

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter June 2014



PNTMC hut maintenance team hanging out at Ngamoko - retake of a classic photo [Martin Lawrence]

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.

12 June

Manaslu Circuit

Dave Grant

Manaslu, in the Nepalese Himalayas, is the eighth highest mountain in the world (8156m) and the Manaslu Circuit is a 15 day trek that takes you around this peak, travelling up the spectacular Bhudi Gandakhi valley and over the 5106m Larkya Pass close to the Tibetan border. Dave did the trek in late 2012.

26 June

Mongolia Revisited

Terry Crippen has travelled to Mongolia four times where he has tramped and climbed extensively in the Altai Mountains, Khangai Mountains, the Khoosgul Nuur and Bogh Khan Uul. A trampers paradise, with large amounts of land communally owned and open for trampers, and very welcoming locals.

Upcoming Trips

1 June

Rangi Hut **E**
Peter Darragh **353 0922**

A pleasant day walk to one of the Ruahines more popular huts. Recently refurbished, this is a great opportunity to see the changes.

7-8 June

Northern Ruahines **F**
Grant Christian **354 5483**

An exploratory trip into the Northern Ruahine Ranges. Contact Grant Christian for more details.

8 June

Farm Walk **M**
Malcolm Leary **06 327 7825**

An annual stroll through the hills of the Rangitikei, with plenty of interest and great Ruahine views. We plan to take a clay road up to the high hills heading towards town, near the Western Highway. Expect great views of the Kawhatau basin and Ruapehu.

14-15 June

Iron Gate Hut **E/M**
Tina Bishop **06 363 5660**

A lovely overnight trip to the classic Iron Gate Hut, situated in the Oroua valley. Reached from Petersons Road, and going past the Alice Nash Memorial Lodge, the well maintained track sidles above the Oroua River to the hut.

15 June

Tunupo **M**
Michael Allerby **328 8563**

This is the highest point of the Ngamoko Range, between the Oroua and Pohangina Valleys. Bring your sun glasses and ice axe - there may be snow and ice about. Depart PN 8.00am.

21 June

Ashhurst/Palmy walk **E/M**
Peter Darragh **353 0922**

As the Te Matai road walk was supposed to be extended all the way to Palmerston North by now, the original plan was to follow this from Ashhurst back to Palmy. While this hasn't happened the plan is still to go on the Te Matawai walk, and possibly extending the trip by following the Manawatu River.

22 June

Wellington Skyline Walk **M**
Martin Lawrence **357 1695**

Situated in the capital city, this track is more adventurous than what you might assume. The

track is 12 km long, running along the ridge from old coach road in Johnsonville to the Makara Saddle in Karori. Stunning views of Wellington, and some great ridge travel.

28-29 June

Mid Winter Celebration **All**
Warren Wheeler **356 1998**

Janet was unable to book the Pohangina Base again but instead we have kindly been offered the use of the Club patron's bach at Rangataua. This is right next to Ohakune and ideally situated for access to Mount Ruapehu. We will do a couple of day trips to suit weather and fitness levels. Summit, anyone? Blythe Hut? Lake Surprise via the high cross country route? Would be good to depart Friday night 5.30pm.

Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trumper 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 on 357-1695. 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:

Janet Wilson	329-4722
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Thomas Robertson, the acting newsletter editor, direct or via our web site

<http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

Notices

50th Anniversary

As the club's 50th anniversary will be next year, we are looking at ways to celebrate this, and also the possibility of publishing a short history of the club based on the archives and people's stories. If you are interested in assisting with this then please get in touch with the club President Dave Grant on 328-7788.

Newsletter Editor

We are currently seeking a newsletter editor, as the acting newsletter editor will be moving away from Palmerston North in July. It is an enjoyable role, and not particularly onerous. If you think you would be interested in this please contact the club President Dave Grant.



