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# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

[www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz)

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter February 2018

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*Work party plus two enjoying the summer sun at Ngamoko Hut*

*[Martin Lawrence]*

### Club Nights

All are welcome to our club nights. These are held on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. Doors open 7.15 pm for a cuppa before start at 7.30pm.

**8 February 2018**

**Rescue Helicopter Hangar Visit**

Come along at 7.15pm to the hangar in the PN Hospital carpark. Find out what happens when you activate your PLB in an emergency. We will be shown around the rescue helicopter and given a safety briefing so you will know what to expect if you ever need to fly with them.

**22 February 2018**

**Navigation Know How**

**Warren Wheeler**

Where are you? Where are you going? These and other deep and meaningful questions can be simplified with the help of map and compass, not to mention GPS and phone apps. We will be focusing on map and compass skills and will have these tools to practise with, but feel free to BYO compass and other navigation devices if you want to find out how to use them better or to share some top tips from your own experience.

## Upcoming Trips

**3 February**

**Shingle Slip Plane Crash F**

**Angela Minto 027 472 0660**

Visit the old crash site high in the Tararuas behind Masterton. This is a combined trip with Masterton Tramping Club and to make it a bit easier includes the option of staying overnight at Jumbo Hut.

~~4 February~~ *Postponed to 24 or 25 February*

**Iron Gates Gorge M**

~~10-11 February~~ *Postponed to 17-18 March*

**Pouakai Circuit E/M**

**Kathy Corner 027 618 5722**

**11 February**

**Coppermine Creek E**

**Woody Lee 357 2390**

We walk up lowland forest for 30 minutes from the car park and cross Coppermine Stream and then rock-hop up the creek to explore the magazine shaft. Bring your torch to find some cave insects. Depart at 8am.

**17-18 February**

**Iron Gates Hut E/M**

**Graeme Richards 353 6227**

Looking for a gentle paced trip over medium terrain? I plan to leave around midday Saturday for a nice trip up the Oroua valley to Iron Gate Hut for the evening and weather dependent, following the river route back to Petersons Road end on Sunday.

**18 February**

**Coal Creek Explorer E**

**Graham Peters 329 4722**

Makiekie Stream aka Coal Creek. Many of us have walked the Short Knights loop. Makiekie Stream is the catchment between them so this is a day walk to have a nose up there.

**24-25 February**

**Maroepa Forks M/F**

**Graham Peters 329 4722**

One of my favourite but seldom visited places in the Ruahines. The plan is to go to either Sunrise or Top Maroepa on the Friday afternoon. On the Sunday carry on up the Maroepa onto the tops near Sparrowhawk Biv

**24 or 25 February**

**Iron Gates Gorge M**

**Warren Wheeler 356 1998**

Depart 8.00am. A classic summer trip down an iconic section of the Oroua River, ideal for

beginner trampers wanting to try something more adventurous as well as for those with more experience. Options to pack float or swim across some deep pools and through the gorge itself. We will pick the best day to suit.

**25 February**

**Beehive Creek E/Family**

**Doug Strachan 353 6526**

This Pohangina walkway, opened in 1983, is just 30km from P.N. Our 10 year old son has walked this track every year of his life, as has our 12 year old daughter (the first time in the womb). The creek is generally ankle-deep and sandy-bottomed, making this ideal for all, including families and first-time trampers. Kids like to jump in the deeper bits, so leaving a change of clothes in the car for them is advisable. No dogs allowed. It can still be a workout for anyone who wants to walk the road section (3km, 40mins) of the loop. The walk will be followed by lunch at a picnic spot across the road from the cars. Good social tramp, and you'll still have the afternoon free to mow the lawns. 9am start from Milverton Park.

**2-4 March**

**Maungahuka/YTTY (3 day) M/F**

**Grant Christian 354 5843**

A classic Tararua circuit from Otaki Forks via Field Hut and along the main range, over the Tararua Peaks and the ladder to Maungahuka Hut. Continue along the main range until we drop down to Waitewaewae Hut and out along the valley. A three-day trip leaving Friday morning.

**4 March**

**Ohau Gorge E/M**

**Warren Wheeler 356 1998**

A fun summer trip in the Tararua Forest Park that starts from Poads Road carpark behind Levin. We first follow the sidle track for about an hour through delightful lowland forest above the Ohau River, then rock hop downstream for about 2 hours and back to the carpark. Some of the pools can be a bit deep so expect to get more than wet feet.

