



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter December 2009 – January 2010

Club Nights

Club nights are held at 7:45pm on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North

All welcome! Please sign the visitor's book at the door.

10 December

End of Year BBQ

From 6.30pm at Ashhurst Domain. BYO food, drink and \$2 gift to put under the tree.

Contact Warren if you need transport.

28 January

New Year BBQ

From 6.30pm at Horseshoe Bend Reserve, Tokomaru. BYO food and drink and BBQ if you have one. Don't forget your togs for a quick dip.

Contact Warren if you need transport.

Upcoming Trips

Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient tramping should expect to do the trips in the following times:

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs
Other grades:	Technical skills (T) Instructional (I)

Trip participants

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips leave from Milverton Park. A charge for transport will be collected on the day.

Trip leaders

Please advise a trip coordinator, as soon as possible, if you will be unable to run your trip as scheduled. This is so that alternatives can be arranged, put in the newsletter, or passed on at club night.

Overdue Trips

If a club trip is late returning, please do not worry unduly as there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone one of the Overdue Trip Contacts:

Mick Leyland	358-3183
Terry Crippen	356-3588
Janet Wilson	329-4722

5-6 December

Tararua Northern Crossing F

Tony Gates 356 7439

This reasonably tough Tararua Classic is planned as a joint trip with some Heretaunga Tramping Club friends (HTC is well known in the Ruahines and Kawekas, so now want to explore our beloved Tararuas). Itinerary is flexible and weather dependant. Hopefully, we follow Dundas Ridge and the Ohau River tracks. Depart Friday evening for Herepai Hut.

6 December

Herepai Hut or Mitre Flats E/M

Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Depart 7.45am. Two choices, one destination - the eastern Tararua Ranges. If it is fine then we will probably go up to Herepai Hut for views from the tops, with return the same way or down the Bottles Track. If the weather is a bit iffy we will drive a bit further south towards Masterton for an up-valley walk along the track to Mitre Flats Hut on the banks of the mighty Waingawa River. The classic return trip for those feeling keen is to "bomb down the river", but this would make it a Fit trip, so Plan A is to return the same way.

12-13 December

Rangiwahia E/M

Tina Bishop 355 5755

We will leave PN about 8.30am. This should be a nice cruisey trip - A first time to this hut for Tina and an introduction to tramping for Holly, Tina's four legged friend. All welcome.

13 December

Rimutaka Incline mountain bike or walk

Richard Lockett 323 0948

Depart Milverton park at 7.30am. A trip over the Rimutaka Range on the old railway formation from Cross Creek to Kaitoke, featuring four tunnels, bridges and one small stream crossing. Torches may be required for tunnels, your call.

Mountain bikers: Cross Creek to Kaitoke return via Summit

Walkers: Cross Creek to Summit return or may be a key swap half way and a walk right through.

10 January

Miki Miki Track E

Fiona Donald 356 1095

Depart 8am from Milverton Park to the Wairarapa. Join me on this delightful trip to ease yourself back into tramping or if you want to try out a tramping trip. We will go via Kiriwhakapapa Road/camping area, nearer to the Mt Bruce area, and walk to Mikimiki; we will return the same way. Beautiful bush, maybe a chance to get your feet wet as there are several streams to cross and a couple of steeper bits to get your blood pumping. Bring your swimsuit for a river dip and afterwards we might stop at Mt Bruce or Eketahuna for afternoon tea.

11 – 15 January

Lockett Range, Kahurangi NP

Richard Lockett 323 0948

On Monday afternoon we will walk up the Cobb valley to Fenella Hut for the night. From Tuesday through till Friday, we will spend the days up on the Lockett range visiting Ruby lake, Diamond Lake, Lake Lockett, Mount Lockett. We will fly camp. Exit point TBA. Richard will have a vehicle down there as he will be in Nelson for the week preceding but depending on numbers might have to arrange shuttle service. Individuals will need to arrange their own transport to and from Nelson

17 January

Manawatu Gorge Track E/Family

Doug Strachan 353 6526

This walk has botanical interest (many nikau palms), geological import (river cuts through the divide), meteorological merit (shady), engineering feats (wind farms, gorge road, and a train was retrieved from the river), economic advantages (minimal travelling time and fuel costs), gastronomic delights (cafe at end), easy walking (about 4hrs; upgraded track), and splendiferous views (new lookout structure). Kids welcome. 9am start.

17 January

Black Creek, Waiopahu M/F

Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Depart 7.30am. This is a good chance to go bush and explore a tributary of the Ohau River. Firstly we will go up the Waiopahu Track to the old hut site. From there we will leave the track, drop off down a handy spur into Black Creek and proceed to "rock-hop" downstream. A shorter version of this trip is

possible to suit the level of experience of the party, so give Warren a call.