SNOWCRAFT 2014

Winter is nearly here and PNTMC's Snowcraft Programme starts in July. It has two aims; to equip people with the necessary skills for safe tramping in snow; and to pass on the

fundamental skills of mountaineering. It will be running as day trips to Mt Ruapehu with an evening session mid-week prior to each day trip. Dates are:

16 July Wed evening	SC1 Intro and briefing
19 or 20 July	SC1 Mt Ruapehu
30 July Wed evening	SC2 Briefing & intro to rope work
2 or 3 August	SC2 Mt Ruapehu
13 August Wed evening	SC3 Briefing & rope work
16 or 17 August	SC3 Mt Ruapehu

The fees are for each of SC1, SC2, SC3 are \$50 if PNTMC member, or \$60 if non-member. These cover weeknight venues, day transport, group gear hire, and instruction. Individual gear hire, if needed, is an additional cost for non PNTMC members. Pass the word round to friends you may think are interested.

Applications (returned application form and fee) close **Thursday 10 July**. Application forms are available on the Snowcraft link at: www.pntmc.org.nz or on the noticeboard at Club night. For info contact Terry Crippen 356-3588 or Bruce van Brunt 328-4761.



Native Tree Seedlings to Give Away.

Cabbage tree; Hebe; Akeake; Lemonwood and other *Pittosporums*; Lancewood, Fivefinger and other *Pseudopanax*; Kowhai, etc. Far too many growing everywhere, come armed with a spade and a bag or three to put them in. Contact Terry 3563-588 or 027 643 3637.

Social Thursdays

Due to popular demand, Social Thursdays on the 1st Thursday of the month will commence again on the 5th June.

Anne Lawrence has suggested the new restaurant on the Corner of Cuba and Rangetikei called "Desert Rose". I will check to see if they require a booking - send me through a quick email if you are thinking of coming along so I have a rough idea of numbers.

Looking forward to seeing some of you there.
Start time 6pm.

Cheers
Janet Wilson
(wearing her Social Convener's hat)

Tararua Hut Bagging Competition

Following the success of our previous Ruahine hut bagging and peak bagging competitions, PNTMC is pleased to announce a new hut bagging competition focused on the Tararuas.

The challenge will run from 1 July-30 June 2015.

3 points per visit to Tararua hut, bivvy, shelter, Holdsworth Lodge etc – as long as they are on DoC website.

1 extra point if the visit is on a club trip

1 extra point if you stay the night. (One hut only per night) Camping outside crowded huts counts.

1 extra point for a first visit.

All other DOC huts in the country - 1 point per visit (no extra points)

All huts maximum of 3 visits to count for points.

Take photos to record the visit with the aim of producing another poster.

Hut bags, email to Janet.

Hut images, email to Martin.

jwilson@inspire.net.nz
martin.lawrence.nz@gmail.com

Membership subscriptions are due

With the AGM behind us, subs are now due. We have kept them the same as last year.

Full sub (newsletter posted to you)
\$40 Family or \$35 Single

e-sub (newsletter from website, not posted)
\$30 Family or \$25 Single

You can pay by giving cash or cheque to Warren at a club meeting, OR fill in the pink slip included with the last newsletter and put in the mail with your cheque, OR you can pay online to PNTMC's bank account: 030726 0485393 00 (please include your name so we know who the payment is from).

Reminder for prospective members

New members need to have been on at least two club trips before they can be accepted as members of the club. This requirement has been a part of the club ethos since its inception - the idea being that people will have checked out that they do fit in with other members and our trips before they become members. Of course people are welcome to come along on club trips and to club nights even if they are not intending to become members.

From the Secretary's desk

Random Notes from PNTMC's secretary (seeing he is not getting into the hills for a while)

1. Fifty years of PNTMC – late next year or 2016

PNTMC is heading towards its 50th birthday: On the 14th December 1965, there was a meeting of 11 people (who came across from MTSC) at which they decided to form Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club. The first club trip was on February 6th 1966 to Field Hut and the Club became an incorporated society in 1967. So it's time for us to put our thinking caps on and come up with ideas of how and when to celebrate this 50 year event! A book, a social event, a tramping get together or ? Let any of the committee know if you have some suggestions. We will probably need a 50th Birthday committee to be set up. (By the way, we held an excellent 21st anniversary series of

events and produced a booklet, back in 1987 – it turned out to be the 22nd birthday!).