**10 March**

**River Crossing Course All/Training**

**Graeme Richards 353 6227**

Looking for some river safety training? This Outdoor Training NZ course will cover river features, dynamics and safety when tramping around rivers. The morning will involve indoor instruction followed by dry land practice of river crossing techniques. Following lunch we will analyse and practice river crossing techniques at the nearby river. Bring your own pack with

pack liner that is similar to a normal tramping weight (content isn't important so is typically towels and water bottles for bulk and weight), lunch and change of clothes. This course is free to PNTMC members thanks to a training grant provided by Eastern and Central Community Trust.

**11 March**

**Manawatu Walking Festival E/M**  
**Dave Grant 328 7788**

**Oroua/Tunupo**

PNTMC and the Oroua Blue Duck Protection Project are hosting this trip for the Manawatu Walking Festival, with co-leaders Dave Grant and Janet Wilson.

We welcome PNTMC club members to join with us in looking after the visitors. Leaving PN i-Site at 8am we will travel by bus to Heritage carpark on the western edge of the Ruahines. We will be venturing with the Walking Festival folk into the Oroua above Iron Gates Gorge to show them Blue Duck habitat, hopefully the birds themselves, and for Janet to outline the ecology of the birds and the history, activities, and results of the Protection Project.

We will then have lunch at Heritage Lodge and then venture up the Tunipo Track as far as time allows, to enjoy the climb through mixed beech and podocarp forest to alpine scrub and tussock. We need to be back at the carpark by 3.30pm, and in PN by 4.30pm.

**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 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](mailto: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
Graeme Richards	353-6227

**Articles for the newsletter**

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

**From the President**

Today I returned from the 3-day Pohangina Valley tramp with 5 other club members. It was a wonderful trip - good company, warm summer weather, and as I write, a great sense of satisfaction from a job well done. This trip was applied tramping at its best - as well as an interesting tramp in and out, we spent the Sunday working on our club huts - washing down Ngamoko, and cleaning the inside of Mid Pohangina. In particular the Ngamoko Hut logbook reflects the appreciation other users have for this obviously much loved hut.

Thanks to those 5 club members who supported this work this year - it was only a few hours work each - as we say, many hands make light work. We plan to run this trip on Wellington Anniversary weekend in upcoming years.

The first trips have been reported in for this year's club challenge - Huts and High Places. There has been a strong and enthusiastic start from a few club members. I hope you get to

make the most of this wonderful summer weather to get out tramping and perhaps feel inspired and challenged to visit some new places.

Don't forget to check out the PNTMC facebook page - [https://m.facebook.com/Palmerston-North-Tramping-and-Mountaineering-Club-1577289419011545/?view\\_public\\_for=1577289419011545](https://m.facebook.com/Palmerston-North-Tramping-and-Mountaineering-Club-1577289419011545/?view_public_for=1577289419011545)

Janet

## Notices

### New Maori Place Names for Peaks

You may recall last year some changes to place names were announced by the NZ Geographic Board as part of a Treaty of Waitangi Settlement with Rangitane Tu Mai Ra (Wairarapa-Tamaki nui-a-Rua).

In particular "Rimutaka" was corrected to "Remutaka" (loosely (?) translated as "a place to sit", from the original Maori name of Remutaka Pass which (some say) commemorates the edge (remu) of Haunui-a-Nanaia's cape falling to the ground (taka) when he first viewed and named Wairarapa, or alternatively that he had to squint (remu) when he sat down (taka) due to the glare off Lake Wairarapa).

Bruces Hill becomes Pukaha / Mount Bruce and two major peaks (maunga for local iwi) in the Tararua Range will include their Maori names i.e. Jumbo/Pukeahurangi ("sky high sacred hill") and Mitre/Pukeamoamo ("hill bearing/carrying the sky/clouds").

Mike Kawana of Rangitane explains the importance of the peaks to local Wairarapa iwi, as follows.

*Hine-te-arorangi was a descendant of Hamua and of Rangitane. She became a respected leader of her Rangitane people of the Wairarapa during the 1700s and built her marae on the mountain that became known as 'Te Tirohanga o Hine-te-arorangi i nga waewae kapiti o Tara raua ko Rangitane', today shortened to Tirohanga and no longer a mountain, but a lake after collapsing in on itself due to the massive earthquake of 1855. It was while she sat at the summit of her pa Tirohanga that Hine-te-arorangi would look across the Tararua ranges and she knew that if she set her mind's eye to focus between the*

*two peaks that she named 'Pukeahurangi' and 'Pukeamoamo' she would be looking directly at the burial ground of her ancestors on Kapiti Island, of Taraika, of Tuteremoana, of Wharekohu and she would mourn for them, she would wail from her mountain top, a cry of acknowledgement and respect for her ancestors buried so far away. Her naming of the peaks was an acknowledgement of their special significance as markers of the direction of her ancestors burial ground.*

*Puke - acknowledges their existence as parts of a bigger Mountain Range;  
Ahurangi - acknowledges the status of her ancestors and;  
Amoamo - acknowledges their stature as 2 of the stand out peaks of the Tararua Ranges.*

## Huts and High Places PNTMC Challenge 2018

### Huts and High Places Challenge 15 Dec 2017 - 9 Dec 2018

Our PNTMC Challenge 2018 aims to inspire you to visit new places, support our club and have fun in the hills.