23-25 January

Tops Trip – A flexiplan trip F

Janet Wilson 329 4722

A Bannister crossing, staying at Cattle Ridge and Dundas Huts or camping along the way, will be the first choice for this long weekend. We will go to the Northern Ruahines if the weather looks more appealing up that way. If the tops are no good, we will go somewhere lower. We might leave on the Friday evening. Please contact Janet early in the week if you are thinking of coming along.

25 January

Stanfield E

Duncan Hedderley 354 6905

We'll probably head off at 8am for the hills behind Dannevirke – walk in along a ridge, come back out along (and through) the Tamaki stream.

30-31 January

Ruahine Duck Pond Explorer F

Graham Peters 329 4722

An interesting, low-level trip exploring streams leading to the Pohangina River. Starting and finishing at the Tamaki Rd end and fly camping in the Pohangina or staying at Ngamoko Hut overnight. Off track and stream travel. Lots of potential for swimming if the weather is nice.

31 January

Honeycomb Rock Walking Track E

Kathy Corner 356 8186

Honeycomb Rock is a spectacular outcrop on the Wairarapa coast that looks like a honeycomb. The track is entirely within the privately owned Glenburn Station, is flat and follows the coastline. Walking time according to the DOC website is 5-6 hours return. En route there is the wreck of the Tuvala, a Fijian trader and also a fur seal colony. We will leave from Milverton Park at 7.30am.

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Anne Lawrence, the newsletter editor, via the club website
: <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

Notices

Events card for first half of 2010

The PNTMC trip card for January through to June 2010 is out now. Many thanks to all those who have contributed to the trip card either by suggesting ideas or volunteering to lead trips. Also major thanks to Janet Wilson and Terry Crippen for their polite requests, patient prodding and reminders that are needed to put the programme all together.

Eastern and Central Community Trust Grant

The Club acknowledges receiving a grant of \$1000 from the Eastern and Central Community Trust. This grant money combined with moneys from the clubs funds enabled us to purchase four digital avalanche transceivers, to compliment the analogue transceivers we already have; and two further avalanche probes. These items will further help the club with its highly successful snowcraft instruction programme. Also, as with all the club gear (with certain restrictions in some cases), these new items are available for hire.

Waikato Tramping Club 60th Birthday

The Waikato tramping club is celebrating its 60th birthday next year. Past members are invited to join in the celebrations. Contact
email: wtc60th@paradise.net.nz
website: www.wtc.org.nz

Don't mine our place...

The November FMC bulletin includes an article written by Robyn McNeill. In the article Robyn presents the FMC's position on the Gerry Brownlee's announcement about undertaking a stocktake of minerals in land set out in Schedule 4 of the Crown Minerals Act. Readers are encouraged to post a photo to save our backcountry. The article can be downloaded from www.fmc.org.nz.

A note from the editor

With summer coming up, I want to encourage people to get out into the hills. There are not a lot of club trips planned for the summer but I am sure that most club members will be getting into the hills at some stage. It might be worth letting other club members know of your plans – having a few more people on a trip often works well – and remember, any trips and photos can be sent into the newsletter!

Summer break provides opportunity to get into the hills. It also can provide opportunity for more idle conversations which sometimes leads to new ideas – if you have any suggestions for the PNTMC newsletter, please let me know. Having been editor for a few years now, it is at times difficult to generate new ideas and I would welcome your thoughts.

News from DOC

A quick update on some of the work done on tracks and huts about the region:

- A new fire has been installed at Iron Gates hut.
- Plans to upgrade the Rangiwahia Hut track are in the pipeline, hinging on a written report from Geotech regarding the slip.
- The gas and long-drop facilities at Rangiwahia hut have been serviced. The

Pohangina team reported that there was a record amount of poo, making removal of the full tank quite tricky. Spare a thought for the guys who take on this messy task!

- The new bridge has been flown in and installed on the Manawatu Gorge Track, but is awaiting final approval from the district council before it can be opened to the public.
- Volunteers from the Ashhurst community are helping to reduce predator numbers in the Manawatu Gorge Scenic Reserve in the hope it will encourage native bird species to re-populate the area as part of the Manawatu Gorge Biodiversity Restoration Project. The traps are checked and re-set once a fortnight by a roster of Ashhurst residents, coordinated by Ashhurst Action Group member Michael Shepherd. 66 rats and six stoats have been removed from the traps since monitoring began in August.

