

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter September 2013



Hinerua Ridge: Paemutu attempt, 27 July 2013. Turned back at point 1489m, dead ahead. [Janet Wilson]

Club Nights

All are welcome to our club nights. These 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.

9 September (Monday)

Refer to notices below.

Interclub Quiz

MUAC (Vet Tower)

12 September

Entries to Martin Lawrence close 6 September. Refer to notices below.

PNTMC Annual Photo Competition

Martin Lawrence

23 September (Monday)

Intellectual and humorous competition for the prestigious "Boot and Rock" trophy.
Refer to notices below.

Interclub Debate

MUAC (Vet Tower)

Continued....

Club Nights- continued

26 September

A Tale of Two Rivers

Warren Wheeler

What is the future of hydro power on the West Coast? Our DVD tonight was prepared by Whitewater New Zealand as part of campaign to stop the construction of a 100MW dam on the Mokihinui River. In May 2012 this campaign was hailed as a success when Meridian decided to abandon the project.

1 October (Tuesday)

Interclub Photographic Competition

MTSC (Lido)

Refer to notices below.

Upcoming trips

1 September

Herepai Hut

M

Duncan Hedderly

354-6905

8.00 a.m. start for a trip into the hills behind Eketahuna. Pretty gentle apart from one steep bit. We'll either go as far as the hut, or if someone wants to bag a peak we can push on (and up) a bit.

7-8 Sept (NB change from 21-22 Sept)

Kime Hut

M

Warren Wheeler

356-1998

Depart 7.30 am. First PNTMC visit to the new Kime Hut, high in the Tararua Ranges. A starlit side trip by torch light to Mt Hector.

8 September

Sunrise Hut

E/M

Malcolm Parker

357 5203

Follow the pleasant, all weather track to the beautiful Sunrise Hut, with its great views from high in the northern Ruahines.

13/14-15 September

Ringatoto TNP climb

M,T

Terry Crippen

027 643 3637

We will probably depart Friday night to attempt Ringatoto (Mitre), etc on Ruapehu. We will stay either at Whangehu Hut (NZAC) if we attempt the North Buttress, or Rangipo Hut (DoC) if we attempt the East Ridge. Let me know in plenty of time since Whangehu Hut must be booked. This trip is for those who have done Snowcraft 3 or more. You will need your own climbing gear; including rope, ice hammer, stakes/pickets, etc. Contact Mick for hire of club gear 358-3183.

14-15 September

Ngamoko Hut

M

Craig Allerby

323 7913

Depart PN 7.30 a.m. From the Limestone Road-end we will ascend either the Shorts or Knights track on to the Ngamoko Range, then travel south along the tussock tops and leatherwood scrub. Possibly some snow

around. A steep track leads down to the newly painted Ngamoko Hut nestled beside the Pohangina River. Two peaks can be bagged.

20-23 September

Tappy & Alarm, Kaikouras

F, T

Malcolm Leary

06 327 7825

We will travel to catch the ferry early Friday afternoon, camp at the roadend Friday night, walk in on Saturday crossing the Hodder River about 70 times, stay at the Hodder huts. On Sunday we will climb Tappy and Alarm if we can. Monday we will walk out and travel home. This trip is dependant on the weather as the river level must be low.

21-22 Sept (NB change from 7-8 Sept)

Maropea Forks

M

Martin Lawrence

357-1695

A beautiful hut, valley, river, and forest located in the mid-north Ruahines. Well worth the effort to tramp to.

22 September

A-Frame Hut

E

Peter Darragh

353 0922

An interesting walk in from Dannevirke, up to Takapari Road and beyond.

28-29 September

Ngamoko Peaks

M

Richard Lockett

323 0948

One of our favourite areas in the central Ruahines – ideal for some peak bagging.

29 September

Tunupo

M

Mike Allerby

323 8563

Close to Apiti and the Oroua River, this area is increasing in popularity these days. Hopefully, great views, and will meet up with the above.

