

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter June 2015



Mitre appears as the sun clears the mist on Brockett

[Warren Wheeler]

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.

11 June

Indochina Adventures

Kathy Corner

In December 2014/ January 2015 Kathy Corner, her daughter Nicola and her friend Pam travelled through Cambodia, Laos and Northern Thailand. Come and hear about their adventures, which included cycling around Angkor Wat, kayaking in Southern Laos and hill tribe trekking in Northern Thailand.

25 June

Tasmania Overland Track

Chris Tuffley

The Overland Track is a spectacular 65km walk from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair, in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. This summer I walked it with two friends, their daughters aged 5 and 8, and another friend of theirs and her daughter aged 10. Great dolerite peaks and spires, waterfalls, lakes and muddy bogs, beech trees and King Billy pines, wombats, leeches, echidnas, currawongs and pademelons - come and see!

Upcoming Trips

6-7 June

Roaring Stag E
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

Leader changed from Anne to Warren.

Depart PN at 8.00am and drive to the end of Putara Road, behind Eketahuna. This is a classic Tararua easy grade trip to quite a new hut beside the Ruamahanga River. We can explore nearby the hut and try to find the little Hidden Lake. Ideal for first timers but if keen you could race up to bag Cattle Ridge Hut. We could at least detour to Herepai Hut on the way out.

7 June

Purity Hut M
Peter Wiles 358-6894

Leave Milverton Park at 7.30am for the journey to the Kawhatau Valley via the back road route. The plan will depend on the weather on the day. If the weather is poor, we can go to Rangī Hut instead. There could be a chance of some snow at the bushline?

13-14 June

Iron Gates Hut E/M
Graham Peters 329-4722

Easy/medium trip. Checking stoat traps on the way. Leaving PN 0800.

14 June

Zekes Hut M
Martin Lawrence 357-1695

Zekes Hut is in the Hihitahi Forest north between Taihape and Waiouru. There should be good views of Ruapehu from the trig and interesting sub-alpine bush. We will leave PN and 7am.

20-21 June

Makahu-Makino, Kawekas E
Geoff Beaumont 354-4929

A nice introduction to the Kaweka Forest Park. Contact Geoff for details.

21 June

Manawatu Gorge Walk E
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

Leader changed from Karen to Warren

Enjoy an easy Mid-Winter walk through to the café for lunch. Depart 7.450am from Milverton Park.

27-28 June

Hut Bagging Finale M/F
Janet Wilson 329-4722

The last weekend before the Hut Bagging

Competition closes. Which Tararua hut is still to be visited? Contact Janet for details.

28 June

Atiwhakatu (not Field Hut) E/M
Malcolm Parker 357-5203

A very pleasant wander in from Holdsworth up the sidle track to the revamped and upgraded Atiwhakatu Hut. You won't even get your feet wet as all of the side streams are bridged. After lunch at the hut and a bit of a look around we return the same way. Depart P Nth 8.00am.

4 July (Saturday)

Coppermine Creek E
Terry Crippen 356-3588 or 027 643 3637

8am start. An enjoyable and interesting walk up the old Coppermine bridle track to the rerouted track along the stream to the Magazine tunnel, then up to the old mine site itself.

5 July

Beach Walk E
Tina Bishop 06 363-5660

Avoid the summer crowds with a winter walk at Foxton Beach, starting with the pine trails behind the dunes to the north of the township, then south along the beach to do some bird spotting at the estuary. Depart late (around 9.00am) from PN.

11-12 July

Mid Winter Celebrations All
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

The venue this year is Janet and Graham's shed, which is about the same elevation as Waiouru so there may be snow around – an ideal opportunity to try out your alpine tent if you wish to camp outside. You can also camp warm inside, although mattresses are limited. Dinner will be a BYO BBQ and our theme is "Bush Shirts and Gumboots". For entertainment we will have a Gumboot Throwing Competition. Come for all or part of the weekend – there are plenty of day trip options to suit your enthusiasm and fitness e.g. Tunupo peak, Iron Gates Gorge and stoat line checking.