Trip Reports

Top Maropea Hut

13-14 September

Report and photos: Chris Tuffley

I'd been past the turn-off to Top Maropea Hut a couple of times, and was keen to check it out; but as the weekend approached it began to look more and more like I was the only one. Friday finally arrived without a phone call, and so I decided to set off with just my PLB for company.

Having no-one to meet allowed for a more leisurely departure, and I got up at 8 - the advertised meeting time - without having to have hurriedly packed before bed the night before. Of course, this meant I still had packing and shopping ahead of me, and by the time I left it was rather later than I thought ideal. On top of that, the weather forecast had changed again; it now sounded like I was heading to exactly the wrong part of the island for the day! Oh well; at least it was sounding good for Warren's Te Atuaoparapara trip the next day, which I was planning to meet up with.

When I reached the road end the car park was packed with cars - I sure hoped no-one else was going any further than Sunrise! The weather, at least, was still fine. I'd thrown my ice axe and crampons in just in case, and just as I was pondering whether to take them a man came down the track. Turned out he'd been up at Top Maropea; was there much snow? Only a little getting to the hut, it seemed, but maybe more higher up where I was hoping to get to. Well, I'd brought them this far, I might as well take them the rest of the way...

It was past noon, and worried about the time, I set off on only a muesli bar or two for lunch. That didn't get me far...and after a quick but more substantial lunch at the turn-off to Waipawa Forks I headed on up, leap-frogging a large MUAC group going to Sunrise. Up past Armstrong Saddle I once more reached the sign pointing the way to Top Maropea, and for the first time followed it down, soon arriving at my Forest Service Orange destination. In the end I needn't have worried about the time - break and all it had taken me less than three hours to get there - and as I'd hoped I had the place to myself.



Chris carefully colour co-ordinating his soup and vest with the hut.

With darkness came the wind and rain, and I hunkered down in the hut by the fire. Looking through the hut book I saw many familiar names from the club - no wonder no-one else felt the need to join me! The rain gradually eased the next morning, and had stopped by the time I headed out, but there was still plenty of wind and cloud about. Te Atuaoparapara was lost in the clag, so rather than carry on up I decided to head back to Sunrise and meet Warren and co there. But not before tucking my crampons away out of sight in my pack - there had been little sign of snow the day before, and I knew Warren would give me a hard time if he saw them! The wind was strongest at Armstrong Saddle, and a decided lean to the right was required to make it the rest of the way back to Sunrise.

Warren's group arrived just as I did, and before long we were heading back up towards the saddle - walking with a lean to the left this time. The cloud was lifting on Te Atuaoparapara, but the wind was still strong; continuing up seemed an unpleasant and foolhardy way to spend the day, so we opted for Warren's plan B, a scree slope leading down into the northern fork of the Waipawa.

The scree and creek made an interesting if shorter alternate route for the day. There were a few small cascades to negotiate, which with my full pack I found a bit trickier than the others; but we were soon past them, and broke for lunch in the sun before carrying on to the forks. By now Te Atuaoparapara could be clearly seen against a blue sky. Had we just

needed a little more patience, or faith that the front would blow through? There was no telling; so, turning our backs on the peak, we headed on downriver and out to the cars.

I was Chris Tuffley, joined by Warren Wheeler, Murray Gifford and Mike Allerby on the Sunday.

Powell Hut-Mt Holdsworth

25 October

Report and Pics:

John Feeney

Following what felt like endless weekends of rain it was a relief to get a fine and very sunny "Labour Day Sunday" and a chance to get out on a dry weather day tramp. Although this trip was organized with only a few days notice a party of 4 interactional trampers... (a Scotswoman, a Korean, Chinese lady and a Kiwi) set out early on the Sunday headed for Powel Hut. The cloud was lifting from the Eastern Tararuas as our group arrived at the Mt Holdsworth car park about 9.15.am. With the long weekend and no doubt the welcome fine weather we found at least 60 cars already in the car park and lots of folk camping in the surrounding area.

We were quickly organized and off on the 3 hours of uphill walking. The track was in excellent condition with extensive work being carried out on the "Gentle Annie" section giving us that false sense of security. This lower part of the track passes through areas of native beech trees with luscious undergrowth. We pass several groups of trampers on the way down from the hut with reports with reports of 50 people being in the hut overnight. The track looks "pristine" given the large number of people who use the area and it is easy to have that sense of being in a unique environment.

Keeping up a good pace, with a short rest at the Mountain House we get into the steeper ascent to the hut. This bit of the track is rougher and does go on a bit, good to be only carrying a day pack. The bush line is reached and we are rewarded with amazing views across the Wairarapa plains. After posing for photos we push onto the hut which we find deserted. After lunch, two of our group decide they have gone far enough and settle for a leisurely walk down. The other two inspired by the fine day, head onto the summit of Mt Holdsworth (1470m). Passing through small patches of snow they find the last stretch to the summit covered in cloud and surprisingly 2 other club members out on their own weekend trip of there own.

