

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter May 2010

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.

13 May Confessions of a Hut Warden Anja Scholz.

Anja has spent several summers hut wardening for DoC on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Now she is down working on the same on the Milford Track. Come along and hear her tales of hut life, hut visitors, and hut work.

27 May BYO Slides

Bring along a choice selection of e-pics on CD or memory stick to show us what you have been doing over the summer. Contact Warren 356-1998.

Quote of the month. When asked if her uncle Terry has ever been to the top of a mountain

"Um, I think he once tried to go there, but I'm not sure if he went all the way to the top"

Jasmin Crippen (5 yrs)

Articles for the newsletter

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

Upcoming Trips

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.

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 May

Holly Hut, Egmont NP M
Malcolm Parker 357 5203

Depart 7.00am from PN. Climb from Mangore Road, on the northern slopes of the Pouakai Range, and up to Pouakai Hut. Over the Pouakai Range, with great views of Taranaki Mt Egmont, across the boardwalked Ahukawakawa Swamp, and so to Holly Hut. There is the chance of a side trip to Bells Falls. Return to the cars the same route.

2 May

Herepai Hut M
Peter Wiles 358 6894

Depart 7.30 am for Herepai Hut near Eketahuna.

If the weather is good, we may have lunch on the summit or nearby - Ruapae even.

8- 9 May

Jumbo Kings circuit F
Leader Required

A Tararua classic, with all ingredients of a great trip. Jumbo is easily accessible in all weathers, and if the weather allows, it is a wonderful tramp along the spectacular Broken Axe Pinnacles and over the three King peaks. Some fine views of the high central Tararuas await. Contact Janet 329-4722 if you can lead this trip or want to go.

9 May

Toka loop M
Anja Scholz 356 6454

A classic southern Ruahine jaunt on good DoC tracks, ascending, traversing, then descending the Ngamoko Range. There should be plenty of good views from the tops, into the Pohangina and Oroua River headwaters. Bring your water bottle, also your storm gear (just in case).

15- 16 May

Kime Hut/ Mt Hector M/ F
Anne Lawrence 357 1695

Leave PN at 8am. We'll spend the morning getting from Otaki Forks up to Kime Hut, and should have time for an explore of Mt Hector and surrounds. If it's a lovely night, we may climb Hector for a view of the city lights. After a night at Kime Hut, we will re-trace our steps back down the Southern Crossing route to the carpark.

16 May

Farm Walk E/ M
Malcolm Leary 06 322 8533

A Hunterville hill country stroll along farm tracks on Otari and Otiwhiti Stations, mostly on ridges, and mostly pasture land (with some pines). Great views. Meet Milverton Park 7.30 am.

22- 23 May

Mangatainoka Hot Springs E
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Depart 8.00am for the Kaweka Ranges east of Napier. An easy three hours tramp up the Mohaka River valley gets us to the Te Puia Hut, and another 40 minutes to the hot springs. We will fly camp or back track to stay at the Hut. We either walk out the same way or by the more strenuous and slightly longer uphill version via the Makino Hut. Togs and fishing rod optional.

23 May

No 1 Line M
Richard Lockett 323 0948

Just a medium trip up the track and to see how far up from the track we can get before the

leatherwood kicks in (i.e. bush bash) and back down again. A good local tramp. Depart at a respectable time.

29- 30 May

Tunupo- Iron Gates loop M/ F
Martin Lawrence 357 1695

Leave PN at 7.00am. We'll climb up Tunupo and then head north along the Ngamoko Range to pick up the track down to Iron Gate Hut, where we'll spend the night. The next day will be a pleasant walk back out the Oroua River to the carpark.

30 May

Harris Creek and beyond M
Dave Grant 357 8269

Join me for an amble up the Mangahao valley in the NW Tararuas to Harris Creek (and maybe a bit further if we feel like it). The track skirts around the top dam lake, passes through groves of rimu, and has some great river scenes. We leave from Milverton Park at 7.30am.

