



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter August 2009

Club Nights

Club nights are held at 7:45pm on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. All welcome! Please sign the visitor's book at the door.

11 August

Evening session for SC2 participants only.

13 August Club Night

Club Photo Competition

Contact Martin Lawrence 357 1695

25 August

Evening session for SC3 participants only.

27 August Club Night

Gear Auction

It's Spring Clean time of the year. Time to dispose of your surplus gear. Pre-loved but none the worse for wear. Good homes to all, never fear. (See Gear Auction Notice inside for details)

Upcoming Trips

Trip Grading

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

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

Trip participants

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

Trip leaders

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

Overdue Trips

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

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

1-2 August

Snowcraft 1 weekend

Applications closed.

1 August (Saturday)

Takapari Rd Mountain Bike/Walk M

Graham Peters 329 4722

Takapari Rd could be a walker's white winter wonderland or muddy mountain-bikers morass, depending on the weather conditions. Which, will be decided closer to the time. Leaving Milverton Park at 8.30am.

2 August

Ellis Hut

E

Peter Wiles

358 6894

The plan is to leave PN at 8.30 am. It is the easiest of walks along an almost flat track through bush for about 2 hours. The hut is one of the oldest structures of its type still standing (and able to be used) dating from the 1880s. The only catch is that the Maroepa River has to be forded at the start beside the carpark, which is at the northern end of Whakarara Road. I would suggest bringing gumboots for the river and then change to walking boots. (One set of gumboots may be shared around if they can be successfully chucked across the river. Taihape gumboot throwing skills would be an asset.) An additional option is that the track can be very easily done on a mountain bike.

8-9 August

Rangototo East Ridge Climb

F,T

Annett Patzold

355 1197

Going up either Friday or Saturday afternoon/evening depending on weather, and stay at Rangipo Hut. Attempt Rangitoto (Mitre Peak) via East Ridge and walk out and head home the following day.

8-9 August

McKinnon Hut M
Martin Lawrence 357 1695

We will leave vehicles at Kawhatau Field Base, cross the Kawhatau river on the cableway before facing a challenging climb up the Hikurangi Range. After overnighing in the hut, we will return, probably by retracing our steps. We hope to see some snow and if the weather obliges we should have some good views as well. Departing PN at 7.30am to give us a reasonable length of day.

9 August

Field Hut M
Duncan Hedderley 354 6905

7.45 start for a trip into the hills behind Otaki. On a good day there are some great views out to the coast and the Sounds; on a not-so-good day, there aren't any streams to ford and the track is in bush.

15-16 August

Snowcraft 2 weekend
Applications closed.

16 August

Punga Hut, Tokomaru E
Tony Gates 357 7439

This is an easy day tramp into the northern Tararuas, in from Scotts Road and the upper Kahuterawa Valley. We can drive through the forest a bit, then follow Burttons Track, then old forestry trails and hunters tracks over a knob named "Scrub", and so to the very rustic Punga Hut. We can return via the same track, unless the trip wants to try a more adventurous off track route - a good spot. Depart 9.00am

22-23 August

Te Matawai Hut and beyond M/F
Janet Wilson 329 4722

Comfortable Te Matawai Hut sits just below the bushline in the Western Tararuas near Levin. Conditions will dictate whether we go in via the river or climb up to Richards Knob via the Gable End Ridge Track. We should arrive at the hut early/mid afternoon and if the weather is suitable, we will continue on up to Pukematawai for great views and some snow. Return on Sunday via either river or ridge track. If the weather happens to be stunning for that weekend there is the possibility of going further for the night, with either Arete Biv or Dracophyllum Biv being options for longer days. Leave PN at 7am.

23 August

Rangi Hut E
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

A pleasant stroll up to Rangiwahia hut to build biggest possible snowperson, throw snow balls at other persons and return home.