The descent back to the cars is tricky in places as we tread carefully to maintain secure footing on the steep sections, lots of pounding on the knees and a few blisters on the toes are generated. It all part of tramping, we get back to the cars about 4.30pm. A

magnificent days walking, our group fully extended but great to be out in stunning surroundings.



We were Woody Lee, Isobel Holdaway, Liping Ding and John Feeney

Mt Patriarch, Kahurangi NP

23-26 October

Report: Anne Lawrence

Photos: Martin Lawrence

We got an early start to Labour weekend, so that even though we had to fly to Nelson via Christchurch, we were crossing the first river before lunch on the Friday. This was the one major river crossing of the trip. The river was high and the water cold - the dilemma, of course, was whether to remove boots/socks in order to have dry feet for the rest of the trip or not. Three of us opted for the safe if damp option leaving Murray to prove that crocs do afford pretty solid foundation even in swift water.

When flying into Nelson, we had seen masses of what appeared to be fresh snow. Our shuttle driver confirmed there had been a heavy snowfall overnight - we discovered later that so much snow had fallen in Nelson Lakes that there was real danger of avalanches leading to tramps in that area being cancelled. By good fortune (the trip leader may claim it was good planning) there had been no snow in Kahurangi.

This first afternoon was spent climbing Chummies Track up a bush covered ridge to John Tait hut. It was a reasonably grunty climb rewarded by occasional dracophyllum amongst the beech trees at greater altitudes. John Tait hut is a classic six-bunker nestled in a shallow indentation just above the bushline. Seldom visited - if the log book is accurate, the last visitors being a few months before us. It seemed snug enough, and there was little dry wood about, so we didn't worry about lighting a fire. Further perusal of the hut book reinforced the wisdom of this decision, as previous attempts at fire had apparently done little but fill the hut with smoke. As the clouds rolled in,

the temperature dropped, and sleeping bags became more appealing so it was an early night for all of us.

The next day, still in cloud, we headed straight up the snow grass covered slope to the ridge a few hundred metres above the hut. For the rest of the morning we followed this ridge. It was a very well defined ridge, requiring careful clambering at times and two diversions to avoid the need for serious rock climbing. As the cloud lifted, we were able to identify many highpoints including Mts Owen, Kendall, Sodom and Gomorrah. After lunch we headed up Mt Patriarch - good planning here as we got to the top in sunshine with rain forming a fine mist as we headed back down to the junction where we had left our packs.



It was a pretty steep climb down to Kiwi Saddle with its cosy hut. No dracophyllum to be seen, with the hut hidden from view by bush. By the time we got to the hut, the drizzle had become persistent. The hut was already occupied - by two others who had just arrived from the opposite direction to us. We joined them in trying to work out who else was at the hut - our puzzle over the one pack and assortment of gear that was spread over all 6 bunks was soon shared by another couple who arrived shortly after us.

The mystery people turned out to be two young men - one experienced hunter and one exhausted-looking novice on his first overnight trip. With the hut overflowing, one couple opted to use their tent (a neat looking affair that many of us had a good nosy at) and Martin and Anne slept under their fly. By the time we hit the sack, the weather had cleared so those sleeping out could enjoy the stars.

The next day Tina opted to house sit while Martin, Anne and Murray decided on a quick sortie to see if we could get to the top of Luna. It was stunningly beautiful on top, but we didn't spend too much time admiring the views as we had said we would be back at the hut by lunch time... of course, we had some flexibility as we never actually said what time that would be. However, by the time we got back to the hut, we were well ready for lunch.

Tina of course was raring to go and led the way down to Hut. This was a very pleasant route sidling along the lower slopes of Patriarch, gradually losing height till we got down to the Wangapeka. From here, it was a 20 minute walk up river to King's Hut.

It took a bit of getting used to the modern facilities at this new 20 berth hut after the less sophisticated accommodation we had become accustomed to. A highlight was a short walk down to Cecil King's hut - lovingly restored hut with wooden slat roof, all the equipment from the bygone era when Cecil had lived there.

The next morning we had a pleasant amble along the Wangapeka track to the road end. The river here is beautiful and the track easy walking despite the mess that has been made in places by pigs. Our shuttle picked us up and delivered us to the airport – time for a coffee in Nelson, dinner in Christchurch and bed in Palmerston North.



