Sunraysia Bushwalkers

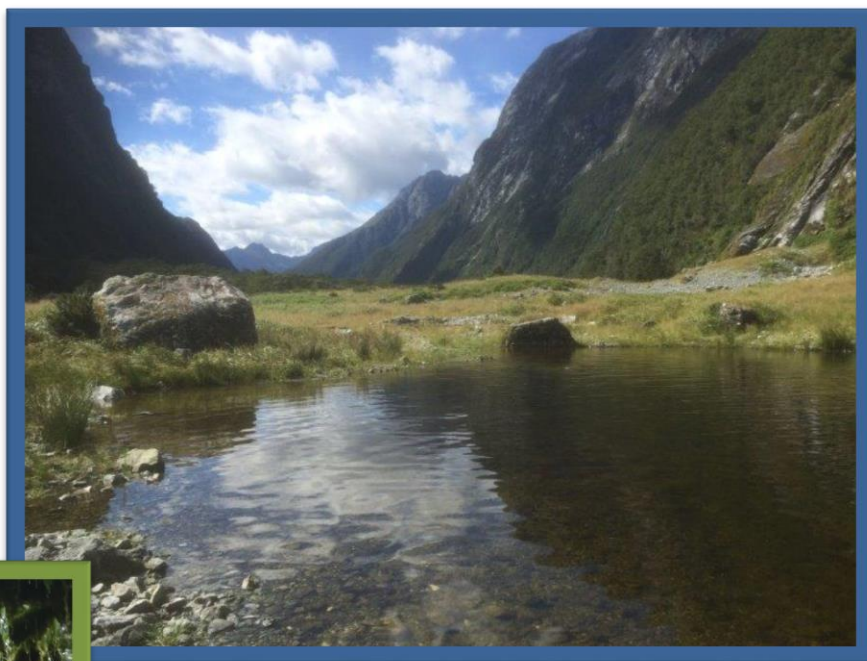## MARCH 2015

Affiliated with:

Bushwalking Victoria

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Giant Polypore
Meripilus Giganteus

To view the complete calendar, please follow the link:
http://www.sunbushwalk. net.au/calendarofactivities.html

Milford Track Walk
New Zealand Feb 2 - 6, 2015

The Intrepid Seven, Neil, Alison, Scott, Roger, Alistair, Bill and Peter, met at Lake Te Anau, NZ prior to beginning the world famous Milford Track. The weather was drizzly - perhaps an omen of what was to come.

Neil plus the other walkers preparing to go!

The start of the Milford Track is from Glade Wharf on the far side of Lake Te Anau. Two groups disembarked from the motor launch, guided walkers and us. Our group of "free walkers" had 34 members and was an international crew with people from Scotland, Germany, England, South Africa, New Zealand and us seven Aussies. We quickly shouldered our packs and walked about 5 kms through beech forest, stands of Manuka, infinite ferns, mosses and lichens along the Clinton River to Clinton Hut. Clinton Hut is typical of all huts on the walk - clean, cosy, spacious and well appointed. Ross the resident Ranger gave interested walkers a nature talk before tea and we learnt, among other things ,that gawls on trees are caused by the gawl wasp and burls are so called because someone couldn't decide if they were girls or boys! We also learnt that there are no native marsupials or snakes in NZ and a comprehensive trapping program for introduced stoats has been a great success.
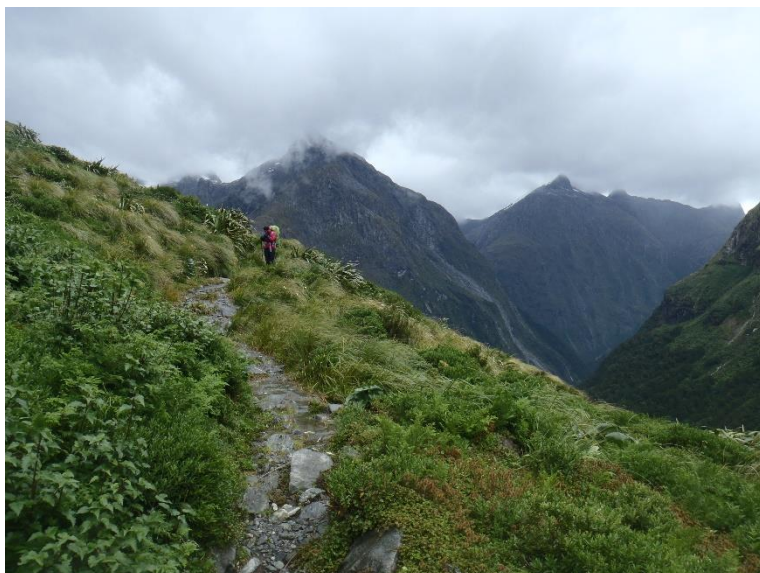