29-30 August

Snowcraft 3

contact Terry 356 3588

30 August

Stanfield Explorer M
Dave Grant 357 8269

Join me for a trip into the southern Ruahine range behind Dannevirke. Starting from the Tamaki road end we will climb up to A Frame hut then wander along the tops on the Takapari track (fantastic views on a fine day), dropping down Stanfield hut then following the Tamaki stream back down through the bush to the road. Somewhere along the way we'll have lunch, and if the weather is crook we might give the tops a miss and head in to Stanfield via the Holmes ridge track and push through to Cattle Creek hut. Lots of options! We will leave from Milverton Park at 7.30am.

5-6 September

Howletts-Waterfall F
Derek Sharp 323 3028

Contact Derek for information on this trip.

6 September

Atiwhakatu Hut E/M
Malcolm Parker 357 5203

Nothing too strenuous on this trip. Depart at 8.00 am. from Milverton Park. Head over to the Wairarapa for a pleasant stroll up to the new Atiwhakatu Hut so we can check out the improvements/replacement. The old hut had its own character - especially when the weather was lousy. Is the new one a satisfactory replacement?

Articles for the newsletter

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

Notices

PNTMC Photo Competition

13 August 2009

Rules:

1. Only **digital** images will be accepted. Entries must not have been entered previously in the PNTMC Photo Competitions.
2. Images must be related to tramping, trekking or climbing.
3. The limit is 3 images per category and each image must be clearly labelled with name and entry category.

Categories:

Alpine NZ: alpine scenery in NZ

Scenic NZ: scenery below the bushline

Natural History: NZ flora or fauna;

Topical NZ: the people shots on your trips

Overseas Alpine: overseas alpine scenery;

Overseas People: climbers or people met while tramping or climbing overseas.

Deadline:

All images must be submitted **at least two weeks in advance**. (This is so they can be given to the judge to study.) The images can either be e-mailed to Martin Lawrence at martin.lawrence.nz@gmail.com Alternatively, a CD of the images can be given to Martin, again **at least two weeks in advance**.

Note: Entries submitted less than two weeks prior to the competition or on the club night of the competition **will not be accepted**.

Gear Auction Night

27 August

It is time to clear out the closets and garage and prepare for the PNTMC gear auction. For those intending to put items up for auction we have the following rules:

- a. The proceeds from items that sell for less than **\$5** will be regarded as donations to the club.
- b. The club will charge **\$2** for items that sell between \$5 and \$10.
- c. The club will collect a **15%** commission for items that sell for over \$10.

Please show up at **7.30pm** on the club night so that the auctioneer can list the items and note the reserve.

For those intending to buy: Bring lots of money and leave extra space in the car to take home the tent, boots, and ice axes you never knew you needed. This is a great way to raise funds for the club and lose/acquire gear.

New to the club

Welcome to two new members, Logan Westwood and Kathy Corner, who have recently joined the club.

News from DOC

Te Potae O Awarua

The Aorangi Awarua Trust has received confirmation of funding from the Lotteries Commission to continue with the Te Potae O Awarua project, battling against stoats and contributing to national research on bait/no bait methods.

From its 20km beginnings in 2007, the Te Potae O Awarua stoat trap line has extended several times, now stretching to 60km. The most recent extension connects the two existing lines in the northern section and although it was only set up at the end of March, it is already catching stoats.

If you are interested in getting your name on the list of potential volunteers, phone Lorraine Cook 06 350 9714 or email lcook@doc.govt.nz.



Heavy snow befell the group checking the line in June, but DOC volunteers carried on. Photo: Chris Mercer.

DOC Track and Hut update

In May, a team from the Manawatu branch of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association led by Andrew Mercer, headed into Te Ekaou Hut in the southern Ruahines for a working bee to carry out general maintenance. They removed the old toilet and set up the new one, cleaned out the water tank, put in a leaf guard and did some other general cleaning.



Snow piled up at Rangiwahia hut

Trip Reports

Urban tramp – a smaller city this time

30 June

Report: Anne Lawrence

The plan to do the skyline walk in Wellington was changed when we saw the forecast for strong winds and heavy rain. The route on the walkways around Massey proved a sensible alternative. We managed to complete the two hour walk before the rain hit.

Following some last minute pulling out (mostly due to uninspiring weather, and injuries) there were four hardy soles who rendezvoused at Rendezvous Cafe.