There are points to be earned for visits, bonus points for new places and bonus points if you are on a PNTMC trip.

To add more challenges to the fun, committee members have added their own challenges. Points for these can only be earned once.

### Huts and High Places

Visit to DOC or NZAC hut	1 point
Visit a named high point	1 point
<b>Bonus points for each hut or high point</b>	
If a club trip	1/2 point
If your first visit	1/2 point

### Committee Challenges

For a bonus of 5 points (once for each challenge):

- Pack float or swim a pool on a river (Warren's Challenge)
- Go on a club organised beginners trip (Anne's Challenge)
- Photograph a whio (Janet's challenge)
- Summit Tahurangi - Mt Ruapehu (Grant's Challenge)
- Visit Ngamoko or Mid Pohangina Hut (Martin's Challenge)

- Visit 3 or more huts on a trip (Graeme's Challenge)
- Camp above 2000m - not near a hut (Bruce's Challenge)
- Hut warden at Rangī Hut (Committee Challenge)
- Bring a new trampler on a club trip (Woody's Challenge)

Points to be gained fairly while visiting the DOC estate and in the spirit of the Challenge - talk to Janet or committee members if in doubt.

There is no restriction on how you can get to these places i.e. helicopters, boats, bikes etc acceptable.

Send your trip details, places visited etc to Janet or add them to the online spreadsheet which will hopefully be up and running for this challenge. Please send them in by the end of the month they are collected in so scores are kept up to date.

## PNTMC Jubilee Book

*Old Boots & Packs - The First 50 Years of the Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club (PNTMC)* will interest and amuse mountain users, historians, photographers, hut baggers and tree huggers. Read about current and past members' exploits, which include climbing our highest peaks (sometimes with boots on the wrong feet) and powering a car on white spirits cooking fuel.



Order your copies directly from the editor Doug Strachan 353-6526 and get ready to put your feet up with this great read, all for only \$35.

## PNTMC Hut Bagging Posters

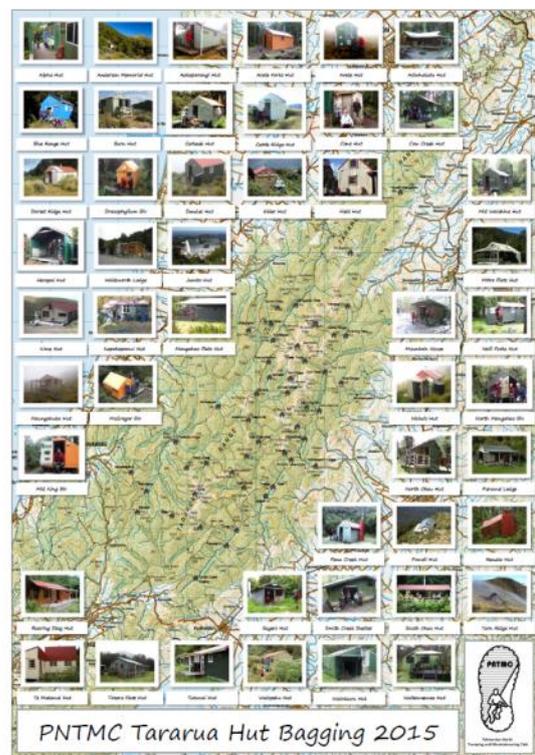
Posters are still available for both the Ruahine Hut Bagging 2012 and Tararua Hut Bagging 2015.

Size	Members	Non Members
A2	\$8	\$12
A1	\$16	\$24

Post and tube is about \$15 extra depending on where it is being sent.

Sale proceeds go towards our maintenance of the Mid-Pohangina Hut and Ngamoko Hut in Ruahine Forest Park.

Contact Warren (06) 356-1998.



## For Sale

Free to a good home - Two Macpac packs.

- Cascade 75 litre size 3.
- Esprit (women's Cascade) size 2.