15 July (Wed)

Snowcraft 1 evening for participants
Registrations close 9 July. See Notices.

18 or 19 July

Snowcraft 1 I
Terry Crippen 356-3588 or 027 643 3637
Registrations due 9 July. See Notices for details.

18-19 July

Cattle Creek Hut **M**
Graham Peters **329-4722**

Departing PN 7.30. A classic Ruahine winter tramp at relatively low altitude. Walk in via Holmes Ridge, the Tamaki River and Stanfield Hut. Out down the river so expect wet feet both days.

26 July

Branch Road Walkway **E**
Janet Wilson **329-4722**

An easy local walk on a winters day. Good views of the Ruahines, Depart my home at Pohangina 8.30. Back for a late lunch followed by a short visit to our newest local walkway.

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
Malcolm Parker	357-5203

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th of each month to Warren Wheeler, the newsletter editor, direct or via our web site <http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>

Notices

PNTMC 50th Anniversary 2015

Plans are under way to celebrate the club's 50th anniversary and Camp Rangī Woods at Totara Reserve has already been booked for the last weekend of November 2015.

A Jubilee book is also being prepared as a record of events and activities over the years.

If you are have any ideas or are interested in assisting then please contact the club President Dave Grant who is heading the organising sub-committee of Terry Crippen, Peter Darragh, Doug Strachan and Martin Lawrence (Treasurer).

We would like to invite past members to join in the celebrations so if you know of anyone please let them know or give Terry their contact details.



It's about time winter arrived! We want plenty of snow! 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.

15 July Wed evening

SC1 Intro and briefing

18 or 19 July SC1 Mt Ruapehu

29 July Wed evening

SC2 Briefing & intro to rope work

1 or 2 August SC2 Mt Ruapehu

12 August Wed evening

SC3 Briefing & rope work

15 or 16 August SC3 Mt Ruapehu

The fees 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 9 July**. Application forms are now available on the Snowcraft link at: www.pntmc.org.nz or on the noticeboard at Club night. For more info contact: Terry Crippen 356-3588 or 027 643 3637; or Bruce van Brunt 328-4761.

Avalanche Awareness Courses are also being run by Hillary Outdoor, with one suitable for climbers likely on the weekend between SC1 and SC2 (25-26 July).

Tararua Hut Bagging

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

The challenge started on 1 July 2014 and will run over the 12 months until 30 June 2015.

3 points per visit to Tararua hut, bivvy, shelter, Holdsworth Lodge etc – as long as they are on DOC website. **Only 1 point for 2nd and 3rd visits, not 3 points.**

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.

Please take photos to record the visit, as well as for producing a new poster. As our Ruahine hut bagging poster was a huge success, the club would like to produce a similar one for the Tararuas.

Hut bags, email to jwilson@inspire.net.nz.

Hut images, martin.lawrence.nz@gmail.com

Progress Update from Janet

The scores as I have them up to 21 May are WW still with a massive lead on 224, me 2nd on 158, and Chris Tuffley surging from 10th into 6th place. So far there have been 492 hut visits by individuals (138 different huts), with an overall total of 1359 points, mostly gained on club trips and at Tararua Huts. Remember, the challenge ends on 30 June.

The current Top 10 Hut Baggers are:

Warren W	224
Janet W	158
Woody L	100
Graham P	91
Grant C	77
Chris T	72
Mike A	69
Craig A	65
Richard L	63
Graeme R	58

On Navigation

A how-to guide from PNTMC President Bruce van Brunt.