A dog theme quickly emerged – initially there appeared to be identical little white dogs at every turn and we realized by the end that all but one of the people we met on the track was accompanied by at least one dog. We followed the road to the track on the left then followed the track past the lake, down to the Fitzherbet Bridge and back up through the Bledisloe Park, crossing Springdale Grove and continuing along the track. We followed the track behind Massey athletics track, crossing Old West Road. and Turitea Rd before heading up the hill, and across Pacific Drive, emerging onto Aokautere Rd, to return to our starting point.

A pleasant, if surprisingly chilly, walk. Tony kindly hosted us at his place with a very welcome cup of coffee and home-made goodies.

We were Tony Gates, Richard Lockett, Anne and Martin Lawrence.

Mid-winter at Rangī

20-21 June

Report: Kathy Corner

Only 3 revellers set off for the midwinter feast at Rangī Hut. By the time we got to the car park it was raining so we quickly donned our packs and set off up the trail. We encountered snow almost immediately- lovely soft snow It wasn't too bad going round the slip We filled up various milk bottles water at the waterfall before the hut as we had heard the pipes were frozen and we were right.

On arrival at the hut we met with Peter Wiles who was introducing one of his co workers from Fonterra to a bit of tramping. The co-worker a young Dutch guy looked familiar and I realized that last time we had met was at a Barbie 50th birthday party - he had been dressed as Barbie and I had been wearing a Barbie-pink mini dress - no wonder we barely recognized each other!

Warren immediately started decorating the hut and we all had the job of blowing up red green and white balloons. Warren also provided the reindeer tablecloths, and Christmas plates. We spent a relaxed afternoon reading and about 5pm started on the nibbles of stuffed vines leaves, hummus, cheese and olives, with a few glasses of chardonnay followed by mulled wine. Unfortunately Kathy allowed the wine to boil so it was not very alcoholic, however still delicious! Next course was Murray's Thai chicken curry and for dessert we had the infamous Mt Doom cake - wow! We finished the evening off with some Swedish vodka.

The next morning was still clagged in. As I was up first I put the billy on and gave 'the boys' a cup of tea in bed - what service!! Warren did a great job of cooking bacon and eggs and I cooked toast over the gas fire.

For a bit of exercise to work off breakfast Warren made a snowman and also built Mt Ruapehu and Mt Ngurahoe. The ice crystals on the tussock grass were magnificent- quite a work of art. By 11am the clouds had cleared a little. We set off about midday and stopped at the waterfall. Not knowing Warren that well, I thought he was joking when he said he was going to have a polar bear dip in the waterfall, but as tradition has it, he removed all his various layers and jumped in starkers - all captured on camera!!

It was a magical walk back- a winter wonderland with all the snow on the trees. On nearing the car park we suddenly encountered a huge number of birds wax-eyes and tuis. We stood for a while just listening and watching them.

Thanks to Murray and Warren for a great weekend.

Oturere

27 -28 June

Report and photo: Peter Wiles

Once we reached the Desert Road it was apparent that much of the recent snow had melted and we had a fine and sunny mild winter's day to take advantage of.

After a delayed start (fuel pump issues and a change of vehicle) we started tramping towards Waihohonu at 11.30am. We passed a small group on a day walk and arrived at the hut for lunch. There was no one about. After a slight rest we decided that we would make the most of the day and complete the intended plan by heading over to Oturere. This proved to be a pleasant walk for a winter's day. There was no wind and the sun was warm. After a couple of rests we arrived at the hut and again there was no one about.



We had an hour or two of daylight left so after a hot drink and snack we wandered up the track towards the centre of the lava field to admire the view.

Once back at the hut, on with the gas heater and into preparing dinner. Fortunately there was a handy candle to light the place as we forgot to bring one.

In the morning it was rather cloudy (as forecast) but there was no wind and as we were about to leave light drizzle started. It was hard to decide whether to wear a parka or not. We made good progress and at the Waihohonu valley left the track to visit the spring at the end of the lava flow up towards Ngauruhoe.