5-6 October

Howletts Hut

M

Graham Peters

329 4722

An historic hut in Southern Hawkes Bay, sheltered, cosy, and welcoming.

6 October

TBA

F

Thomas Robertson

354 5036

Stay tuned here, and save your energy. Guaranteed to be an interesting and strenuous weekend peak bagging.

Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trampler 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.

Gear for trips

Minimum gear for day trips is appropriate footwear, pack, lunch and snacks, waterproof jacket, overtrousers, gloves, warm hat, torch, toilet paper, matches or a lighter, sunblock, first aid kit, and a survival bag or space blanket. Each person needs to be equipped to survive overnight.

Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips

The club has purchased two PLBs for members' use. If you want to take one of these on a trip, contact Martin or Anne Lawrence. Note that this applies to any trip you are going on - it doesn't need to be a club trip.

Trip leaders

Complete the trip intentions form and leave with one of Overdue Trip Contacts or drop into 44 Dahlia St or email to pntmctrips@gmail.com with the date and trip name in the subject line. If you are unable to run your trip as scheduled, advise a trip coordinator as soon as possible so that alternatives can be arranged.

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:

Tony Gates	357-7439
Janet Wilson	329-4722
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Tony Gates, the newsletter editor, at kiwi@leatherwood.co.nz, or via <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

Notices: some Interclub events

Interclub Quiz

9 September (Monday)

Will PNTMC be able to hold off MUAC and MTSC from the Trevor Bissell Memorial Billy Trophy this year? Or will we just get the chocolate and other minor prizes?

Come along and join one of our teams for a fun night out, starting at 7 pm in the ICLT lecture theatre, ground floor of the Vet Tower at Massey University.

PNTMC Annual Photo Competition

12 September

Rules

- Only digital entries accepted
- No previous entries
- Images must be related to tramping, climbing, trekking
- Limit 3 images per category (per person)
- Images must be clearly labelled

There is a slight change in the categories this year to better align with the Interclub and FMC categories.

Categories

NZ Landscapes – scenery, no people
Above the Bushline – includes people
Below the Bushline – includes people
Natural History – NZ flora, fauna, geology, etc
Topical NZ – people or detail
Overseas - people and/or places

Deadline 6 September

Entries due ASAP, so that they can be given to our judge. These can be provided either by pen drive, CD, or email. Contact Martin Lawrence on 357-1695 or martin.lawrence.nz@gmail.com

Notes

There is a prize for the overall winning image. It is anticipated that the winning images will be entered in the Interclub Photo Competition (Thursday 1 October 2013) and the FMC Photo Competition 2013. In addition, some of these images may be used to promote PNTMC. Please indicate if you do not want your images used in these activities. Images remain the property of the photographers.

Interclub Debate

23 September (Monday)

MUAC is again hosting the rejuvenated

Interclub Debate between MUAC and PNTMC. Last year MUAC again got their name on the Old Boot trophy – this year we hope it will be our turn. Let Warren or anyone else on the committee know if you are keen to be on our team or come along to offer your support at the ICTL lecture theatre in the Vet Tower at 7.00pm.

Interclub Photo Competition 1 October (Tuesday)

Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club are our hosts this year. Only the best entries from the MUAC, PNTMC and MTSC 2013 photo competitions are eligible – come along and be amazed.

7.30pm at the Rose City Club Rooms (to the right of the Lido) in Park Road.

The Club Archives Terry Crippen

I have taken over looking after the Club Archives from Peter Wiles, who had that job for many years. Once getting it all here to Number 11, and getting rid of the big cabinet it was stored in, I went through it all and reduced the material considerably; keep only that material directly relevant to PNTMC. Hence old Massif's, HVTC journals, FMC bulletins at the Club auction.

The Archives are certainly an interesting collection of material! Besides a near complete set of newsletters, accounts for the last 8 or so years, financial records and correspondence files, we have such material as:

The original application for incorporation (1967) with all the signatories, original certificate of incorporation, original constitution.