This is not an article on how to navigate, so put away your compasses and maps. I thought I might write about some simple navigational ideas (some very obvious) and tools that I have found useful over the years. The astute reader might think the author must have just experienced a recent moment of geographical bewilderment, but I assure this reader that the catalyst is not such an event, but hedge things by saying that doubtless I will soon be geographically embarrassed. Here are some important tools:

The Necktop Computer: This is a sophisticated instrument. When used properly and loaded with the appropriate data it is probably the single most effective navigational instrument. Every trumper and climber should have one of these and be familiar with its operation. There are times when this instrument gives unreliable information, but it is usually when the owner is tired, cold, stressed etc. In short, keep track of where you are going, what you have already passed, what you expect to pass and landmarks. It is too easy to simply follow somebody in a tramping trance without reference to your surroundings. Ask yourself the question : “ If I had to get out by myself could I at least reverse what I did and find my way down?” Do not be a merely a “passenger” on a tramp.

Maps: The necktop computer is much more effective if it has data beyond what the owner observes. Bring a map of the area. To make the process more effective, study the map before you go. Even if you know where you are at on the tramp, look at the map anyway and identify what is out there. Try to recognize streams, peaks etc. If the route is unfamiliar, try to predict what is out there from the map. Look at the altitudes: will it be a 200m or 1000m climb to the destination? Maps, of course, can be wrong but the errors are often minor. The most recent Mt Cook/Westland Map still does not include a massive lake at the terminus of the Strachen glacier. This is important, need to know information for those venturing to climb Unicorn from the Copeland Valley. Often tracks are marked slightly inaccurately and sometimes huts are not exactly as on the map. Old maps can prove a false economy unless supplemented with current information. My old maps of the Ruahines show a number of huts and tracks that no longer exist.

Compass: This remarkable instrument is devastatingly effective in the hands of a trained person (I do not include myself). Once you know where you are at and from the map have a direction of travel, this instrument is difficult to beat in speed and efficiency. Practice with the compass. A game I used to play with my daughter at Mt Cook was to point to some peak and have her by compass and map identify the peak. Where practical, on large featureless snowfields I used to have her follow a bearing etc. The weakness of the instrument is that you really have to know where you are at in the first place in order to use it effectively. Those who swear by the compass are generally those accomplished in the use of the necktop computer. They may

not know exactly where they are, but they have a pretty good idea. Triangulation is fine, provided you have convenient landmarks, visibility, and know how to triangulate. Most people get lost under perhaps more challenging conditions.

Altimeter: I think that this is a seriously underrated piece of equipment particularly for climbers and trampers that go on tracks/routes involving notable ascents and descents. If you have an altimeter and are on a marked track that is essentially a climb/descent, then it is often easy to see where you are or at least where you are not. Altimeters give you a realistic idea of your progress and position. Just remember to use the necktop computer and set the altimeter. On the tops it is often possible to navigate by altimeter (and necktop) alone. More than a few times I have drawn up a bombproof navigational plan: climb up/down to X metres and contour. I prefer wrist top watch altimeters because I can continually check the altitude and note the altitude of significant points for future reference. I have extracted myself from the Douglas Neve in a whiteout from the top of Sefton with no more than an altimeter and a navigational plan that relied on staying within a narrow band. Certainly anyone going to Iron Bark hut via Mokai Patea can do this in bad weather by noting to stay at a certain altitude until near the track junction. The use of the map and the altimeter is a great combination.

GPS: This technology is now “old hat” and standard. The military (USA) has been obliging and removed the noise from the system, and the Russian satellites have improved the overall accuracy of the devices. This is awesome technology that can be used in a very positive manner. A modern GPS is perhaps the best instrument for determining where you are regardless of visibility, weather etc. From here you can use the instrument to get bearings and other relevant information. Once the GPS gives me my position, I find it rather slow to use it as a compass. I prefer to establish my position via GPS (if there is doubt with observations and landmarks) and then use the compass to direct my travel. The GPS can be used at any moment if necessary to verify my position later. If I am on a large glacier in limited visibility, I have always found navigation purely by a compass a real challenge since no straight line can be followed for long and bearings must be adjusted. I have yet to meet anyone who has solved this problem with a compass, unless the glacier is modest and the only problem is

visibility (not too many crevasses). I know of no other instrument in the tramping/climbing arsenal that has occasioned more controversy. There is always the wizened trampler/climber that claims they can navigate perfectly without such modern gadgets: I suppose there were similar people out there a few centuries ago before the compass that made similar claims. The point is that it works, it is quick, and you can update your information.