Eight years old. Both in very good nick, except for the gravel graze on the top pocket where we tried to back over one. Macpac durability through and through.

Contact Fiona or Anthony 358-5517 or 027-470-9829.

## Trip Reports

**25-26 November 2017**  
**Manawatu Cycling Adventure**  
**Report by Richard Lockett**  
**Photos by Anthony Behrens**

As luck would have it we four adventure cyclists got a perfect weekend of weather i.e. high cloud cover to keep the sun off our backs with no wind, not even a breeze which when peddling a mountain bike kitted out for touring makes for ideal conditions. The adventure element of the weekend was the fact that the participants did not know the location of the overnight camp out or the route to get there until we were on our bikes and well into the journey.

The outward route centred on Ridge Road a long winding gravel road which traverses along the high ground between the Oroua and Pohangina Rivers. Getting to Ridge Road from the midday Feilding start involved heading north following the Makino Stream before turning east and fording the Kiwitea Stream which meant wet feet for all whether one walked or rode across. Continuing east to the Oroua River at the Almadale Reserve, a pedestrian bridge took us over to a bush remnant which hid the road which continued east to intersect with Valley Road.



*Crossing Kiwitea Stream near Feilding*



*Crossing Armadale pedestrian bridge.*



*Picturesque flat gravel backcountry roads.*

With the terrain being no longer flat the participants decided that this was a good rest spot and seemed reluctant to proceed with vigour, the leader knowing that we had a bit of ground to cover and most of it all up hill before the day was over. Only 200 metres up the road Anthony's rear inner tube blew apart with a loud bang so we got another rest while Anthony replaced the shredded tube and lowered the tyre pressures all round. Heading north again and a stop at Dave Grant's house as it would be rude to pass by without saying Hello. I hadn't let Dave know that we would be calling in, but he was wise enough to be somewhere else when we did (just down the road at his new house site).

A few k's of gravel along Pollock Road brought us to Ridge Road and if we were making good time we might get to Apiti and have a beer at the pub before heading back along the road to the overnight camp spot at London's Ford beside the Oroua River, but it turned out to be a tad longer and our pace slower than I had figured so no cold beer before dinner. A rapid descent off Ridge Road brought us to the London's Ford Ferry Reserve with my GPS giving 55km's as the distance covered so not a bad afternoon's work and as it was still very warm we all had a splash in the Oroua keeping away from the prominent bluff above as per the signage. Fly camps were set up, billy's boiled, coffee drunk, dinner cooked, the wine that Anthony had packed in was shared around, thanks. A special kind of evening as it got dark still in comfort just in shorts and tee shirt, the start of the hot dry spell in late 2017.

We all got woken in the night by the crashing sound of rocks and stones falling from a great height and it sounded very close, too close when just in a fly camp. Morning revealed that it wasn't the prominent bluff but a slip in a side gully just upstream and across the river from our camp site.

A relaxed Sunday morning start preceded a steep climb out of the Oroua valley and up Fowlers Hill on the Apiti Road to Kimbolton, I wasn't looking forward to this climb first thing in the morning, grinding uphill with a heavily laden bike but mountain bikes have plenty of low gears to choose from except for Fiona's, a borrowed bike which seemed to be a special and lacking in the lower ratio's which meant that it was more of a grunt than a grind up to Kimbolton. Breakfast at a cafe in Kimbolton would have been a welcome option but as the new owners don't open for trade on Sundays that option wasn't there to take, so we bypassed the settlement on some gravel roads to check out a small bush reserve to the west which the Kimbolton School use for environmental projects.



*Enjoying a rapid downhill descent.*

From Kimbolton back to Feilding it's mainly all downhill on dusty gravel and sealed rural roads and with the ideal conditions we had made for a pleasant mornings cycling passing through Beaconsfield and along McKay's Road and down the Makino. Anthony struck mechanical issues with his bike breaking the cable which operates the rear derailleurs, a repair was effected by breaking the chain and turning the bike into a single speeder, but the chain broke a few k's down the road, but only a km from our destination so only a short walk was needed to finish the trip!

So a practice run for some of us interested in bike packing adventures, testing our fitness, tuning our bike packing equipment, how much water to carry (heaps, a 3 litre camelback is best), what tools to take etc - a good learning opportunity.