It was a thoroughly enjoyable trip – we voted that we had got it by doing the climbing at the start and then spending most of our time on the tops. Thanks to Martin for leading this trip – and for good planning with the weather.

We were Tina Bishop, Murray Gifford, Anne and Martin Lawrence.

South Ohau Hut

October 31 – November 1

Report and pics: **Richard Lockett**

I'd planned this trip to be medium length trot up the Ohau River to the hut for the night and out the same the next day but after reading of Graham Peter's Te Matawai Hut trip I decided that it was about time I checked out Gable End Ridge myself.

So a new plan, from Poas road end along the track to the old Ohau Shelter site proceeding up the Gable End ridge track to reach the confluence of the Gable End, Dora and Waiopahu tracks at Richards Knob

along the Dora, over Butchers Saddle and down Yeates track to the hut, out via the river.

An all-Feilding affair with Michael and Craig Allerby tagging along on what promised to be a fine weekend weather-wise which would make a change. A 9.30am departure from the carpark gave us our first glimpse of a snow covered peak whilst crossing the farm land - much speculation as to which peak it was (identified as Arete) – peak identifying became an activity to which we would occupy us for the remainder of the day as we climbed higher.

Such was our pace that reaching the first footbridge just into the bush Craig decided a drink was in order; unfortunately this would involve a trip back to his car to retrieve the bottle from the car's boot. Craig must have run there and back as we were soon on our way again towards the old Ohau shelter site and the start of Gable End.

Starting off fairly steep then briefly levelling out before climbing at a consistent grade which with the warm conditions was consuming a steady supply of water with no possibility of a top up till the hut. A sunny clearing and a stop for lunch and upon climbing onto a shrub a view over to Waiopahu hut was achieved. A look at the map to discover our sunny spot was just below the high point Gable End itself and a few minutes' walk further on one clears the bush line with views to the west and south. Bloody typical. A kilometre of undulating travel above the bush rekindled discussion on the Tararua peaks spread out before us before the final push up onto Richards's knob. Somewhat of a disappointment this prominent Tararua high point, no views to be had at all because of the head high vegetation, a quick stop for a bite and drink and a photo of Richard at Richards Knob for the family album.



Onto the Dora Track with a steep drop from the Knob along a narrow ridge, the divide between the Ohau and Otaki catchments and a steep push up to the Yeates track junction marked with a toilet seat hanging in a tree. Now a nice bit of track this, a downhill lie, wide with a covering of beech leaves, I could give the legs a good stretch out and cover some

ground quickly before the steep descent to arrive at the hut at 5pm.

A lovely new hut all to ourselves, on with the billy, hot sweet coffee for me, Jasmine tea for the Allerbys and the polishing off of Craig's packet of chocolate macaroons. Good light till after eight saw the well stocked library of hunting magazines with ripping yarns about hunting and fishing in the Tararuas by one Tony Gates all perused while cooked dinner, four cheeses pasta with peas and sweet chilli kranskes which hit the spot nicely.



An eight o'clock departure saw us heading downriver in the shade till the North Ohau was reached; morning tea and sunshine always welcome when travelling in rivers. We were soon back at the old shelter site. A brisk trip along the track to the farm and we were back at the car at lunch time, leaving time for other activities that afternoon, lawn mowing being mentioned.



Burttons Track

1 November

Report and photos: Woody Lee

It was a beautiful fine morning for Tour de Manawatu but six keen trampers were travelling on the Scotts Road for exploring one of the popular tracks in Te Araroa Walkway. We were forced to stop at the

beginning of a gravel road as there was a sign of ROAD CLOSED. The road was temporarily closed for upgrade work but we continued driving further up to check the road condition, and had no problem to the carpark on the Scotts Road.



It was a pleasant walk through a huge mature pine plantation then a steady gradient up a hill in the morning sunshine. At the top of the hill we had a tea break before getting into the bush forest. There were a few fallen trees and muddy areas on downhill track until the first stream. Its level was a little over ankle deep. It was time to say good-bye to the two drivers (Peter and Rene who returned to drive around to the Tokomaru Road). Four of us continued tramping and soon faced several creeks/streams and the Tokomaru River. No way to avoid getting feet wet here for crossing the river so we happily walked into the river and stepped onto the private land. Buttercups, waterfalls and low flying birds were sighted and the area was a rather attractive with open clearings with a second crossing of the River (I felt that the water was a cooler temperature second time in).

It was midday when we were looking down the river from the track and found the Burttons Whare site on the other side of the river but we did not want to cross the river again. We wanted to have a lunch break instead and to dry our feet! I realized that the information sign was accurate in terms of walking time. The rest of the track was an easy walk through native bush and over a big fresh slip with toppled trees, then we saw two tall guys waving hands at us near the top end of the Tokomaru Valley Road - what perfect timing!