Alistair, Roger & Bill

Tea was cooked by our tour guides and volunteers, (the guides are connected to the Rotary Clubs that organise and supervise the free walks. Monies raised by the Otago Youth Adventure Trust/Rotary Club of Milton Tramping Club are donated). All meals were wholesome and consisted of items such as rice, pasta, mashed potato, peas and dehydrated meats. Desserts were dehydrated fruits such as apples and apricots with custard or chocolate sauce. Lunches were sandwiches, cuppa soups, tea/coffee and biscuits. Lunches were always eaten under covered shelters.

McKinnon Pass

Clinton Hut to Mintaro Hut was 16.5 km and is located at the base of MacKinnon Pass. Quintin MacKinnon was one of the first Europeans to walk from Te Anau to Milford Sound and he pioneered the current Milford Track. There is a stone memorial to him at the top of the Pass. Most of this walk was in bright sunshine and the photo opportunities were endless - swift flowing creeks, waterfalls, "Jurassic Park" vegetation, soaring mountains and deep glacial valleys.

Day 3 was from Mintaro Hut to Dumpling Hut, about 14 kms. This was the most spectacular part of the walk because it included MacKinnon Pass, awesome terrain and panoramas and a side walk to Sutherland Falls (possibly named after one of Bill's ancestors). Sutherland Falls is 580 meters high and the noise from the falling water sounds like a squadron of jet fighters taking off. Day 3 was mostly fine but with some hail and buffeting winds over MacKinnon Pass and rain late in the afternoon. This rain did not stop and it rained all the next day as well. (Each night saw about 250 mls of rain fall - Mildura's annual rainfall in a good year. Annual rainfall for this area is 7 meters!).

Day 4 was from Dumpling Hut to Sandfly Point, the pickup point on Milford Sound. This was 18 km of fairly level walking but in rain all the way. All participants were still smiling at the end, possibly because of the thought of hot showers to come.
Our group then embarked on an overnight cruise on Milford Sound. It had snowed overnight down to 800 meters so the scenery was misty and eerily beautiful. The next morning on the final day saw us cruising back to Milford Sound township in bright sunshine and under blue skies. The tour bus then transported participants back to Lake Te Anau or Dunedin for the trip home.

In summary, the trek was excellent and easy to recommend. It was well organised, the food was plentiful and filling, the track is well maintained and the trek demanding but not exhausting. The terrain and vegetation were fantastic and the silver lining to all the rain were the surging rivers and spectacular waterfalls. There were no mishaps or breakdowns among any members of the group and so the Intrepid Seven, as a particular Roman General said, "veni, vidi, vici".

Report by Peter

WALKS SUGGESTIONS

At this month's meeting the annual calendar will be composed and the suggestion is that we have a local activity on the weekend after the monthly meeting and a Wednesday walk on the next Wednesday following the meeting – this does give two activities fairly close together and you may have an opinion on that – if so come along and express it.

Cape Liptrap & other walks – Mornington Peninsula from a base camp
Hinchenbrook Island Qld
Mt Nelse (near Falls Creek)
Elphicks Island &/or Frenchman's Creek – day walk/canoe
Cape Jervis to Deep Creek – supported walk – part of Heysen Trail
Edeowie Gorge SA near Wilpena Pound
Fraser Island – pack carry walk

Patagonia - Highlights of Chile and Argentina
This stunning sojourn to one of the world's last frontiers starts 16 November 2015. Over 23 days in Chile and Argentina you'll climb an active volcano, visit Perito Merino Glacier and Mount Fitz Roy, and complete the Torres del Paine Circuit.

CALENDAR

2015		
March 4th	Meeting 8.00pm Club Room	
March 13 - 19	South Gippsland Rail Trail	Contact Michael 0400549988
April 23 – 1 May	Mundabiddi Track, WA Collie to Albany	Contact Michael 0400549988
May	Grampians	Contact Roger 0488121648

Nov 16th	Overseas Walk – Patagonia
	                    South America
	                    See previous page
		23 day walk, early indication of interest required.
		Contact the Club at:
		enquiries@sunbushwalk.net.au

Next Meeting
Wednesday 4th March at 8.00 pm
at Drysdale's
2164 Fifteenth Street,
Irymple