2. The Club library

At the club night venue we do have a library of sorts from which members are free to borrow books, magazines, etc. Some of the material is old, some new, various guide books, and on all sorts of aspects of tramping and climbing, including all the Wilderness Magazine which the club receives each month. Fill in the note book with you name and when you borrowed material and cross it off when returned. Any donations of books gratefully received, thanks.

3. Facebook and You Tube

The club has a Facebook site, Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club. So if you are a keen Facebook user or thinking about it, join up to the group and stick all those interesting images of trips on the group site, or other relevant info. So we can all look at them. The club also has a YouTube site (via pntmc.org.nz or youtube.com). If you have any videos of tramping, climbing, skiing or outdoor activities, go there and stick them on, and add some music to the video. ("Tubular Bells" or Mongolian throat singing or anything!). Ask Eric for help if you like.

Terry Crippen

Trip Reports

22 March Ruapehu Explorer Anne Lawrence

Having left Palmerston North fairly early on the Saturday morning, we reached Whakapapa around 10am despite a coffee stop in Taihape. The day was a stunner, so we left the car at the top of the Bruce carpark and took advantage of the ski lifts to quickly gain a bit of height. We strode up, probably not taking the most efficient route to Dome, but arrived in time to have lunch not far from Dome shelter – out of earshot of the tour guides talking to the two groups lunching next to Dome.

It was a very different landscape to what I had experienced on previous trips when there had been much more snow on the ground. With no wind, a clear sky, a pleasant temperature and fantastic views in all directions, we felt spoilt for choice when deciding how to spend our

afternoon! Group consensus was to bag what peaks we could.

We started with a leisurely explore of the Crater Lake and the nearby crevasse. The lake was a particularly lovely blue with occasional drifts of sulphurous fumes. Then we headed off to Cathedral Rocks. A quick check of the GPS helped identify the highest point (2663m) which proved surprisingly easy to clamber up. From this vantage point, Glacier Knob seemed to be crying out to be bagged. This required us to cross the plateau which looked flat from above but proved to be pocked with many quite large depressions. Despite this it was still an easy saunter across the tussock and alpine vegetation. Glacier knob (2642m) is part of quite a long ridge and there was some debate as to where the actual top was. As we were debating where the actual top was, a mountain runner appeared from below. I explained to him we thought we were probably at the top so he helpfully tried to explain that the actual top of the mountain was a bit further on! At that stage I decided it was just not worth trying to explain what I had meant by 'top'!



Lunch at the Crater Lake [Warren Wheeler]

No time to muck around now – we knew we would miss out on getting a ski lift down (they finish at 4pm) but Te Heuheu (2732m) and Tukino (2721m) were beckoning. A pretty easy saunter got us close to Tukino, but the last little bit to get to its top was a little more challenging (I suspect none of us looked down!). Some fairly gentle down and up got us up our last peak for the day. From here, Warren led the way down, down and down. Parts of this downward journey were probably the most challenging parts of our day – steepish in places, and very rocky, it was quite a long way down Pinnacle Ridge before we joined the formed track, and from there it was quite a trudge back to the carpark.

We got back to the car feeling well pleased with the day – 5 peaks, 5 trillion photos, 4 happy trampers. We booked into the Whakapapa motor camp, set up tents, and enjoyed a well earned pre-dinner snack outside since it was still pretty warm despite evening falling. Dinner in the camp kitchen/dining area was quite a social occasion – many nationalities, and ages and lots of chatter.

The next day we joined Peter Wiles on his trip to the lava fields.

We were: Warren Wheeler, Richard Lockett, Martin and Anne Lawrence

18-21 April Around Egmont Report by Tina Bishop

The weather forecast was not good, only Warren and I were keen to go so the original plan of around the mountain circuit was scrapped. A stop at Opunake gave us a nice scenic walk along the sea cliff tops and an unexpected trip for Warren involving a dog :).

We started at the Kahui road end after lunching in the back of the car and the rain held off. The track to the hut had obviously had a lot of wind judging by the branches on the ground and trees across the track. The track was a gentle climb which we hardly noticed but it was very hot and humid. There was an abundance of berries to sample along the way including Coprosma of reds, oranges, and clear. A red fuchsia like berry too. We arrived at the hut after two hours and had a quick explore up the ridge behind the hut which we later found out was a track made by goat hunters.