We were (Peter Wiles, Rene van Oosten drivers and a third of the walk), Sally Hewson, Isobel Holdaway, Kathy Corner and Woody Lee

Tama Loop - Tongariro National Park

8 November 2009

Trip Report and pics: Peter Wiles

It was a lovely day for 5 keen walkers to leave the Desert Road carpark about 10am for Waihohonu Hut. There was much conversation along the track, but that did not seem to hold us back. A late-ish morning tea stop was had at the hut and then it was off up the hill to the ridge top behind the hut. About half way along the ridge we met the weekend party and after a brief chat, it was more of the plod amongst the rocks and sand onwards and upwards. The final 150m climb up to the summit was a bit of a struggle but all made it for a well earned but slightly late lunch. (A bit after 1.30pm actually.) We were able to take in the expansive views despite the chill breeze.

Around 2pm we were off again, but this time along the ridge in a southerly direction. Initially the slope was gentle, but this gradually steepened where we descended some bluffs before reaching more scree and then scrub. We avoided the scrub by taking a dry creek bed and some grassy flats before crossing the stream at the bottom. This proved to be quite awkward but all made it without getting their feet wet despite varying amounts of hesitation. The Round-the-Mountain track was only about 50m beyond the stream. After a steady walk we arrived back at the cars at about 5.15pm, somewhat tired but quite joyed by the day's efforts.

Team: Jason and Mel, Garry, Lu and Peter



Waihohonu Springs Fly Camp

7-8 November

Trip report: Janet Wilson

Photo: Woody Lee

We left PN at the leisurely hour of 8.30am travelling, via the Waiouru bakery, to the carpark just off the Desert Road. After an easy walk of an hour or so we dropped our packs and made a short detour to the

Ohinepango Springs. The water here is beautiful - cold and clear and of course, Warren couldn't resist a quick dip. Retracing our steps, we joined the Northern Circuit Great Walk and soon arrived at Waihohonu Hut for lunch.

We carried on for another hour until we came to a point where we could see our destination to the west towards Mt Ngauruhoe. Leaving the track we went directly across country - Warren deviating slightly towards a small pond with some loudly croaking frogs. (I'm sure he must have seen frogs before?) An easy walk took us to the lovely clear springs with the perfect fly camping site right beside them. Plenty of flat ground and just enough trees. It was still quite early so we had plenty of time to enjoy an extended pre dinner drinks and nibbles session. Warren set about creating his spectacular Mt Doom dessert (see pic below and the latest FMC Bulletin for the recipe). There was easily enough for 10 of us!!



Most of us had a good night's sleep - except for Woody who learnt that sleeping on the ground without an insulating mat can be a warmth sapping experience. It was mostly calm and quiet and we woke to a lovely morning.

The plan was to climb Tama and possibly to meet the day trip group on the top for lunch. We decided against the direct approach and instead walked west up the dry stream to the dry lake overlooking Upper Tama Lake. Stunning views! We then scrambled up Tama where we had an early lunch. The other group were not in sight so we headed for home, only to see them a little later, on the ridge above us. Some of us climbed back up to meet them while the others lay around in the shade. We then carried on our cross country route to the track and the historic old Waihohonu Hut, where we had more food and then retraced our steps out to the car. Woody's pedometer said we had walked 18,000 steps that day - An excellent introductory fly camping trip

We were Warren Wheeler (Leader), Terry Crippen, Woody Lee, Graham Peters and Janet Wilson.

Keretaki Hut

15 November

Report: Anne Lawrence

Photos: Terry Crippen

It was a ferociously windy morning when we set off from Palmerston for the Eastern side of the Southern end of the Ruahines. With showers forecast, the main question was whether we would get thoroughly soaked as well as windblown on our venture.

As it turned out, this was a perfect route for the blustery conditions. We parked at the end of Fairbrother Road and as soon as we started heading up the Oruakeretaki Stream, we were out of the wind. Boulder hopping, criss-crossing the stream was not arduous although the rocks were slippery and there was an abundance of onga onga. At the confluence with of the headwaters of the stream, we headed up the ridge - a fairly steep climb up to Keretaki Hut.



On the ridge by the hut, we were again buffeted by wind gusts. Despite the wind howling, the hut proved an excellent spot for an early lunch – the views were excellent, and the hut cosy. (Mental note to self: come back and spend the night here – there are quite a few possibilities for a weekend trip).

We returned by a different route, taking the track in an easterly direction down to another stream which flows into the confluence we had left earlier. This part of the trip was the most challenging, with some gymnastics required to make it down to the Oruakeretaki Stream where we had left it earlier.