4- 7 June

Queen's Birthday Coastal Classic
Janet Wilson 328 4722

Starting on Friday, this classic social trip will be based at a cosy 12-bed house near the Putangirua Pinnacles, on the coastal Wairarapa. There are plenty of great day trips to do by MTB or foot. Further details from Janet.

12- 13 June

McIntosh Hut, Kawekas M
Geoff, Rochelle Beaumont 354 4829

A cosy bush hut with a great fire box, guaranteed to keep you warm on a frosty night here. Details next Newsletter.

SUBS for 2010 are now due

Standard Sub

\$40.00 family
\$35.00 standard

E-sub (newsletter via email)

\$30.00 Family
\$25.00 standard

Please complete the pink slip included with this newsletter and pay your subs by mail or directly to Martin at the next club night. Thank you.

Notices

Helicopter Rescue

A fun trip to the Sunrise-Waipawa Loop on Sunday 11 April ended with a broken ankle and a helicopter rescue from the narrow head of the north branch of the Waipawa Stream, just below the scree (see trip report below). This incident provides a timely reminder for trip leaders and party members to be properly equipped and well prepared as set out in the Guide to Trip Leaders sheet and the Gear List in the Events Card. A full Accident Report has been presented to the PNTMC Committee to help identify any issues and changes that may be required. Meanwhile, take care out there, especially with less experienced party members - rest, recuperate, enjoy.

PS: Margaret spent 2 weeks in Hastings Hospital and was due to return home on Wednesday 28 April. We wish her a speedy recovery.

PNTMC Scrapbook

The PNTMC maintains a scrapbook of relevant newspaper and magazine articles, and trip photographs. If you have any contributions, then please forward to Dave Grant.

Hi from Christchurch

You'll be pleased to know I have started with the CTC (Chch Tramping Club) and had a 1st outing. This is a view from Mt Oakden looking north west, just south of lake Coleridge. The views were splendid. Approx 1700m, looking up the Wilberforce river to the back of Mt Murchison where Terry Meguru and I visited a couple of years ago. We climbed 1000m in two hours, must admit my legs were nearly jelly by that stage and I really needed a lunch stop. They rate this moderate down here. Must build them tougher here! Down was via a scree about 600m in 30mins. CTC has 250 members and runs 3 to 4 trips every weekend thru Summer. Remember if you need to stop off in ChCh there will be bed available. **Murray Gifford**



Farewell Robert

I am going home to Austria and I want to let you know that our Tararua tour [Mitre Peak] was one of the highlights of my stay in down under. Thanks a lot for this wonderful experience. I only regret, that it has been my only mountain tour - hence I have to come back, because there are still many mountains to climb, many valleys to explore and numerous trouts to catch. Finally congratulations Tony to your extraordinary and absolutely awesome giant trout catch !!

Best wishes and thanks for all.

Robert Sauer (the Austrian)

SNOWCRAFT PROGRAMME 2010

PNTMC runs a comprehensive snowcraft programme. It has two aims: Firstly, to equip you with the necessary skills for safe tramping in snow, be it on winter trips, or summer trips above the snowline. Secondly, to pass on the fundamental skills of mountaineering. The programme consists of three weekends up Ruapehu or Egmont, and a midweek evening session prior to each weekend. A progressive approach is used, with Snowcraft 1 assuming little or no previous snow experience and SC 2 and 3 building on the previous levels. Most participants enrol in the complete programme, while others just in one or two of the weekends depending on their previous experience or ambitions.

SC1 evening Wednesday 28 July. SC1
weekend 31st July – 1st August
SC2 evening Wednesday 11 August. SC2
Weekend 14th -15th August
SC3 evening Wednesday 25 August. SC3
weekend 28th – 29th August
(All at the Quakers Hall, 227 College St.)

Fees cover weeknight venues, transport, weekend accommodation, most food, group gear hire, and instruction. Individual gear hire, if needed, is an additional cost for non Club members.

Pass the word round to friends you may think are interested. Open to Club members and members of the public. For further info & costs; visit the Snowcraft link on the Club web site: www.pntmc.org.nz or contact Terry Crippen 3563-588, or Alasdair Noble 356-1094.