We had the hut to ourselves, a nice old six bunker with separate living area, no fire but an awesome view out to sea. At about 5pm three young guys called in for a quick break, they had come from North Egmont road end and were on their way to Waiaua Gorge Hut. A very long day for them (about 13 hours I think) especially for the inexperienced guy with a very heavy pack, although his enthusiasm made up for that. Very early to bed as we had read the paper and FMC magazine and the pretty cloud formations had disappeared in the dark.

We woke to pouring rain, had breakfast and donned our raincoats but the rain had nearly stopped leaving lots of puddles in the steps. Warren spent a lot of time taking photos of my boots in the watery pools - felt like I was on a

fashion shoot! Back to the car then off around the mountain road to North Egmont road end. Warrens plan was to do the Pouakai Circuit but it was after 1pm and the lady at the info centre reckoned it was seven hours to the hut plus the weather was getting grotty again. Warren thought it would only be five hours to the hut but I wasn't feeling confident about it so piked out. Instead we headed to Holly Hut in the drizzle, up lots of steps stopping and starting to put our coats on and off numerous times.



Passing under Dieffenbach Cliffs [Warren Wheeler]

The track evened out to a gentle monotonous up and down following the contours of the land. We met a few people in various types of clothing, certainly not what I would want to be wearing as it was getting wetter and colder. We did not stop too often for long although I did consume quite a lot of berries and Warren took plenty of photos. We even had to walk under a waterfall cascading over the track. Eventually we saw the swamp area that takes you to the Pouakai Circuit amongst the craggy mist so we knew we were getting closer to the hut. We arrived at Holly Hut in the rain late in the afternoon. The fire was on and the hut was rocking, I felt like I was walking into an English Pub. There was a large group of students playing cards having a few wines, they were rather noisy but very well behaved. We sat at the other table amongst drying raincoats a few older people and some interesting people from overseas making sandwiches with tinned luncheon. Oh and we had solar lights, what a luxury. It pelted down all night, not a nice thought putting soaking socks on again but after breakfast we were the first to head off.

Although it had rained heaps the creeks were not up but the steps were swimming pools again. It was colder today but the rain had eased. We headed back the way we had come yesterday eating many berries again and

managed to avoid the waterfall. An hour before the North Egmont centre we turned off and headed up Jacobs Ladder and had a good view of Humphreys Castle looming above us. It actually isn't a round pointy rock but a long rock that only looks pointy from a front view. We had a snack out of the wind. The wind was supposed to get very strong today and we were now up in the tussock. You could still see the old track that people used to summit the mountain before the steps were put in further on. We could finally see the radio antenna and Tahurangi lodge. By the time we got there it was pelting down and very windy. We sheltered in the concrete toilet, concrete because the plastic ones blow away up there. We were joined by a guy who was not really that sure about where he was going. Warren offered him to come with us but he declined as he was well dressed except his Warehouse \$10 sneakers. Heading down the four wheel drive track was torturous on my legs but we could see Maketawa Hut in the distance and we turned back onto a tramping track. A nice young couple had come up for a stroll, they called into the hut later that day.

Lunch was at the deserted hut - Mmmmmm do we stay here or bail back to the car? It was so early, but we decided to stay and entertained ourselves stocking the wood basket with kindling and coal and lighting the fire. The Easter Bunny delivered to the hut thanks Warren. A couple of women arrived and then four keen young guys whom were intending to summit the Mountain the next day - our entertainment for the night. As the hut is only just over an hour from the road end it is easy to carry in copious amounts of alcohol, large square cookers and food for a dozen kings. Another young couple arrived also and cooked a meal that put our dehydrated meals to shame.