We were Kathy Corner, Fiona Burleigh and Anthony Behrens and Richard Lockett

## **9-10 December 2017 Matiu/Somes Island Yvonne van der Does**

Two carloads left Kathy's place around 7:45am for Days Bay, Wellington to catch the 10:30am ferry to Matiu/Somes Island. One car missed the turnoff and ended up doing a speedy U-turn by the cake tin but we all arrived with plenty of time to spare for a comfort stop, a quick drink and even cheese scones with jam and butter, unfortunately a horde of cyclists had turned up so no chance of getting any whipped cream, at the Day's Bay pavilion. It was sunny but windy and Wellington harbour was choppy so the ferry was quite late but, with a full load of passengers, in 10 minutes we had landed on the island.

There are strict rules to keep the island introduced predator free and the Eastbourne volunteer rangers assist the DOC staff to welcome all visitors at the Whare Kiore upon arrival. All day visitors and overnighters had to check their bags for any free loader pests and our shoes were sprayed with disinfectant and checked to ensure no new seeds or bugs were brought onto the island.

We could have camped but Kathy had booked us a very spacious Forest and Bird house with three bedrooms, large lounge, dining area and fully equipped kitchen. After dropping off our bags we went exploring. You didn't need to go far to see the wildlife as there were skinks in the garden by the house and even a penguin nesting box. The tracks are well maintained and go around the island with lots of good lookout points to the rocky outcrops below with gulls and shags - should have brought binoculars - and 360° across to the mainland.

Along the track there was a roped off section where tuatara had been seen before. We all stared hard into the undergrowth and someone thought there was one in the dappled light below the track. Lots of blurry photos were taken and we started to convince ourselves that it could be one but alas it was a lump of wood as it was in the exact same position later that evening and the next day. Luckily we did see several skinks; the common and a spotted skink sun bathing along the way.

We continued around the island and came across a mother duck with at least eight ducklings tucked in on the track and thought how strange to be on an island in the middle of the sea, but behind a fence there was an oxidation pond.

Other things to see: the lighthouse built in 1900, a fully occupied weta motel and a Do Not Disturb sign by a tuatara burrow, but either it was tucked up tight or out as no one managed to see that one. It was dry and grassy around the trig (would have been an easy high point for the PNTMC Challenge 2018) and World War II old gun emplacements – it reminded Kathy of Alfred Hitchcock “The Birds” with the sea gulls swooping low to protect their nest and chick. The island had an internment camp during wartime and quarantine facilities for both human immigrants and animals. Now the quarantine station is abandoned but you can wander through the animal stalls, look through documents in the vet office and check out some of the equipment.

Slowly the explorers regrouped at the house and out came all sorts of goodies; chips, dips, olives, cheeses and crackers. It must have been the invigorating sea air as we then tucked into a delicious potluck dinner of Kathy’s special spicy beef curry, rice, broccoli, quiche and fresh salad.

One hour before sunset it was time to head down a track and in no time we were back at the wharf to await the little blue penguins. We sat down on a low wall and waited quietly. Three other parties were staying overnight. The twenty somethings were very loud and shone their torches (at least they were red lights which is supposed to be less disturbing) on the lead penguin who was hiding behind a small wall above the shoreline but they soon became impatient and wandered off to be annoying somewhere else. Next the family with two young children that yelled and shone their white light torches everywhere (this could make the penguins regurgitate their catch and the young in the nests would starve) they left after we shushed them. The third party of humans had decided to stand on the track unknowingly blocking the penguin route. Slowly more and more penguins amassed behind the wall. The people left and with the track finally clear the penguins made a run for it and climbed up the hillside to their burrows and hungry youngsters. As we walked home we could hear happy chirps and trills. Janet managed to find a Cook Strait giant weta – looked like a poo in the grass.

We still had room for dessert; strawberries, hot mince tarts, tea and coffee. Somehow four people decided to sleep in one room which meant Richard and I had a bedroom each and Sally opted for the couch. Apart from doors

and CD’s (hanging inside windows to stop bird strikes) rattling all night and the *harmonious* snoring everyone got some sleep.

It rained the next morning but didn’t last long and we all went exploring hoping to see the elusive tuatara before meeting up for lunch of leftovers and to catch the 12:30pm ferry back to Days Bay.

Trip members: Kathy Corner and friends Pam and Olwyn, Richard Lockett, Sally Hewson, Janet Wilson and Yvonne van der Does.



*Destroying leftovers for lunch.*

### **13-14 January 2018 Roaring Stag Hut Ewen Cameron**

Our group of five, led by Warren, who stepped in as Anne’s replacement, departed Milverton Park at 8:00am for the once deferred Beginners’ Overnight Tramp. In the pre-departure briefing, the newbies were told that the hut is often full and that we could perhaps expect to not get a bunk... given the weather forecast was for thunderstorms, it was with some relief that we found just one car at the Putara Road end.