Applications (with registration form and fees) close Thursday 15th July.

INTERCLUB DEBATE MUAC vs PNTMC

Like the Interclub Quiz and Photo competition, this fun event is an historic interclub competition that has been vigorously fought for during past

years. Debate titles are normally topical and humorous, and the trophy is a battered old leather boot from the 1970's.

The 2010 event is set for **Monday the 3rd May** at 7pm in the Vet tower lecture theatre at Massey. MUAC has their regular meeting at this time and will move on to the Debate as soon as that is done - after about 15 – 20 minutes. There will be a couple of topics so more than one team can compete. Supporters are more than welcome to attend.

Come along for a fun night and support PNTMC. If you would like to be on the Debating Team(s) contact Warren 356-1998.

Presidents Report

March 2010

Prolegomena

Our club was formed to provide a focus people interested in tramping and climbing to meet, discuss, plan and participate in tramping and climbing related activities. Another goal is to introduce people to new outdoor experiences and, above all, we hope that somehow in all this we have a lot of fun.

The success of our club during a given year can thus be measured in part by our activities, and it is on these outward signs that I focus. It is my pleasure to present the 44th President's report.

Membership

The membership of the club is generally quite stable from year to year. The membership for 2009-2009 was 60. This year we had an upturn in membership. We welcomed 13 new members. Our membership stands at 73.

Activities

Club Evenings:

Once again the club had a wonderful spectrum of talks about places all over the globe. This year we started in Norway and then went south on the long Camino de Santiago trek. We jumped the Mediterranean to visit Ethiopia and took in the views from Tibet and Nepal on the way home. This was a delightful world tour. It always amazes me just how active our members are overseas.

Closer to home (but still offshore) we got to visit Codfish Island to see how the Kakapo gets fed and Stewart Island in search of the largest leafed leatherwood. We also got to see the seldom visited Auckland Islands resplendent with fauna.

On the west island (Australia) we got a taste of rock climbing at Mt Arapiles.

Talks about NI and SI New Zealand included a "What's up DoC?" night, a climbing trip to the Fox Glacier, and a historic introduction to the Routeburn and Caples valleys. In addition, we had a talk on the natural scenic diversity of NZ by the photographer, Harley Betts.

Club nights were also used for other social activities. We started off last year in grand style with a chocolate cake contest at the AGM. Other activities included two BBQ's, two BYO slide nights, a gear auction and an interclub quiz.

The club photo competition was held in August and well subscribed by members. Udo von Mulert judged the entries and generously gave his time and detailed comments. Thanks Udo for all the effort. The winners went on to the interclub competition, where we made a good show. This year the profile of the photo competitions was raised by the local newspaper, and there was a display of winning images at the public library in Palmerston North. Well done PNTMC photographers. Thanks also to Martin, Dave and others for organizing the events and publicity.

Thanks are given to all the speakers and organizers of these nights. It is surely a good sign that we can consistently field such a spectrum of social activities.

Club Trips:

A considerable suite of tramps/climbs was offered to cater to the diverse interests of members. Activities included long and short trips in the Ruahine and Tararua ranges, climbing trips in Tongariro and Egmont National Parks. Some more unusual trips included "Castlepoint explorer", "Wellington urban tramp" and "Mt Holdsworth Valentines Day Champagne Brunch". South Island trips on offer included the Arrowsmiths, the Lockett Range and the Queen Charlotte Walkway.

Of the trips offered, 25% did not go, owing primarily to poor weather. The day trips suffered a 15% attrition; the overnight trips suffered a 34% attrition. The average number on day trips was 5.2 and for overnights was 4.3. The most popular day trip was Daphne Hut (12) although this destination was abandoned en route due to heavy snow on the ridge, resulting in a turn around to the south along the snowy ridge, with high winds, a bushbash off the tops, and a rockhop downstream that would rank this as the most memorable as well; the most popular

overnight trip was the Castlepoint Weekend (11) which became the real mid-Winter party.