Jacobs Ladder to Humphreys Castle [Warren Wheeler]

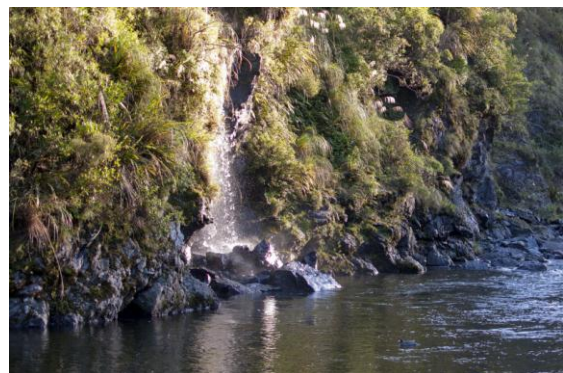
Next morning we rose to more rain and a sprinkle of snow on the mountain. The party guys were still keen to summit the mountain (or maybe just talking about it), I told them I didn't want to hear about them on the news. It was an easy walk back to the car with lots of variety, a good track for a beginner trumper as there were ladders, easy river crossings, and nice scenery.

Carrot cake at the cafe and back off to Palmy. This was my second recent trip to "The Naki" as I had been up to New Plymouth the weekend before so Warren did most of the driving. I think if he drives my car too often he may want to trade his Renault in for a Cube?? We were Tina Bishop and Warren Wheeler.

25-27 June ANZAC Weekend Ngamoko and Mid-Pohangina Report by Martin Lawrence

It was hut maintenance time for the two huts that PNTMC is responsible for. We had two huts to clean and spruce up and a number of gas powered pest traps to re-gas and bait on the Pohangina River between the two huts. We had between 4-6 people for the 3 days and the possibility of some decent rain over the long weekend making any river travel difficult or impossible.

Craig was leading this trip, so had the task of organising us and all the gear that we might need. We didn't forget anything of consequence, so he did very well!



The Pohangina River [Martin Lawrence]

Leaving PN on Friday were Craig, Woody, Warren and Martin. Heading up the Pohangina with fairly full packs we were pleased that the rain was holding off. The rain continued to hold off until evening so there were no problems fording the river by Mid-Poh hut. We found that the 4 bunk hut already contained 3 slumbering hunters, so we couldn't very well launch into full cleaning mode. We spent the

rest of the afternoon putting up the hut poster, our hut fees notice with pre-paid reply envelopes, checking the hut ticket container and had some vigorous exercise bulking up the wood supply. Unfortunately we found that someone had broken the door catch. Warren spent some time dis-assembling and re-assembling the works, with no luck.

The hunting group left the hut well before sunrise the next morning, leaving us plenty of time to clean and tidy.

After the big clean Warren and Woody headed up river to Ngamoko, while Craig and I were headed the same way but were to check the traps enroute. We started badly as the trap closest to the hut eluded us and had possibly it been stolen. It was a beautiful sunny afternoon when we set off. The river was passable, though we agreed that we wouldn't want it any higher, and Woody described the river as "challenging". Craig and I did run into a few technical hitches with the traps, so the job did take some time and we had to remove some traps where the gas cylinder seemed to be fused to the mechanism.

Thomas arrived at Ngamoko early afternoon on Saturday, having left his vehicle at the Limestone Road car park. There were no extra people this time so Thomas, Warren and Woody had a busy afternoon cleaning and hefting loads of gravel up from the river tidy around the toilet. By the time Craig and I arrived after 5 we were probably all ready for dinner.

The big job on Sunday morning was removing and replacing the broken toilet door hinge, with the minimum of tools. Full marks to Warren for bloody-minded persistence with a Swiss army knife and to Thomas and Craig for forceful screwdriver work.



The team posing in front of Ngamoko [Woody Lee]

Before leaving, we made the traditional "hanging out at Ngamoko" photo. It was hot work heading up to the Ngamoko range, but once on the tops we found there was a very cool breeze. Having pushed through plenty of poky Leatherwood we found easier going and warmth and sun again on the descent down Shorts track.

I think that we all felt that we have left the two huts looking excellent, and we had a pleasant 3 day weekend. Thanks are due to all 5 workers and special thanks are due to Craig for the organising.