The tramp in to the hut is in three phases, the first, the walk to the second swing bridge is a bit up and down but relatively easy in the bush beside the Mangatainoka Stream.

The second phase is a climb up three or four hundred metres. Fortunately, Saturday was not as hot a day as some we have had, but the climb up to the T where the track forks to Herepai and Roaring Stag huts was heavy going for at least one of us (me). Fitting a new pack and participating on a first overnight tramp now seems a bad idea.

Progress from the top of the track down to the hut in the last phase was pretty good going. We had lunch at a nice river bank setting where the track first meets a stream. From there it was a quick walk down to the hut although rock hopping across a couple of small streams we had to cross provided some “entertainment” on the way...which prompted Warren to provide some advice on boulder hopping.

Once we'd sorted out sleeping arrangements and discussed “what next” we assembled minimal gear to head out to the Hidden Lake... but as we headed out Warren suggested a new plan which involved going down to see some nice camp sites and have a swim at a nearby swimming hole – the new plan was readily accepted - a lazy afternoon spent exploring, looking at rocks, plants and just enjoying the place.

By progressing close to the river to the left of the “big arrow on the main track” and guided by Warren, we got to some great camp sites and the swimming hole...without Warren's help we'd have been none the wiser about them. Now we have somewhere to head next time.



*Trying out the pool below the hut. [WW]*

As the night was warm, many of the other people who had arrived at the hut, and Mark, chose to sleep outside on the porch of the hut. Perhaps because the hut was not full or because the night temperature dropped a little, we all had a comfortable sleep.

Sunday after we'd packed up, we headed back up the track for about 15 minutes, before getting involved in some navigational practice to head through the bush to Hidden Lake. Once Warren had “refreshed our memories”, Stephen lead us straight to the lake. The lake was mirror calm, with about 15cm (0.5m further out – Ed.) of clear water over thin mud. Stephen was the only one of us to take a dip.

From there we circled round the lake and back out through the crown fern and tall rimu forest to the Ruapae Stream. We then “boulder hopped” upstream for about an hour before bush bashing up a ridge for another hour to rejoin the track. Most of us found that hard work and once again we benefitted from Warren's wisdom.

The tramp down was uneventful until Warren pointed out yet another great swimming hole where we were all able to cool off and enjoy the river. We returned to the road end by about 3:00pm and headed for home. A memorable weekend and perhaps the beginning of point scoring for the club competition this year.

We were: Warren, Mark, Stephen, Kirsten & Ewen.



*Ready to leave Roaring Stag Hut. [WW]*

### **20-22 January 2018 Pohangina Huts Kathy Corner**

I had never been to Ngamoko Hut or Mid Pohangina Hut before so the Wellington Anniversary weekend trip to check out and tidy up these huts seemed like a good opportunity to combine visiting a new area and doing my bit for the club. Janet had heard that the route from the western side had a lot of tree damage so suggested to Martin we should go in via West Tamaki Road end, then via Stanfield Hut and Cattle Creek. As it was forecast to be a hot day (another one I hear you say!) we left early and were on the track by 8.45am. We were Janet, Graham, Warren, Martin and Grant and myself.

All I remember of the first part of the track was the wide 4WD track that climbs above the river. I was busy chatting away to Janet at the time, so somehow missed the scenery. It was only on the way back on the Monday that I

took in the spectacular views - but I am getting ahead of myself.

We arrived at Stanfield Hut in time for morning tea and then set off up the somewhat overgrown creek before a hot slog up the spur. I wondered why I was making such hard work of it, but I think it was the muggy weather making me sweat so much. I was warned that Cattle Creek ridge could get exceedingly windy and sure enough after walking through some beautiful bush, we came out into the wind. We could see the bright orange of Cattle Creek Hut down in the valley below and quickly descended to get out of the wind. The others commented how they had been there in far windier conditions. We met two hunters from Palmerston North and Ashhurst at the hut, who we chatted to briefly.



*Rock hopping down Cattle Creek. [WW]*

After lunch we headed off down Cattle Creek. I had read in a trip report that there was a difficult gorgy section where you had to sidle across a rock face and there was a chain to help. I didn't like the sound of that so when we reached that part, I elected to get wet and climb down the waterfall - after all it was very warm so I didn't mind getting wet.



*A small waterfall to sidle in Cattle Creek. [WW]*

The route up to Mid Pohangina Hut from the river is practically a vertical climb/scramble up through the vegetation. Poor Graham had to

listen to my groans and grunts as I climbed. I must say I was tired, hot and sweaty by the time I got to the hut and so thankful for a nice cup of tea followed by a swim. There is a great swimming hole and a little waterfall plus resident eel.

