles on the climb down on the Mount Barron Route. The going was still a bit tough as it was steep, a bit overgrown and slippery. We finished at the bottom of the track 9½ hours after we began the ascent—a tough but rewarding climb, with lovely weather enjoyed by: **Shana Dooley, Peter Umbers, Geoff Spearpoint, Helen Binnie, Jane Liddle and Sonja Risa (leader, photographer).** 🏔️ SR



The ascent via the tough Pipeline Track



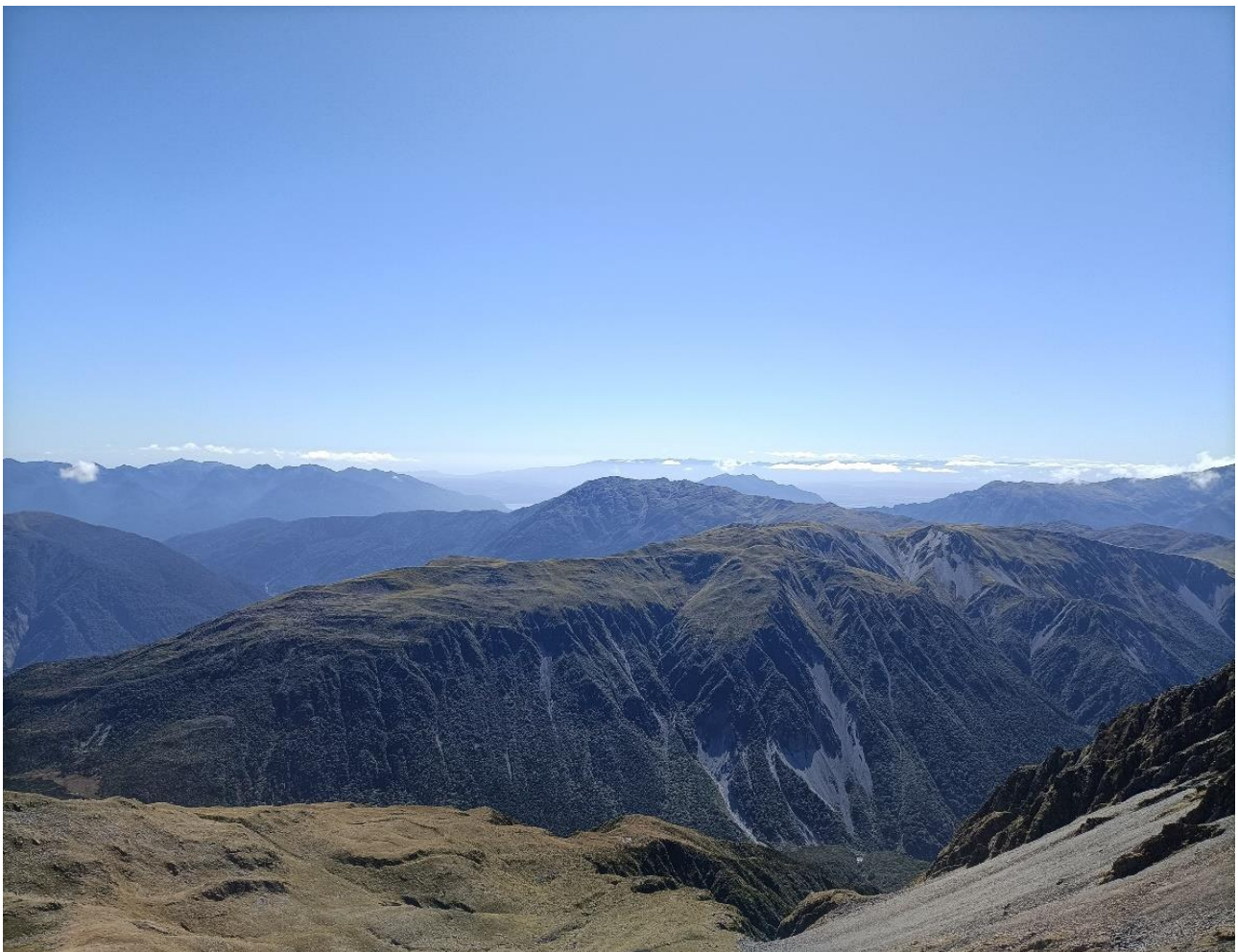
The view down the Otira Rr from our morning tea spot



The final ascent via scree to Mt. Barron.



The intrepid trampers. Photo by Sonja



From 1730m Mount Barron, with Lake Brunner just visible, left of centre, in the background