Now, why did I write this article? I guess that after a few years using a GPS occasionally and an altimeter I got very tired of people asking "what happens if they all fail and you must fall back on your compass?" *It is hard to give a polite response and describe the functions of a normal necktop computer*, the informed and studied use of a map and other intangibles. I have never had a GPS or altimeter fail (used intelligently) provided I realized their limitations and, for instance, carried a spare set of batteries (just like you would a head torch). On the other hand, I have had a compass "fail". On my recent climbing trip my old Suunto compass finally gave up the ghost, broke into several pieces from I think fatigue cracks, and died silently in my hands as I attempted to get a bearing. Fortunately, my necktop computer, altimeter, and GPS worked. Compasses can break or be lost, so there is no harm having and knowing how to use a few other tools. In the last instance, I was fortunate to have my necktop computer with enough spare batteries in the form of food and tea.

Concerning navigation I find that there are three distinct classes of trampers/climbers:

1. Those who stay to well marked and travelled tracks where there is little confusion of position and direction. A very sheltered life akin to keeping your adventures to say walking to the corner store in a slight mist. No navigational issues can occur here, but the subject is quite limited to such groomed pathways. There is merit here, and we all enjoy the occasional straightforward walk in the park experience. These people, however, never leave this environment and hence have little need for any navigation assistance.

2. Individuals that have been lost and learned from their experience. These people are doubtless those that are either lucky or eventually learned some basic navigation.

3. Liars, those that claimed in their infinite experience never to have been geographically embarrassed, yet pushed the boundaries. These are the "know it all" trampers.

I think/hope I am in the second group.

A good lesson to learn is to try when possible to tramp with others that really know how to navigate and learn from them. Never be a passenger/parasite on a trip, but learn what you can from those that actually do it. *Be humble and admit mistakes*, adopt a system and equipment that you are comfortable with, and keep tramping.

Trip Reports

26 April Awesome Autumn Arawaru Ascent Peter van Essen

Anzac weekend Sunday saw five appropriately attired adventurous agile athletes assembled at Black Bridge. We ambled up part of the Sledge Track, ascended the ridge after Quartz Creek, acquired the axed route through the leatherwood to the actual summit, and then acclimatised at the top of Arawaru over lunch.

After admiring the attractive view and absorbing the ambient sub-alpine atmosphere the afternoon was spent attempting an asymmetric circuit back to the Sledge Track.

After a bit of assertive navigating aided by some astutely arranged flagging tape we abruptly emerged from the pepperwood onto the amazingly wide Otangane Track (still under construction) this allowed us to accelerate away back to the Kahuterawa to achieve our goal of an absolutely awesome autumn Anzac weekend ascent of Arawaru.

Arawaru is becoming more accessible as the area acquires more tracks and is no longer the skin abrading arboreal bash it used to be, but it does still require some off track navigation skills to accomplish the ascent.

We were Richard Lockett, Jessie Hyde, Jean Garman, Raj Palanisamy and Peter van Essen (leader/scribe).

**1-3 May
Tarn Ridge
Graham Peters**

Some say Carkeek Hut in the Tararuas is the Holy Grail. Right in the middle and for most people not a destination achievable in a day hence the decision to make it into a 3 day trip. Unfortunately the Friday we were to take off followed the PNTMC club night and I was quite keen to hear about Arthur and Liz's cycling in France. This meant going in to Mitre Flats on the Thursday evening wasn't an option. The plan would then have been to stay at Dorset Ridge on the Friday night with a day trip to Carkeek on the Saturday via an old route. In an ideal world we would still have spent the night at Dorset Ridge, a day trip to Carkeek and a quick visit to Tarn Ridge on the way out.