Membership lists (member's names, phone numbers, and addresses) 1971 to 1987, along with all the applications for membership. And letters of resignation – how many people now days bother to write in to resign?

All the old committee minutes books, including that of the first meeting which was in December 1965 when it was decided to form PNTMC.

Trip log books from the first club trip (to Field Hut Sunday Feb 6th 1967, 14 people went), all

nicely typed up; 1967 to 1975.

Copies of Trudge the combined PNTMC/MUAC song book; 1st edition, not the controversial 2nd edition with the grubby section (Engineers Song etc) that produced the controversial and very long committee meeting under the chair of Chrissie Elliot (nee Williams). It was decided that the grubby section be removed from all the PNTMC copies.

The 21st Celebration publication and research material (actually it was 22 years and a weekend of celebrations was held in 1987 at Rangiwhahia town).

Club night meeting books with who attended. Some accident reports.

Old newspaper scrapbooks of articles relevant to tramping, climbing or PNTMC.

So if you are interested in going though any of it, give me a call and come round for a coffee or two (better still, bring a bottle of wine). **And since 2015 will mean 50 years of PNTMC it is nearly time we start thinking about researching the history of the Club and having a celebration and producing a publication!**

PNTMC Peak Bagging Challenge 2013-2014

The aim here is to encourage participation, to get trampers out and on to the hills! To follow on from last years hut bagging challenge, with a bias towards the Ruahines.

Rules:

- To run entirely on an honesty system, although photos on high points are encouraged.
- To run between the clubs 2013 AGM and the 2014 AGM. (You must be at the AGM 2014 to claim points bagged that day).
- All peaks to be within the Conservation Estate ie administered by DOC in New Zealand. They must be marked on NZ Topo 50 maps. Those on boundaries will count. If in doubt, look at the Walking Access NZ website.
- Peaks must be named - a Trig code or spot height doesn't count.
- A peak located on the DoC boundary will count.
- Points - Ruahine peaks 2 points, all others,

- 1 point.
- Special Ruahine peaks 5 points - for first visits (or if its more than 20 years since you last visited). There are 10 - Maharahara, Toka, Tunupo, Mangahuia, Otumore, Ohuinga, Mangaweka, Tiraha, Te Atua O Parapara and Te Atua Mahuru.
- A bonus point for each peak bagged on a PNTMC club trip.
- Points can be claimed for each high point a maximum of 3 times.
- Your results should be sent as soon as possible after each trip to Malcolm Parker at mparker@slingshot.co.nz or phone 357-5203.
- Any dispute to be settled by the committee.

Preliminary Peak Bagging Results

Early in August there were 15 members logged as peak baggers.

The top five were:

Grant Christian	43 points
Warren Wheeler	30 points
Terry Crippen	27 points
Janet Wilson	18 points
Tina Bishop	16 points

Grant has amassed his points on 15 climbs, whereas Tina only on 8.

No doubt in the last few weeks the total has changed with plenty of good weather for trips.

Portrait of New Life Member Tony Gates

Tony comes from a well known tramping and outdoor recreating family -The Gates - so he has naturally continued with this enthusiasm with the outdoors. He joined PNTMC in 1988 and since then he has been an active, competent and enthusiastic member, both out in the hills and mountains on Club and private trips, and behind the scenes.

Tony was Club President for three years; 1990 to 1993. Newsletter editor from 2001 to 2003. One of the Trip Coordinators from 2004 to 2007. And again Newsletter editor from 2010 to the present.

From the time I have known Tony he would be considered one of the most enthusiastic club members. Occasionally we have had to reign in Tony's enthusiasm! Tony has always had a passion for trips beyond the standard Tararua

and Ruahine ones, heading to places near and far in the North and South Islands. Some of these different trips I have done with Tony include:

- Climbing Whanokao and Hikurangi in the Raukumara Ranges.
- A circuit of the Ruakituri Wilderness Area in the Urewera National Park.
- Various trips to the Thousand Acre Plateau, the Barton, the Leslie, Karamea and the Tablelands in Kahurangi National Park.
- The Wanganiu River, Southern Alps.