Warren and I elected to sleep in the hut with two young hunters, and the others pitched their tent flies under a pine tree - an idyllic spot where they camped for two nights. Both nights we spotted whio which was very exciting. I loved sitting observing the male whio as he whistles away and sticks his neck out. I also learnt that the female growls, but when we saw a pair of whio we didn't hear any growling. Maybe the female wasn't impressed or they were a male pair. I was also impressed what fast low fliers they were. I gained some points for the challenge, and took a photo using Janet's camera.

We headed up the Pohangina River to Ngamoko Hut the next day and got stuck into some serious cleaning for an hour, washing the outside of the hut, removing weeds around the base and cleaning the toilet (my job that day!!). We enjoyed a leisurely lunch and then who should turn up but Chris Tuffley and Elly who had walked in from Kashmir Rd end. They also were heading for Mid Pohangina Hut.



*A deep spot despite low river levels. [WW]*

It took us less than two hours to walk back as Janet said she had rarely seen the river so low. However, there were a couple of places which were a bit deep and fast flowing so I clung on to Martin, holding on to the top of his pack rather than the waist and nearly pulled him in. Janet was watching and said I really needed to go on the river crossing training.

Back at Mid Poh we all had a wonderful swim, including Chris and Elly and then enjoyed a beer courtesy of some hunters who had left five cans in Ngamoko Hut. Thank you - most appreciated. It was wonderful sitting by the

river, and later watching the whio. Chris and Elly decided to push on to Cattle Creek Hut. I mustn't forget we did do a bit of cleaning of Mid Pohangina Hut before our beers. Warren did a grand job of cleaning the toilet.



*El fresco dining at fly camp by the river. [WW]*

Graham and Janet set off to find a deer after tea and arrived back after dark laden with venison. So also did our two young hunters. Warren and I were already in our bunks when they arrived, so they sat out on the balcony cooking and polishing off a bottle of Honey Bourbon. We kept on hearing this crashing noise, so Warren questioned the hunters as to what it was, as it was keeping us awake. It turned out it was one of them leaning back on the bench and banging against the tin hut wall. Warren asked them politely if they could perhaps "wrap it up sooner or later" and so amazingly they did, and we were able to get to sleep.



*Leaving Mid Poh Hut. [WW]*

We heard rain in the night, and knew the forecast was not so good the next day and so left early. It was an uneventful trip out with just some light drizzle. I particularly enjoyed the last bit over Holmes Ridge, as the views were spectacular with the mist over the ridges, and the trees emerging ethereal reminding me of Chinese paintings.

Thanks for a great weekend and I earned lots of points for the Challenge!!

## 27-28 January 2018 Top Gorge – Upper Pohangina Anthony Behrens

Fiona and Anthony left town after work on the Friday night; the plan was to meet Janet, Graham, Warren, Ian (from NZDA and the Ruahine Whio Protectors) and Bruce (the dog) up at Longview Hut after they had attended DoC's volunteer do at Coppermine Creek.

Somehow everyone managed to arrive at the carpark on Kashmir Road at the same time so we all walked up to the hut together as the sun sank. It was muggy and drizzly, but cooled as darkness fell. We all arrived at the hut at about nine. Well..."slow coach" Warren set off first and arrived about twenty minutes earlier without even having to get his headlamp out (just).

We were greeted by a couple of Napier hunters who marvelled at the fancy "Tramping Club treats" we rustled up. A bottle of really cheap wine and some corn chips. Wow...how the privileged live!

Graham and Bruce slept out on the back porch which proved to be a very sensible idea. They missed out on a chorus of snoring AND a couple of other hunters arriving at about 11.30. One of this party knew one of the other party. This meant that when Party B left at 4.30 in the morning, twenty minutes was spent catching up with Party A, swapping tips and planned routes. Graham and Bruce slept on. No one else did...Never mind.

At dawn a casual breakfast was had and we all sauntered up to the signs above the hut where we said our farewells to Ian who headed off for a crossing to Iron Gates that would take him to a lift from the Tabletop carpark.



*Heading off into the cloud at the sign. [WW]*

The rest of us made our way south along the rigeline to Rocky Knob where Fiona and

Anthony gained their first ever Club Challenge points for climaxing for the first time on a named point. Apparently this entitled them to bonus points.

From Rocky Knob we continued a few hundred metres down to the saddle, then off down a rough route to the Pohangina River where a short line of Ruahine Whio Protector's A24 traps awaited servicing. The river was very low and progress pretty relaxed. Top Gorge Hut was reached after two and a half hours of very relaxed tramping from Longview.