However, things are seldom ideal which had Janet and myself and Bruce the dog meeting Warren in Ashhurst at some uncivilised hour of Friday morning while it was still dark, before driving down to the The Pines road end. Mary Lund was originally to be with us but changed her plans to maybe meet us on the Saturday evening. Likewise Chris Tuffley thought he might meet up with us.

Like many sidle tracks, the one to Mitre Flats can be a little tiresome but we were at Mitre Flats for an early lunch. Although it was sunny there was a keen wind that had a bite to it. By the time we got to the bush edge it was obvious it wasn't going to be very pleasant on the tops so it was on with more clothes and have a snack. Soon we were in cloud and strong winds. The only pleasant part was re-discovering that there's no real loss of height between Peggy's Peak and the Mitre.



A bit breezy on misty Mitre [Warren Wheeler]

On to Brockett then and with no visibility the compass and map came out to check as we went on to Girdlestone. By the time we arrived at what we surmised to be the turn-off to

Dorset Ridge we'd had enough and Tarn Ridge Hut beckoned.



Tarn Ridge Hut at last [Warren Wheeler]

As is his wont, Bruce was some metres ahead and first to the hut. If you were a dog, how happy would you be to find a nice big deer's heart lying on the ground just off the hut verandah? Certainly happier than we were. There seemed to be no other bits of dead animal lying around and it didn't smell too bad so after cutting of a chunk for him to eat, I biffed it well away (or so I thought).

Saturday was a much nicer day as we headed off down Dorset Ridge looking at the route options for getting to Carkeek. With Warren regaling us with tales from his infamous Mid-Fold Traverse which followed this route we considered our choices. In the end we decided that Dorset Ridge Hut was a good option – at least we would bag one hut and it proved to be very pleasant sitting around having our lunch there in the sun. [Ed – quote of the trip by Graham: "I'm always a sucker for the easy option"].



Lovely Dorset Ridge Hut [Warren Wheeler]

Obviously whoever looks after this hut (the Kapiti Deerstalkers?) love it. As we headed back after lunch the weather deteriorated and it was back to wind and cloud for the final stretch back to Tarn Ridge where we were joined first by Mary and her dog Taffy and then

just on dark by Chris.

Sunday after we'd had our breakfast and Bruce had found the deer's heart for his, we headed off into the cloud again.



Brocken spectre along the misty ridge [WW]

The sun was rising in the east creating good Brocken Spectres as we made our way along the ridge to Girdlestone and by the time we were climbing back up onto Mitre we were back in the sun.

It was calm so we spent quite some time malingering on the top enjoying the views and appreciating the contrast with when we were there on Friday. The rest of the trip out was uneventful – the sidle track hadn't improved and was no shorter. With all the mucking around we finally ended up back at the road-end just before dark.

We were (mostly) Warren Wheeler, Graham Peters, Janet Wilson and Bruce the dog.

10-12 May 2015 Te Heu Heu – Via North East Ridge Grant Christian

I became interested in this trip after reading that Te Heu Heu Peak via the North East Ridge was the first peak that was climbed by climbing parties. The first recorded climb was 12 December 1877. The climb would start from the site of the Waihohonu Hut. Sometimes horses would be taken higher up the mountain. The peak is about 11 km from the old Waihohonu Hut in a straight line and the height gain is 1600m so it is a much longer trip than climbing, for example, Tahurangi Peak from the top of the Turoa Road.

Despite an unfavourable weather forecast Mary and I decided we should go ahead with this trip because the forecast is unreliable and the weather can vary enormously on different

sides of the mountain. I was glad we made that decision. We travelled up on Friday night and parked up the Tukino Road (I've heard that parking by the Desert Road is not the safest place to park). We didn't depart for Waihohonu Hut until about 9 p.m., arriving just before 11 p.m.