Besides just tramping, Tony would also enjoy; hunting, trout fishing, cross country (and I expect down hill) skiing, rafting and tubing and photography. These activities would also get other club members involved.

Tony would concentrate on pet areas enthusing others. For example;

- Howletts, Sawtooth Ridge, Te Hekenga, Waterfall Hut; mid winter trips.
- The Punga Hut area (Patupairehe)

As well as all these activities Tony has developed a wide network of tramping contacts and friends – this of course helps to promote PNTMC. Other times Tony would manage to get onto guided trips for free such as rafting down the Mohaka and Motu Rivers, as chief photographer! And then there are Tony's exploits in Argentina.

Behind the scenes Tony has a keen interest in researching topics related to tramping and the ranges. Hence the well produced Howletts Hut log book, material on William Colenso, and of course *Worn out Boots*. This is also shown in Tony's enthusiasm as Newsletter Editor. He would also often be editing drafts of other peoples writing of tramping and the ranges. All of this helps promote PNTMC's name.

September 2013 Editorial By Tony Gates

I was thrilled to receive Life Membership of PNTMC recently, and really sorry to not be able to attend the special meeting on 25 July. Thank you for all of the support. I chuckled at the video of the event, and the speeches. I would like to add a bit more here.

When I joined the PNTMC in 1988, I was pleased to join a dynamic and experienced club and committee. It was obvious that PNTMC was (and still is) a great organisation

for trips and activities to many places. I was President for a few years during the 1990's, Editor, assistant Secretary, Trip co ordinator, Snowcraft Instructor, and probably my best role, as trip leader for tough trips. Maybe I can be blamed for taking a few too many toys on a pleasant tramp- skis, snow shoes, mountaineering equipment, cameras, binoculars, fishing rods, rifles, a four wheel drive vehicle, truck tubes, and even a kayak into the heart of the Tararuas (The Mangahao Dam). I am yet to take a horse on a PNTMC trip. I enjoyed many times being one of the PNTMC team for the interclub quiz for the Trevor Bissell Memorial Billy. The Ruahine and Tararuas always featured, as well as the Southern Alps etcetera. Some of my favourite places include; the upper Otaki, Totara Flats, Waterfall Hut, and Lake Colenso Hut. The Editor's role was shared with others; Peter Wiles, John Phillips, Lance Gray, Doug Strachan, Anne Lawrence, and Warren Wheeler. Between us I think that we have made a pretty good written/ photographic record of the PNTMC. This will be very useful for when we publish the fiftieth anniversary story of our club in a few years. (much of this record is in digital as well as print format).



The Editor enjoying the snows above Rangihut, on his first PNTMC trip, July 1988.

Many years ago, I noted a plethora of books about the Tararuas- but few about the Ruahines. I have carried out some extensive Ruahine historical literature research which I am happy to say has proved useful to various publications and writers. William Colenso was one of the principal Ruahine characters whose writings and journeys I became familiar with, as well as botanist William Howlett, poet Lester Masters, and botanist/ map maker Norman Elder. Some of their fine quotes and poems have been published in this newsletter. I find such history fascinating and vital.

.. the fog came in so densely that we could hardly see a yard before us!. So, after

wandering about for some time, and fearing that some of our party might go astray (which one did!), we halted to breakfast, and to await the clearing of the fog. On two or three rare occasions while travelling in the mountains, I have met with this species of dense, dry fog, so widely different from the fogs of the low lands.William Colenso (1852)

Recently, one of my most rewarding roles has been to assist with publicity of PNTMC. We lodged a proposal to the NZ Geographic Board to name several Ruahine watercourses and places, a proposal that can only benefit anyone interested in the Ruahines. Also various publications such as the FMC Bulletin, Wilderness Magazine, DOC publications, and the like have published my writing and photographs. Other PNTMC writers/ photographers have also featured. I published my own book "Worn Out Boots" last year, and this too offered (I believe) good publicity about PNTMC, the Ruahines, and Tararuas. I would like to encourage other members here to consider writing their own book- it is a great way to share stories and memories. I hope that "Worn Out Boots", and PNTMC, can offer inspiration for you to do good trips, and to record them.