The rest of the trip involved re-tracing our steps, boulder hopping back down the stream then across the farm to the road end. There was enough rain falling for us to put our jackets on, but it had dried up before we got to the vehicle.

A stop for coffee and cake at Yummy Mummy's in Woodville and then home by 4pm feeling like we had had a decent stretch.



We were Terry Crippen, Warren Wheeler and Anne Lawrence.

Kashmir Rd, Longview Hut Loop Track, North East Ruahines

22 November

Report and photos: Murray Gifford

We were a party of eight, the weather forecast was for improving weather to develop and light winds, but the day started with the front still hanging around, rain and low clouds over the ranges. An 8.00am start for the two-hour drive, collecting two from Ashhurst and one from Dannevirke. The Central Hawke's Bay was in the mist and rain also. A start from the Kashmir Road end at about 10.00 am, the cloud still hanging low over all the ranges and light rain.

We kitted up in the small DOC shelter with park map and noted a few club members in the photos by Tony. Alasdair took the van to the end of the road and cycled back, starting later with Bruce, but catching us up by the top of the initial ridge climb. Down though the long wet grass, over a small stream and up thru the scrub, climbing quickly. Warren found small green orchids on the trackside, so some photo stops to record their presence. 45 mins to reach the bush edge and the slope flattens. We stopped on the top of the first ridge for a rest, time to regroup and shed some sweaty tops under the raincoats. The track drops a bit and finally climbs to the main ridge, 1hr 30mins. Some stopped for a bit of lunch, the rain was very light and air calm. The track splits at the ridge, right to Daphne Hut, left to Longview, the track indicating 45min to the Hut. Again the track drops and out into the tussocks, views only a 100m or so. The spaniards were noted, no sign of flowers.



Up the ridge to 1189 and 1232 and the sighting of a few waratahs, marking the track to the hut and Pohangina Saddle. Over 1232 and down the ridge, the track again dividing right to Top Gorge Hut, ahead to Makaretu Hut and left to the Longview Hut. All up it took us 1hr to the Hut from the top of the main ridge. Three hunters in residence, one had had success near Top Gorge, two waiting for the weather to clear. Lunch in the hut, Alasdair boiled a brew.

By 1.30 pm we were out the door and back up the hill to the road end track. The mist remained so no views the rain very light. Down the ridge in 1 hour to Moorcock Saddle and the road end, a rocky rutted track thru tussock to about 700m. Apparently one of few places in the park where the bush has never grown and the tussocks hang low.



Ice creams in Dannevirke on the return journey, a light to medium days effort, a good stretch of the legs and a social time had by all.

We were Alasdair Noble, Warren Wheeler, Bruce van Brunt, Grant Christian Cathy Corner, Gary, Jonathon and Murray Gifford.

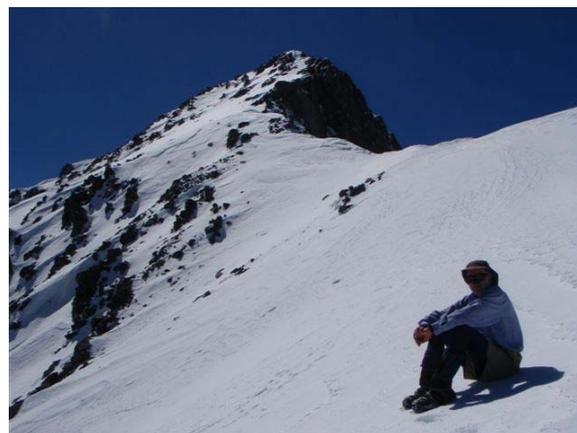
Of interest...

Tappy – A classic Labour Weekend trip

Report: Terry Crippen

A climb of Tappy (Tapuae-o-Uenuku, 2885m) in the Inland Kaikoura Range is a classic Labour Weekend trip. PNTMC often runs a Tappy trip at this time as a good follow-up to Snowcraft. This year however the Club Labour Weekend trip was going to the southern end of the Mt Arthur Range and I had been there a couple of years ago, so I thought I should have another Tappy attempt instead.

As usual, the Labour weekend Friday night ferry had a significant number of trampers and climbers heading across Cook Strait, so there was the usual exchange of plans and ideas, and generally catching up. Once at Picton our multi national carload (Dutch, German, Swiss and me the sole New Zealander) then proceeded to drive through to the Awatere Valley and up to the Hodder Bridge for a night in the tent. Come Saturday morning after a comfortable sleep and a natter to the Pitts of Gladstone Downs Station, it wasn't long before we were down in the river for the first of numerous river crossings. Some say at least 80 – but who counts after the first one.