The drizzle became more persistent towards Waihohonu Hut. We dropped our packs and walked up to the historic hut before having our lunch. The walk back to the road was rapid in gradually increasing rain intensity.

We called in at the Army Museum and when we emerged a couple of hours later the easterly wind coupled with steady rain made for rather a damp drive back.

We were Peter Wiles and Rene Van Oosten.

Castlepoint Explorer

4-5 July

Report: Ian Harding

Photos: Jennifer Kitchen

It had been a long time since I last visited Castlepoint and as with many coastal settlements in NZ much has changed. Sure the lighthouse is still the prominent landmark but the increased number of dwellings present is quite profound. While some of the traditional batches still remain, more recent constructions seem perhaps better suited to an up-market city sub-division than seaside retreat....stunning creations all the same.

We were guests of Kay and Jennifer at the "Kitch-Inn" for the weekend. A really nice spacious home with good views and tastefully decorated in the nautical theme.....even down to the lavatory seat. Other quirky extras included vinyl 45 rpm records attached to the ceiling in the "girls" room and a suitably adorned "boys" room. A motion-activated gnome figurine on the stair landing, with an audible flatulence problem also added appeal. One of those "Every home should have one" accessories.

After an early lunch on Saturday most of us decided to tackle Castle Hill, a very steep and abrupt incline south of the lighthouse. While pleasant enough on a calm day, it would undoubtedly be hazardous when windy. Sheer cliff-drops plunge to the sea on the eastern side with wind-burnt grass covering the top and opposing faces. A view to die for however! The jagged rocks below provide a home for lounging fur seals along with their accompanying aroma. Sanitation issues aside, what a life!.....fishing, swimming, eating, procreation and sleeping.....where did I go wrong?

On returning we dropped by on the few optimistic souls in our group who were trying their hand at fishing from the rocks....sadly no fish. Somehow not totally surprising though with four full-time commercial fishing boats [on launching trailers] parked nearby.



With the afternoon drawing to an end it was decided to explore the lighthouse which is still operational but now fully automated. A recently laid concrete path leads to the tower with an elaborate boardwalk structure extending further beyond to a look-out platform. Some would say a little extravagant but obviously deemed necessary given the high volume of foot-traffic and scant soil environment.

Back home to begin preparing the evening meal which after all the treats appeared, turned into more of a banquet than a trampers nosh-up. Suffice to say, nobody went hungry or thirsty! I'm still pondering whether it was excessive food, alcohol or just sheer madness which saw most of us taking a late evening stroll...again, up to the lighthouse. Refreshing to say the least, if not sobering! Nothing too dramatic resulted though...no abseiling from the tower or late night skinny-dipping. All very civilized really...thankfully it wasn't summer!

Sunday morning dawned with the majority of us exploring the natural cave/tunnel formation beneath the lighthouse rock. Only accessible at low tide and closely guarded by the resident seal population. A fair degree of subliminal seal persuasion was required to gain passage along the rocky high-tide line. Challenging, to say the least! And boy.....those beasties have long, sharp teeth and can look most defiant! Graham was the only member of our group

who actually ventured inside the cave. Deepish water at the entrance and the seal family inhabitants deterred the rest of us. He did however manage to disappear from view, explore some 40 metres of cavern...and survive.

With the weather slowly deteriorating the decision was made to embark on a beach walk, this time in the northerly direction, adjacent to the main street. Very little sand is evident on that portion of beach at present due to severe tidal erosion and no recent sand-depositing storms. The under-laying rock and mudstone structure is clearly visible displaying some most interesting geological features. On the return journey a detour via the caravan/holiday park treated us to the sights and history bounding the main thoroughfare...a cemetery, fire station, former primary school site, pub-store etc. Kay and Jennifer were also able to share with delight, many of their recollections of colourful characters, past and present.....all so very unique to Castlepoint.

Finally back at base camp for a debriefing and a late lunch which concluded a most interesting weekend with lots of fun and gaiety. Thank you Kay and Jennifer for sharing your piece of paradise and extending such warm, welcoming hospitality. Very much appreciated by all in attendance I'm sure. Hopefully we all behaved ourselves sufficiently well enough to be invited back in the future.