On a slightly different note about publicity (about the New Zealand mountains), I'm sure that we have all been watching the adventures of Jamie Fitzgerald and Kevin Biggar on their second TV series "First Crossings". These two kiwi characters have set out to follow in the footsteps of various explorers over different eras of our history, and to some very different environments; caves, mountains, glaciers, rivers, etcetera. It is a series of fascinating journeys that (attempt to) show us what it may have been like. There are amazing scenery shots and historical interest comments on prime time TV.

More amazing mountain scenery, this time in the Karakoram, featured in "The Summit", a movie played at the recent film festival. Some made it to the summit of K2, some didn't, and some didn't make it down alive. It was absolutely awesome scenery with a dramatic and tragic story.

Recent SAR business

A number of non fatal SAR events in the area of our interest occurred during late autumn and

winter 2013. A man and his dog were lost in snow covered scrub near Jumbo Hut, and there was a helicopter rescue of a person from Pinnacle Ridge, above Whakapapa ski field. A friend of mine was snow shoeing over to Triangle Hut, and she twisted her ankle. She activated her PLB, and was also rescued by Helicopter. She told me that it was interesting to note the difficulty the helicopter had in actually finding her, due to GPS inaccuracies, and how reluctant the pilot was to land at Triangle Hut. Similar GPS inaccuracies initially occurred during a recent successful SAR event that our friends in MTSC were involved with, up on the Ngamoko Range. Night vision worn by Palmerston North Rescue Helicopter crew were to prove essential in a night time search for a delayed trampers to Kiritaki Hut by the Thursday Trampers. The weather proved tricky at times, but the rescue was effected by 10.00 PM on a cold winters' night. The rescuers reported a problem with Ongaonga.

Trip Reports

3 August 2013 Branch Rd Walkway, Pohangina Janet Wilson

Seven of us enjoyed a nice morning walk up my local walkway, the historic "Branch Rd". This walkway was badly damaged by storms in 2004 and 2008, but today is in good shape thanks to the generosity of local land owners. The badly damaged lower section has been bypassed in parts over private land and locals have also marked and maintained the track well so it is again a very easy walk.



Top of Branch Road Walkway [Janet Wilson]

We were expecting to be buffeted by the forecast strong cold easterly but when we broke out into the farm land at about the halfway point, we were still sheltered. It wasn't

until the top that we got some breeze. We had a break at the top and then headed back, enjoying the views to the ranges. Although it isn't a long walk, we were out for about 4 hours and my legs were feeling a little tired as we arrived back at my house. We enjoyed a nice shared lunch before everyone headed home and I carried on with the rose pruning.

Thanks everyone for coming along for a nice winter day walk. We were Richard Lockett, Kathy Corner, Anne van Brunt, Warren Wheeler, Scott Esser, Sally Hewson and Janet Wilson.

4 August 2013 Snowcraft 3 (Tukino) Terry Crippen

The forecast for the weekend was less than desirable, in fact it was horrible! So as we set off from PN at 4:30am we were surprised as we headed up to Waiouru that conditions looked OK; just overcast and no wind. We all meet up at the "Z" service station for a coffee, coke, pie, etc and then proceeded in the two 4WD vehicles up the Desert Road and the Tukino access road.



Belaying using ice-screws as anchors.

A collection of vehicles were at the lodges here on the "Wild Side" of Ruapehu, both skiers and NZAC Auckland Section on their AIC. Gearing up (with the students carrying all

the gear) we headed over to the waterfall and the southern end of the Northern Bluffs.