After a bite to eat we split up. Janet and Fiona went up the steep track to Ngamoko tops to service 8 more traps, while the blokes, including Bruce, wandered down stream to service what was supposed to be 10 more. At the gorge, where they planned to finish, the lads had only found 7, at which point the wondering started in earnest. Was it them? Was it their GPS? Was it the coordinates? None of the numbers matched so Graham went old-school with an actual map. It didn't really help, but it felt good....Shrug.



*Time for a cuppa outside Top Gorge Hut [WW]*

After a cuppa back at the hut, it was time to set up for the night. Graham took the back door with a fly tied off a yet-to-be-erected meat safe. Warren and Janet took the luxurious Top Gorge beds and Fiona and Anthony pitched their fly on the true right of the river. Bruce? You'll have to ask Graham. The evening got gloomy and rain looked like a possibility, but the night was still and the sky cleared in the wee small hours. Fiona and Anthony expected sandflies down by the river, but only found ruru.

They were woken at 7.05 by camp leader calling out a "Good morning you two!" across the river. Another casual breakfast was had, packs were stuffed and we were off back up the river to deal with the last A24s. The river journey was very beautiful and leisurely with a

diversion being taken to scout for whio up one of a couple of forks. Sign was found on a rock, but no actual ducks were spotted.



*Easy travel in upper Pohangina River [WW]*

One unusual feature of the river was the large number of dead weta floating downstream. Anthony counted nearly twenty of varying sizes. Most unusual. After navigating several waterfalls and making one last climb to the signs above Longview Hut it was all over bar the shouting.

Janet went down to Longview Hut to see if the club's daytrippers were present, but they'd been and gone so we all headed off down the hill. Fiona and Anthony aren't really anti-social, but they like to treat themselves to music at the end of a tramp, so plugged themselves into their phones. Everyone walked at slightly different paces, so their rudeness probably wasn't an issue.

Once we hit Mercer's Incline, we spied the daytrippers getting into their car. They saw us and waves were exchanged before they zoomed off. Those of us with good knees dodged the gentle zig zag by taking the old track straight down, while one of us took the sensible route. He arrived at the car a couple of minutes after the last of the speedsters. Not bad and a good test of "The Incline's" engineering.

The general consensus was that we all had a good trip. It's amazing how much wilderness you can find in the Ruahines within four hours from the carpark.

We were Janet Wilson, Graham Peters, Bruce the dog, Anthony Behrens, Fiona Burleigh, Warren Wheeler.

## From a Tramping Husband to his Wife

*We scrambled up treefall-littered spur  
Ambled across tussock-covered plateau  
Descended rock-strewn mountain stream  
And ...*



*We forded clear-flowing river  
Traversed mossy open ridgetop  
Tramped along beautiful leafy bush track  
And I ...*



*We camped near a high mountain tarn  
Stretched a tarpaulin shelter by a bivouac  
Stayed in a lovely river-side hut  
And I was ...*

*We boiled the billy for a nice cup of tea  
Breakfasted on nutritious muesli and fruit  
Dined on tasty reconstituted dehydrated meals  
And I was thinking ...*

*We baked under a blistering sun  
Sheltered while rain drummed on the hut roof  
Trudged along into a thundery approaching storm  
And I was thinking of ...*



*We sloshed through deep miry bog  
Forced a way through clinging scrub  
Walked on leaf-carpeted tracks  
And I was thinking of you*

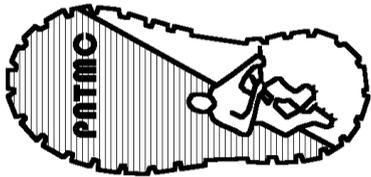


*Mokai Patea, Iron Bark, Ohutu Ridge  
Ruahine Corner, Potae, Kylie Biv  
Colenso, And on the way home  
I've been thinking of you*



*Inspired by Geoff  
Conspired by Bruce  
Transpired by Lindsay*

Thanks to Geoff Phillips and Lindsay Middleton, with apologies from the Editor for leaving out some of the pics from the original.



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## PNTMC Newsletter February 2018

### *What's inside this month?*

- Huts and High Places Challenge
- New Maori Names for Tararua Peaks
- Manawatu Cycling Adventure
- Somes/Matiu Island overnight
- Beginners Tramp – Roaring Stag Hut
- Pohangina Huts Working Bee
- Top Gorge – Upper Pohangina
- From a Tramping Husband to his Wife
- Coming trips and more

### **Articles for the newsletter**

Send by the 20<sup>th</sup> 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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