We were Noeline & Murray Gifford, Kathy Corner, Janet Wilson & Graham Peters, Warren-where did you get that hat-Wheeler, Kay & Jennifer Kitchen, Ian Harding, Terry Crippen and two Kitchen family friends, Grant and Rebecca.



Arriving at RSH after 2½ hours left plenty of time for lunch in the sunshine – Graham started the billy and hot soups and drinks were welcome. The trip back was again done in a good pace, so Graham and Janet had ample time to return home and get dolled up for their dinner engagement. The rest of us went for ice creams (remember: winter, huh ?) at Eketahuna - as Anne, Martin and I had rated our last Eke Café experience as less than clean we gave coffee a miss. Back in time to scrape the mud off the one boot that had found the bog hole, and to blob out eventually with the required coffee.

We were Anne and Martin Lawrence, Michael and Craig Allerby, Janet Wilson, Graham Peters, Murray Gifford, Lance Gray and Anja Scholz (trip leader)

Roaring Stag for lunch

19 July

Report and pics: Anja Scholz

Forecast were severe westerly gales, so cunningly doing a low level trip in the Eastern Tararuas paid off. Nine trampers decided that a leg stretch to have lunch at the by now only “near new” Roaring Stag Hut was the best option for a wintery Sunday, and so we set off from the road end at just before 9am.

With a well known track, and experienced trampers, the group stretched out at everyone’s preferred pace (called “leadership by laissez-faire” for those that ever attended an FMC leadership training course) and assembled at crucial (time for a snack) points and at (swingbridge) bottlenecks. The track was less muddy than its winter normal, except for a decent bog hole before the first swing bridge, which caught even Craig, who had managed to keep his new gaiters pristine up until then, on the way back. A fair amount of cars were parked at the carpark, and a number of trampers encountered – all in all there must have been around 10 in the hut the previous night.

Mid Pohangina

23-24 May

Report: Richard Lockett

Having never ventured up the Pohangina River further than Centre Creek before, putting a trip to mid Poh down on trip card to lead is my way of making it happen. Mid Poh hut only being a four bunker I got a call from a Kim of the MTS club enquiring as to the number in our party as she and hubby were thinking of going for a hunt up that way. Only two, possibly three, so we should be ok I said. As it happened, in spite of an unfavourable weather forecast for the weekend, Nicola Wallace was still keen so it was two.

Calm but with heavy overcast conditions greeted us on our arrival at the start of the poled route down to the river. Once Nicola had polished off a large tin of sardines, we were on our way; the sticky papa mud making ones boots somewhat heavy on the steep track. A southerly front was due to roll through about midday so I was keen to press on at a good pace to get the bulk of distance in before it arrived. The Piripiri Stream was soon crossed and we were on to the sidle track which climbs steadily up above the river. Nicola was under the impression that the track would meander alongside the river all the way to the hut; what she got was a wet, greasy trail through the forest

high above the river. To add to this, the conditions of the day made it somewhat dark and gloomy giving the impression of it being late in the day whereas it wasn't even midday yet.

A drop in temperature heralded the arrival of the southerly bang on time, the wind blowing straight up the river valley. The slippery tree roots and rocks had Nicola on her backside on a couple of occasions. Time for lunch, and coats on as it was more sleet than rain at this stage. Far too cold to hang around with our hands taking forever to warm up again. We ploughed on. "How long to the hut?" giving an indication that someone is not quite comfortable with the conditions; I mulled it over hoping an accurate answer of an hour or so would be of some comfort. Another slide saw Nicola completely caste upside down, legs and arms flailing in the air unable to right her self, luckily no damage done.

With the track descending steadily to the swing bridge across the river, my timeframe to the hut was looking accurate, lifting the spirits of us both - till the bridge crossing which exposed us to the full force of the southerly. We took the high route to the hut which was rather treacherous in the conditions - finally out of the gloom appeared a little hut and someone had the fire going - yey.