Below the waterfall due to all the water spray there was solid ice, so those that wanted to began belaying with ice-screws as anchors. The rest of the crew began with *T-slot* anchors – the snow was crusty on top and soft underneath. The purpose of the day was to get a lots of putting in anchors and lots of belaying. The three ropes continued up slope for the morning. *T-slots*, *upright mid-clip* and pretend *upright top-clip* anchors were used. Backing up and multiple anchors and runners as well. Using rocks as anchors made progress quicker.



Mary setting up T-slot anchor [Dale Hokin]

Eventually we reached our “summit” so it was time for a late morning tea. Then a spell of avalanche rescue practice using the three types of avo transceivers that the club has. (Made sure all cell phones were turned off – they stuff receive and transmit up!!) Plus poking Gary’s leg under snow to see what a body feels like compared to snow! So far the weather has been excellent; continuing to be just overcast with little or no wind.

Lunch was partaken, with the lads checking out another waterfall while the ladies going walk-about up and above the next bluff line. After lunch it was time to rope up for glacier travel and having to negotiate around some imaginary crevasses! Nobody fell in.



Roping up to practice glacier travel.

By this stage mist had started to come in with some light rain. We then preceded to down-climb our ascent route, with plenty of belaying as we went. Also some lowering of “injured/less confident” people and third persons prussicking down the rope. The snow at this stage was quite soft so more effort was needed in setting up anchors – compressing the snow and backing up. Ice screws were again used for the section of ice at the bottom by the waterfall.

We knocked off about 3pm, so had a full worthwhile day. Then it was off to Angkor Wat (not open early morning on weekends unfortunately) for a bit of a feed and a debrief. I expect everybody had increased their knowledge of snow types and had learnt a few tricks of the trade as well as increasing their speed at setting up anchors and belaying. So keep at it everyone!

We were, students and instructors: Angela Minto, Bruce van Brunt, Dale Hokin, Gary Sparrow, Hannah Lund, Mary Lund, Terry Crippen.

4 August 2013 Mangaweka Peak Grant Christian

Once again the forecast was not favourable with rain predicted for the hills. The landowner had given permission for no more than three to cross his land. Fortunately Warren had shown interest on condition the forecast was favourable. There was some debate about which was the quicker route, via Kimbolton and Rangiwahia or up through Vinegar Hill and Mangaweka. We chose the latter for the journey up, arriving at the car park after about 1 & 1/2 hours.

After getting out of the car we spotted a pheasant heading in our direction. It was

obviously tame because it came right up to us and looked like it would appreciate something edible. It was presumably disappointed by our lack of offerings.

The conditions were pleasant as we strode across the paddocks which were noticeably dry for this time of year. After the steep climb up to the bush line we steadily climbed through the bush, skirting several lots of windfall, and eventually striking snow remnants that thankfully had been compacted by other trappers. Once we got to Purity Hut we stopped for a snack and added more clothing. From here the route is above the bush.

The snow here was not compact and quite often a foot would break through and we would be in snow up to the knee or worse. This made it hard going in places. We were now getting into cloud and conditions were not as pleasant. After an hour and a quarter of uphill from Purity we reached Wooden Peg, the first of the peaks. At this point Kelly decided he would head back to Purity because the conditions were bad and he was not worried about bagging peaks. Thomas & I pushed on.

From Wooden Peg it is only 10 minutes to Iron Peg and then another 20 minutes to Mangaweka. The cloud was thick so we needed to find the correct direction as the ridge is quite broad. It was my first visit to Mangaweka which is just a small rise in the ridge rather than a true peak.

We didn't linger on the peak but scampered back in the direction from whence we had come. We stopped at Purity for lunch where Kelly was relaxing in the warmer conditions. From here we had an uneventful trip back to the car.

There were cows grazing on the roadway past the car park and they were shut in with gates. We drove up behind them and then Thomas got out to walk past them but they got spooked and crashed through the gates and ran down the road. Both Kelly and Thomas walked through the paddocks to get past them and we eventually got them shut in again.