11 May Longview Hut Report by Karen Tutt

We arrived at the Kashmir Road roadend, in from Takapau (not far from Waipukurau), around 9am, after some of us had taken a short scenic diversion up to the Tukituki River, where we admired an impressive old farmhouse, which we would not have seen if we had not taken this short scenic diversion. Our driver reckoned the sign for Ashley Clinton was pointing in the wrong direction. The driver of one of the other vehicles encountered the same problem, so perhaps it was the signpost, and not driver error (I know where I'm going, I don't need to look at the map!). There were signs towards the end of the road warning about logging vehicles, but thankfully we didn't encounter any.



Longview Hut

[Karen Tutt]

The nine of us set off, with Llew and Jenny forging ahead. This track is easy to follow, with only a few steep, rocky bits, and it took about two hours for the stragglers, including me, to get up to the hut. The weather was sunny, but not too warm – perfect for tramping. The track passes very close to the top of some fairly impressive scree slopes, and I can imagine

these parts of the track falling down into the valley in the not too distant future. The farthest end of the catchment of the Pohangina River can also be seen from the last part of the track towards Longview Hut.



The track to Longview Hut [Karen Tutt]

We all sat in the sun on the verandah of the hut, enjoying the view across southern Hawke's Bay. After lunch we meandered, and sometimes slithered and stumbled, back down to the roadend.

When I got home, I had a look on the internet to find out what that little brown bird is, that sometimes hops along the track in front of you in open country above the treeline. It's a New Zealand Pipit, or Pihoihoi. At first glance they look a bit like a female sparrow, but they walk rather than hop, their legs are longer, they don't have the sparrow's conical bill, and they have a characteristic way of flicking their tail up and down.

On the drive home we took the correct route, and passed through Ashley Clinton: population; 0, buildings; one rural Fire Station. We were Karen, Fiona, Llew, Jenny and trip leader Mick, plus first-time visitors Craig and Helen, and their daughters Caitlyn and Ella.

The story of Shutes Hut

Trampers of the Northern Ruahines may be familiar with Shutes Hut, a picturesque stone hut that would look more in place in Central Otago than the Northern Ruahines. It was named after Alex Shute, one of its builders and earliest occupants. By all accounts he was a bit of a character as these accounts from Les Masters' back country tales shows.

"Built in 1920 by E. Smith and Alex Shute, for Messrs Vautier and Hewitt, to serve the back portion of what was then their Big Hill sheep run. It now stands a deserted habitation, in a scrub infested area of abandoned country that 30 odd years ago carried in the vicinity of 1000 sheep.

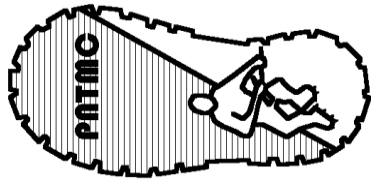
The hut is named after its first and most frequent occupant, Alex Shute, the rabbitier, a back-country character who will long be remembered in the area, and one whose nondescript pack of dogs were all named after spirituous liquors, such as Whisky, Brandy, Gin etc."

"Many eccentric characters were to be met in days gone by, in the country about the Northern Ruahines. The best is doubtless Alex Shute, the rabbitier. Alex was no man's mug. He was just a shrewd sane man, living a lonely life, who gained amusement by trying and often succeeding, in fooling others, including myself, that he was nuts.

One of his tricks, on noticing anyone approaching, was to completely ignore them, and start talking loudly, as though in earnest, with one of his nondescript pack of mongrel dogs.

One yarn I heard tell of Alex, concerned a new chum packman. As he approached the hut he heard the usual din, and was amazed to find Alex in a nearby water hole, with just his face and bald head showing above the surface. The packman was amazed on going over and speaking to him. No matter on which side of the hole he stood, all Alex would do, was turn his head accordingly and just keep staring fixedly at him.

The packie hurried back to his horse, dumped the provisions he'd brought on the ground, took another look at Alex, leapt into the saddle and headed smartly back for the station."



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PNTMC Newsletter

June 2014

What's inside this month ?

- New Tararua Hut Bagging Competition
- Snowcraft Programme
- Social Thursdays
- Ruapehu explorer
- Pohangina's club huts
- Longview Hut
- Around Mount Eggmont
- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

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

Get out and about with us!

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