Next morning we were away at 7:15 a.m. The weather was good and we could see Te Heu Heu from the hut. It was a short walk to the old Waihohonu Hut from where we headed into a small patch of bush. This was straight forward travel and we soon emerged into alpine scrub which was harder work and proved to be quite tiring as we slowly headed up. We eventually got past the scrub and it was easy travel across a barren landscape of loose rock and dirt. I really enjoy the barren landscape of Tongariro National Park. I love the wide open space, it reminds me of a lunar landscape.

The peak was still a long way in the distance. The occasional cairn showed that we weren't the first people to go through here. They were the only markers of our route. It was pleasant to be out with no other people in sight and very little sign of other people having being through here. The slope was climbing at an easy angle and we could see in the distance what appeared to be the best route. It was apparent that the angle of ascent increased significantly, closer to the peak.

At about 2100m we started to climb steeply. It was now after midday and I knew that it would be unlikely we could get back to the hut before dark. The climbing became a lot harder with loose rock and soft scoria underfoot. It reminded me of struggling over glacial moraine. It was much harder than the approach along Pinnacle Ridge. We slowly but steadily gained height and reached the top about 2:15 p.m. It had taken seven hours to reach the top. The weather had been kind to us but the wind on top was stronger and very cold so we didn't spend much time enjoying the views.

The trip down was made a lot easier by the soft scoria that had made it hard work going up. To avoid the difficult walk down through the scrub we headed east once we were part way down and dropped into a dry stream bed. This avoided the scrub and soon linked up with the around the mountain track. From here it was an easy track to follow back to the hut with the final part of the journey being in the dark. We arrived at the hut at about 6:15 p.m.

The return trip had taken only four hours. In total it was an 11 hour day.

The hut was very busy on our return and was terribly overheated making it very unpleasant. This is a great hut with battery powered lights and solar heated water for dishes and cooking. A great place to stay in the off-season. We both had tea and went to bed early after a very tiring day, satisfied that we had achieved our goal.

Sunday morning was an easy walk back to the car in pleasant conditions.

Trip Participants: Grant Christian & Mary Lund.

23-24 May McGregor Bivvy Angela Minto

We set off at 0800 on Saturday from Holdsworth car park for Jumbo Hut; after 1.5 hours of highway travel over new bridges and board walks and we were morning teaing at the surprisingly empty Atiwhakatu Hut. Then it was the climb to Jumbo arriving sweaty and chilly with a cool breeze out in the open tops. A hot brew awaited us after Geoff had powered on ahead to get the billy going. After an enjoyable warm lunch stop we headed for McGregor Biv, with the exception of Terry who opted to stay at Jumbo and head out via East Holdsworth the following day.

With an overcast sky but clear tops we enjoyed lovely unencumbered views. After seeing very few people (unusual for the Holdsworth Jumbo circuit) we spied four figures on the distant skyline heading off McGregor Peak, and thankfully continuing on past the Bivvy turn off. An old sign turned us toward the descent down toward the bright orange McGregor Biv. We were pleased to see it had a water tank and a brand new loo!



Arriving at McGregor Bivvy

The three of us managed to squish in to the two person biv reasonably comfortably happy to avoid a windy cold night under a fly outside, in the cramped conditions it was lights out by 7.05pm. Pleased to wake to little breeze or cloud, we headed up McGregor Peak. By the time we got there an icy southerly was biting, so with jackets on we negotiated the Broken Axe Pinnacles, heading around them via a marked route instead of over the top – thankfully when seeing what we presumed would have been the way down off them!



Heading along the Broken Axe Pinnacles

Initial plans to visit the Three Kings or even just South and Mid King blew away in the deteriorating and strengthening cold breeze.