On the way home we enjoyed coffee or beer and the delicious chocolate cake at the Kimbolton cafe. Another great day in the hills for trip participants: Grant Christian, Thomas Robertson & Kelly Holland.

17-18 August 2013 Iron Gate Hut - Stoat Line rebait Janet Wilson

Plan A - an overnight tramp with a purpose - to rebait the stoat/rat traps along the Tunupo/Iron Gate circuit (and score a high point or 2) - was foiled by a bad weather forecast.

Plan B - a day trip splitting in to teams to do various sections of the traps lines was put in to action. Richard and Warren headed up the Tunupo track where they rebaited and cleared a lot of the braches broken in the heavy snowfall back in July. Graham and trap novice Geoff (and Bruce the dog) started from the beginning and worked their way towards Iron Gate, rebaiting and oiling traps along the way. Martin and I tramped directly to Iron Gate Hut and worked our way back down the track. Tunupo Stream was up a little but not enough to cause a problem. Graham and Geoff must have been going well as Martin and I met them much sooner than I'd expected. Bruce vanished at this point and we think he ran all the way up to Iron Gate following my scent - he came back some time later at a very fast pace down the track.

We were all back up at our shed at the road end for afternoon tea and the team stayed for a early BBQ/ pre dinner venison snack.

Graham and I stayed the night and the next day Craig Allerby came up and he and Graham went down to the river, doing the traps along the way. I did the other short "Stoat Trappers" line and so that was all the traps done for another winter's month. Thanks team for all cooperating so willingly.

We were Richard Lockett, Warren Wheeler, Geoff Phillips, Martin Lawrence, Graham Peters, Craig Allerby and Janet Wilson.

10 August Blue Range and Te Mara Peak Karen Tutt

On Saturday morning the four of us (trip leader Woody, plus Warren, Margaret and Karen) set off from the Kiriwhakapapa roadend and campsite, where tall trees wreathed themselves in mist. They must do this a lot, because the thick moss and trailing lichens only became more abundant as we climbed. Apparently the views from this track over the Blue Range can be spectacular. We had a nice view all the way of the dense white

insides of the clouds. In the bright but diffuse light, the varying greens of the forest were almost luminous. After just over two hours' steady climb (I am getting fitter, I am!) we reached the T junction at 978 metres above sea level, a total climb of 638 metres (<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~fiski/br.html>).

To the right is the track to Blue Range Hut, to the left, the track to Cow Creek Hut. After some discussion we decided to take the left hand track in order to bag Te Mara Peak, at 1104 m a.s.l. the highest point in the Blue Range. There is no Department of Conservation maintained track to the peak, so we soon had to deviate from the orange plastic triangles, uphill through open, mossy forest. After a short while we came across a track, marked with tin lids nailed to the trees. Some of these lids were so old that they had corroded away, leaving little more than a metal ring hanging from the nail. Warren's knowledge of the area, and map reading skills, made negotiating this part of the trip a lot easier, although when he said that finding the peak would be "easy – you just keep going up until you can't go up any more", I felt some misgivings. The phrase "It's easy – you just . . ." has preceded many stuff-ups. But in this case the prediction came true, and after a little searching along the well defined ridge, Warren found the trig point, an old iron tube. This was adorned with a metal tag roughly engraved with "TE MARA 1104m", and an old horse shoe which Margaret said must have come from quite a big horse. Horses would have been used to drag logs out of the forest in earlier times.



Warren at Te Mara peak 1104m [WoodyLee]

My lesson for that day was that, while it may be easy to find a peak, it is very easy to lose yourself, and each other, on the way down from the peak, at least in a forest. One member of the group was out of sight of the

rest of us, easy enough to happen in a forest, and accidentally went a few degrees away from our route, and off down the wrong side of the range. We soon noticed we hadn't seen this person for a little while; some coordinated hollering enabled us to relocate said person, and then we proceeded without incident back down the tin-lid track to the main track, back to the T-junction, and thence to Blue Range Hut.