Summit ridge of Tappy.

Halfway up the steep sided Hodder, Chris and Jeroen decided rather than spending all the time in the narrow confines of the river, to expend extra energy to obtain fine weather views by scrambling up and along a section of Tongue Spur (between the Hodder and Shin). Later on this gave them some "excellent" bush bashing through Spaniard and Matagouri as they descended back down to pick up the sidle track. Anouk and Terry however continued up the less demanding river bed.

At the huts that evening the weather didn't look too promising, with cloud coming in and light rain. However the next day couldn't have been better - not a cloud in the sky. Snow conditions were excellent

also – well for us anyhow, since we fortunately left the huts about an hour after the Hutt Valley T.C. team, so we only managed to contribute a small amount to the step plugging once we caught up with them, not too far from the summit ridge. We took a standard route onto the west ridge from the basin just to the NW of the summit and had an enjoyable lunch on top along with the other parties. Excellent views of many snow covered peaks with Alarm and Mitre nearby, and across to the Clarence river mouth. Jeroen and Terry descended down the north ridge to a saddle and gully, while Chris and Anouk returned via the ascent route. With much delight and merriment, everyone partook in very long and very high speed bum slides, so we were soon back at the hut for the start of much eating. Coming from the provinces, I was very impressed with the range of nibbles and mains put on by the Wellington based food connoisseurs!



Looking across to Alarm and Mitre from slopes of Tappy.

The third day was a relaxed but hot exit back down the Hodder, with one unsuccessful attempt to run down some fresh meat for a lunchtime BBQ. A highly successful Labour Weekend.

The team: Anouk Minnaar, Christian Fremd, Jeroen Sieburg, and Terry Crippen.

Rock Climbing at Mt Arapiles, Victoria 21-28 October

Report and photos: Chris Tuffley

For more stories and pictures, come to Chris's club night talk in February!

Labour weekend fell midway between the end of lectures and my class's final exam - perfect timing for an extended long weekend of rock climbing in Australia! Steve, Erich and I caught an early morning plane to Melbourne on Wednesday, and a four hour flight and a four hour drive later we were gazing up at the orangey-brown cliffs of Mt Arapiles. What a fantastic place! "Mountain" was hardly the word - except perhaps in such an otherwise flat landscape - but the cliffs along its north side were a climber's dream come true. It was late afternoon by the time we

got there, so for our first day we just went for a bit of an exploratory walk and boulder; on the next, we took rope and rack and began enjoying the vertical world.

Picking a route for the day from the nearly 400- page guidebook (beautifully illustrated, and fantastically detailed) was easy: we just went to the "Index by Grade", picked a two- or three-starred climb from our grade of choice, and we were bound to be on to a winner. Everywhere we went the rock was solid and beautifully textured, the routes varied, interesting and fun, and the views fantastic.

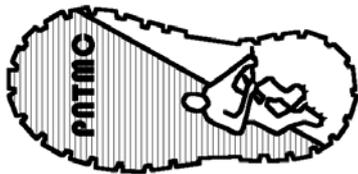
Never a heavy sleeper, I woke on New Zealand time every morning and took advantage of this to get up early, watch the sunrise and explore. There was no mistaking the surrounding landscape for home: flat, studded with gum trees, and filled with loud, colourful birds, this was definitely a different world. The kangeroos must have been on New Zealand time too, however, as this turned out to be the best time to see them, and I even saw several mums with joeys in their pouches. When mum bent to graze it seemed that joey took the opportunity to grab a bite to eat too!



Dion on the 46m free-hanging rappel off the Pharos

Our friends Dion and Nicola joined us for three and a half days, bringing our numbers to five; and for two of these our numbers were evened by Andrew, a kiwi travelling around Australia by himself after recently finishing his PhD in physics at UQ. By our last full day we were back down to just the three of us, and we set off to climb the Bard, a classic that had come highly recommended by a friend in Palmy. Among the many great climbs we'd done this was definitely the highlight for me, and a great note to end on - for all too soon we were back in the car to Melbourne, vowing to return early and often.

We were Erich Schuster, Stephen Keen and Chris Tuffley, joined by Dion O'Neale and Nicola Gaston.



Palmerston North
Tramping and
Mountaineering Club
Inc.

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PNTMC Newsletter

Dec 2009 - Jan 2010

What's inside this month?

- *Upcoming trips and club events*
- *Reports on recent trips and events including the recent interclub quiz*

Articles for the newsletter

end by the 20th of each month to Anne Lawrence,
the newsletter editor, via the club website
<http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>.

Get out and about with us!
www.pntmc.org.nz

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