While descending off down to Baldy periods of horizontal sleet/snow pummelled us hard. The bush cover a welcome reprieve where we took just a 20min lunch stop, we were keen to get moving again to warm up. Once down at the track junction (right to Atiwhakatu, left to Mitre Flats) we opted to head out over Pinnacle Ridge, now a reasonably easy to follow ground trail with sporadic fresh permalat markers, thanks I expect to a Mr Don Brown. There were also new signs to alternate routes off the ridge, firstly down to Atiwhakatu Hut then Donnelly's Flats and finally over Pinnacle itself, which we took. All up it took us about 7.5 hrs from McGregor Biv out.

Terry got an early start on Sunday morning

from the overflowing (with people) Jumbo Hut and headed south along the tops in mist and cloud, and encountered hail and rain once in the bush on the East Holdsworth track.

Thanks to all for a scenic fun trip. We were Geoff Phillips, Warren Wheeler, Terry Crippen and Ange Minto (scribe).

30 March - 2 April 2015 Sunset Saddle and Mt Hopeless Report by Nicholas Allen

In the week leading up to Easter, my Dad and I headed down to Nelson Lakes NP, to do a bit of tramping on the Travers Range. The first day, taking us up Mt Robert and along the Robert Ridge, was straight forward, although a bit claggy at times. The afternoon cleared progressively, and sunlight broke through the low clouds, delicately casting the sculptured 4th Basin and surrounding cirques in golden hues — it was magnificent.

Having had an early night, Dad and I got up early, to reach the summit of Angelus Peak for the sunrise. Despite a few stumbling detours between cairns into patches of speargrass, we reached the summit just as the warm orange of the morning sun graced the edge of the sky, bringing that early-morning definition to the ridges of the surrounding ranges. The view from the top of Angelus was just stunning and we sat up there for a couple of hours, enjoying warm cups of tea, gingernuts, and the breathtaking view. From Angelus Peak, we descended the scree slopes down to Sunset Saddle, past the tarns, and arrived at Hopeless Hut mid-afternoon.

We set off for Mt Hopeless in the dark, around 6:30am. The beginning of the unofficial and unmarked Hopeless Creek route is a bit hard to discern in the dark: there were a great number of cairns, not nearly as many continuously discernible paths, lots of bush-bashing, and at least one wasps nest: not something we wanted to discover at 7am! Again, it was a clear, crisp morning and the climb up to the base of the peak was simply stunning. We approached the peak from the western couloir, traversing the face to join the north-western ridge. There was a bit of ice and lots of loose scree, which made things exciting! We reached the top and, while rather preciously perched above the clouds, we set up the billy and ate our lunch.

Returning to Hopeless Hut, we tramped down the valley that afternoon, to the Travers River.

We originally planned to camp by the river, but upon arrival, we both had a bit of energy left and decided to boost it to Coldwater Hut. Having walked for a total of 15hrs that day, we arrived at the hut at 10:30pm, relishing the thought of a good night's sleep. As we settled down, we quickly released that our hopes for a good night's sleep were going to be dashed, with a couple of snoring tourists and a good number of very noisy rats. It was a long night.

The next morning was overcast and we had a relaxed start to the day, both feeling a bit shattered. Dad and I walked down Lake Rotoiti to the Mt Robert roadend, arriving shortly after midday. From there, we promptly made our way to the Apline Lodge in St Arnaud, to enjoy what were arguably the best pizzas ever -- at least, they were to our post-tramp tastebuds. Having eaten our fill, Dad made his way north and I hitchhiked south to Springs Junction, to catch up with my mate Gee.