This 1958 hut is painted the brightest blue, and charmingly decorated with old hospital signs (Do Not Enter During Surgery) and topographic maps. After a lunch break and a wander around to admire the view (more cloud insides), we took our way back down to the Kiriwhakapapa roadend, as the clouds began to release a fine, continuous drizzle upon us. I am looking forward to my next opportunity to get into the Blue Range, hopefully with less cloud.

11 August Foxton Beach Walk Tina Bishop

We started at the Foxton Beach Fire Station and wandered thru the housing area to the pine forest, the weather was dreary and drizzly. Bruce and Holly the dogs bounded through the trees highly excited while we followed a newly made mountain bike track which eventually led to the four wheel motor bike track at the back of the sand dunes. We followed this track for quite a long way avoiding getting knocked down by the dogs who at times insisted on racing around our legs.

The rain had stopped as we finally came out onto the beach – it was a bit windy for lunch so we sat in the sand dunes entertained by Bruce doing circuits telling us it was time to get moving. The tide was just starting to go out so the water was quite high, there was the odd boat out and a long line off the beach. Pieces of plastic and various other rubbish was conscientiously picked up by some and dropped in the rubbish bins by the Surf Club – the lifeguards were out practicing in the surf in their rubber dinghies.

Down the beach we walked until we reached our pristine Manawatu River and then around the point to the estuary. The walk goes through a small forest and onto the sunset walkway which follows the estuary down to the boat club and wharf but we turned into Robbie Street and up to my Hut. Here Bruce and Holly

get to sit in the garage (although Holly knows how to open the sliding door to sneak upstairs) while we go up and have afternoon tea with views of the sea and river. Many interesting topics were discussed by all!

We were: Graham, Janet, Bruce, Richard, Warren, Stephanie (my friend), Tina, and Holly.

18 August
Coppermine Creek
Warren Wheeler

Our leader Janet Maessen had injured herself so I offered to fill the breach for this nice easy trip. A dodgy forecast wasn't enough to put us off and in the event there was only occasional drizzle and the odd light shower, which actually added a nice edge to sharpen the experience of this easy walk, with its benched pack track through the supplejack festooned lowland forest above the stream changing to a slightly slippery rock hop up to the Magazine (where we braved the short dark wet tunnel to

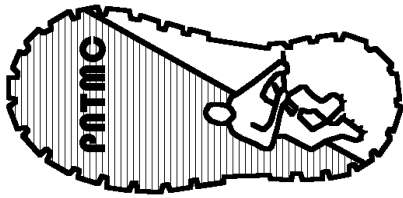
see the growing families of cave weta with their long legs clinging to the low roof) and on up the pack track to a short section of rough narrow track across a slip to the old mine entranceway (now covered over and looking rather unlike the photo of the miners there) for a sandwich. We then explored an old miners' track down to the stream and found ideal swimming holes for a cooling dip next summer.

As the showers eased off again we hopped back down the track and past the barrier to see the very narrow remaining track left by a big steep slip into the creek and agreed that discretion and vertigo meant we back tracked to the Magazine and down the short length of stream again, back onto the benched track and out to the roadend some three hours after the start of our enjoyable little adventure. Our outing concluded with a stop for coffee at Yummy Mummys in Woodville and exploring the shop full of collectibles next door.

Thanks to Lorraine Barr for not being put off by the weather – it was a really nice trip.



Peak baggers in misty Tararua Forest, Blue Range. [Woody Lee]



**Palmerston North
Tramping and
Mountaineering Club
Inc.**

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PNTMC Newsletter September 2013

What's inside this month?

- New Life Member of PNTMC
- Some recent SAR business
- Snowcraft 3 on Mt Ruapehu
- Mangaweka Trig, Hikurangi Range
- Branch Road rambles
- More Oroua valley stoat trap checking
- Te Mara Peak and Blue Range Hut

Articles for the newsletter

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

Get out and about with us!

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