Kim and husband Honey (odd name for a bloke) with little dog were already settled in, huddled around the fire, willing the damp wood to burn. Although only just mid afternoon, it felt like it was early evening such was the available light. Once changed out of wet gear and hot drink in hand, we were very kindly offered the primo spot in front of fire. Bad move on their part as we didn't move from there till we hit the pit. A wake up call for me in that I had not packed a spare pair of socks for in the hut use, so had to keep the damp pair on as it was warmer with them on than without.

The rest of the day was spent watching the fire, opening and closing the window to control the smoke without letting too much cold air back in and watching the ice form on the outside of the clear roofing panel. A night of cold feet and little sleep as it rained and blew hard all night. Up sharp in the morning for a quick breakfast and on our way; four together plus dog. With it still raining, the streams and river were only going to get higher. Between the hut and the Piripiri Stream there are four or five little watercourses which have to be crossed; these all became a bit of a challenge requiring careful thought and a cunning plan.

It always seems quicker on the way home and we were soon at the Piripiri - our major concern for getting out - best described as ugly; but with a look for the best spot to cross and all four linking up together in the approved manor, we were across

safely although somewhat wetter than we started. The route across the farm was not bad as I feared and we were out safe and sound - all in all, perhaps a more challenging trip than Nicola had anticipated. We were back in Feilding just after two pm.

We were Nicola Wallace and Richard Lockett.

Kahuterawa Explorer

26 July

Report: Anja Scholz

Photos: Dave Grant

Numbers had dwindled to three at the last minute but we were rewarded with one of the better winter days so far this year. Leaving Palmy for the short drive to the Sledge Track carpark at 8am we were the first car there, and didn't see other trampers until about 1pm !! A good leg stretch on the Sledge Track before we warmed up on the climb to the Platinum Mines/Toetoe Loop Tack. The best views I've had from the track junction included the snowy tops of Taranaki, Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe - though we could not quite make out Warren's group scrambling around North Crater...



A short way down the Toetoe Loop we turned off a side track marked with an "H", however soon this track looked not quite like the hunters' track Dave had in mind. We retraced our steps, but - alas - ran into some hunters coming towards us, so some hunters' track it was after all... Anyway, back on the Toetoe Loop we quickly found the 'real' hunters' track, marked "old hunta", and followed it past some open toetoe clad area (time for elevenses) and onto Marima ridge - more views, to Wharite and beyond to the North, and the snowy Dundas Ridge to the South.

Carrying on to finish the loop we then had lunch on a knoll above Toetoe Flats - warm hats had by then been replaced with sun hats - and talked about various native birds. Dave mentioned the first time he'd seen stitchbird/hihi in the wild and I told the others about a Massey lecturer I'd met who

researched hihi, and whose licence plate was even “DR HIHI” – some enthusiasm! Eventually we made our way back via the Platinum Mine and Sledge Tracks to the carpark – and boy, do the Sledge Track steps get steeper on the return journey. Woody broke out the Potato Chips at the car, to restore our energy balance after 6 ½ hours away. And “just in case you didn’t believe me” I pointed to one of the cars at the carpark “you might want to read that licence plate”.....indeed, DR HIHI was out somewhere on the track!

The explorers were Woody Lee, Anja Scholz and Dave “I put plenty of money into the sun meter” Grant.

Of interest...

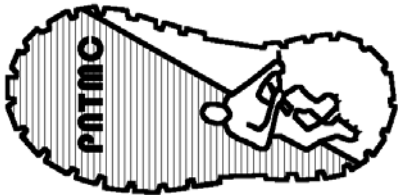
Two club members recently came up with a good way of distinguishing between Manuka, and Kanuka:

Kanuka is **K**uddly - e.g.soft leaves - and has **K**lustered flowers

Manuka is **M**anly - e.g.hard, prickly leaves - and has **M**ixed flowers (not clustered) and is **M**ini (smaller max. height)



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PNTMC Newsletter

August 2009

What's inside this month?

- *Upcoming trips and club events*
- *Reports on recent trips and events*

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

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Secretary	Terry Crippen	356 3588
Treasurer	Martin Lawrence	357 1695
Webmaster	Peter Wiles	558 6894
Membership Enquires	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
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