3-6 April 2015 Kahurangi NP and the 1000 Acre Plateau Report by Nicholas Allen

Gee and I were going to climb Mt Owen over Easter Weekend, but the weather did not look good, so we decided to head up onto the 1000 Acre Plateau. After a hearty brunch in Murchison, we headed up the Matiri Valley, past Lake Matiri and up onto the 1000 Acre Plateau. It is a fair grunt, heading up to the Plateau, and under a sweltering sun with little wind, the slog was not particularly enjoyable -- I think Gee and I both regretted that extra bowl of potato wedges we ordered with breakfast. Arriving at Poor Petes Hut (2 bunks) in the early evening, we were greeted by 19 others and a sizeable tent-town, but amongst the crowds were some friends from Wellington, which was a pleasant surprise.

Rain started coming in overnight and, with increasing showers forecast, Gee and I had an alpine start and headed the short distance to Larrikin Creek Hut. The track was slippery and muddy and I was particularly happy with and grateful for my new Resolution Pants! Knowing that the hordes (plus a hut-full from Matiri) would be soon arriving, and that there were a shortage of tent sites at Larrikin Creek, we quickly set up our tent in the beech forest behind the hut, and enjoyed breakfast, mark ii. The day was a bit wet and miserable, and so it was a good opportunity to talk. Gee and I are heading to the Himalayas at the end of the

year, to do a climb and some trekking, and so it was a good opportunity to plan. Later in the

afternoon, as the rain eased, I caught up with my friends from Wellington and we did a bit of exploring around the waterfall near the hut. I was struck by the beauty and mystery of the Plateau under rain: the massive waterfalls forming on the face of The Haystack (the mountain behind the hut), the pre-historic bush vivid with colour, and the dramatic escarpments seemed as if they had been pulled straight from a scene from Jurassic Park.

The following day was fine and we set out with my friends from Wellington to climb The Needle. It was a beautiful walk, cloud gracing the valley below and forming crazy cirrus formations above. Returning to Larrikin Creek Hut, Gee and I packed up and headed back down to Lake Matiri and the road end. From there, we made our way to the Murchison pub and enjoyed a few well-earned beers.



Looking North from the Needle

Oh Summer Climb

"Summer Climb"- to the tune of Summer Wine.
Based on "Winter Climb" from A.U.T.C. days.
By Terry Crippen

When we were young and bold and so much in
our prime,
We had a strong desire to do a summer climb.
Saved all our money till the rents were in
arrears,
Went down to A.G.L. to buy us all the gears.

Oh Oh Summer Climb

Chouard axe, some snargs, a 50 metre rope,
A Stubi hammer for to bomb the steepest
slope.
A light weight parka and a pair of shiny boots,
Are just the gears for climbing warm summer
routes.

Oh Oh Summer Climb

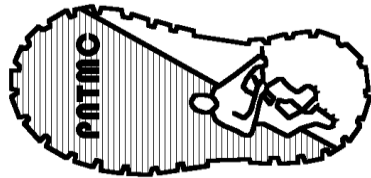
Flew into Centennial west of the main divide.
At Pioneer they festered 30 days and 30 nights
The hut was full, with people sleeping on the
floor,
The wind and rain kept on knocking at the
door.

Oh Oh Summer Climb

Over here Centennial had plenty room to
spare,
And of course our food was better fare.
We'd done some climbs in weather really not
so bad,
While over there, Pioneer People were going
mad!!

Oh Oh Summer Climb

*[Written in desperation after 5 days of being
hut bound in Centennial Hut, January 2000.
Sung to the bods in Pioneer Hut at about
midnight over the radio - some of whom got no
climbs done due to the weather and were
going mad; jam packed in the much smaller
hut!]*



Palmerston North
Tramping and
Mountaineering
Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

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Palmerston North

PNTMC Newsletter

June 2015

What's inside this month?

- Snowcraft Programme
- On Navigation – a How to Guide
- Hut Bagging Update
- Awesome Autumn Arawaru Ascent
- Te Heu Heu Northern Ascent
- Taranua trip reports – Mc Gregor Bivvy, Tarn Ridge
- South Island Trip Reports – Kahurangi and 1000 Acre Plateau
- Mountaineers Song – Oh Summer Climb
- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

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

Get out and about with us!

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