Given our proximity to the Ruahine and the Tararua ranges it should occasion little surprise that these locations dominate our trip cards. Of the trips that did go, 31% were in the Ruahines and 30% were in the Tararuas. Some of these trips were standard favourites such as Sunrise Hut and Roaring Stag; some went to lesser frequented places like Ellis Hut and Blackwater Stream.

There was also considerable activity in Tongariro National Park including climbing trips to Ruapehu. Trips that went further afield included the Kaimanawa Ranges, Haurangi Ranges and down south to Kahurangi National Park.

The hills are alive with PNTMC members. We are a very active club. Thanks are due to all the trip leaders, who made these trips possible. Special thanks are due to Janet Wilson, who organized the trip card. It is no small feat to gather trip leaders and craft a trip programme that balances easy, moderate, fit trips along with day and overnight trips.

Instruction:

A key rôle of the club is to teach people tramping and climbing skills. This year we held three Snowcraft courses. Owing to inclement weather, the first snowcraft course was a day trip to Ruapehu. The second snowcraft trip was a weekend trip on Ruapehu based at the MTSC hut. Snowcraft 3 was also a weekend trip. It was held on Mt Egmont based at Kapuni Lodge. Each course was supplemented by an evening session in Palmerston North. The club also offered a course on Alpine Rock. The weather, however, precluded this trip in late November, and similar type trip did not go in February. There was also a navigation evening led by Warren Wheeler in February.

These courses required considerable planning, organization and effort on the part of the leaders. Thanks to Terry Crippen, Alasdair Noble, and Warren Wheeler for all their efforts. Thanks also to all the students and instructors.

Other Trips:

There are many non club trips that members did throughout the year. One can get a "pulse" of how active a club is by such activities. Each year Terry Crippen compiles a "Who Has Done What" list partially to record what members are doing and partially to serve as a reference for people venturing into similar areas. Overseas highlights include trips to Japan and Korea, rock

climbing at Mt Arapiles, and an ascent of Kilimanjaro. NZ highlights include ascents of Mts Earnslaw, Lendenfield, Minarets, Mitre Peak in Fiordland, Dragonfly, Tappy and Rolleston. Thanks Terry for all your efforts (for compiling the list and participating in many of the trips).

Newsletter

We are still tweaking the newsletter and trip cards to make them easier to read both in the B&W print version and in the electronic colour version. Changes this year in format were minor.

It is remarkable that newsletter has been consistently an interesting and enjoyable read. The newsletter not only gives us news about upcoming events and past trips, but it often contains snippets from the tramping world, and even a recipe or two for tramping food (who could resist the Mt Doom recipe). A big thank you goes to the newsletter editor, Anne Lawrence and subeditors/helpers such as Tony Gates. Thanks are also given to all the contributors for making this such a success.

Website

The PNTMC website is in many ways the "public face" of the club. This website has been constructed over several years and has become a valuable resource for members and the public. As noted in the report last year, our website is one of the better designed tramping club sites in New Zealand. Other clubs have enquired about the website and how they might copy it: this is surely evidence of a quality site.

The website is being constantly updated and new features added. For example, the map coordinates for huts have been updated for the new map series. New photos are being added steadily to the site, and there is a plan to add "RSS" capability to allow viewers with RSS feeds to receive alerts when new material is added.

The number of hits on the website this year alone was over 7500, which is an increase of over 3000 from last year. Over the year there have been over 1400 newsletters downloaded. Clearly this shows that the website is well used by members and the public.

The construction, maintenance and updating of this site is largely the effort of the webmaster Peter Wiles. We owe him a big thank you for all of this hard work putting PNTMC on the cyber map.

Equipment and Gear

The club has been upgrading and modernizing its gear collection over the last 13 years. This

year we purchased 4 digital avalanche transceivers with funds from Eastern and Central Community Trust along with money from our snowcraft programme. In addition to this, we made some minor purchases such as wire leads for snow pickets. We are continually checking and overhauling our equipment. We believe our current collection of equipment is adequate for our courses and hopefully for the members. An eye, however, must be kept on replacing items as they wear out. Mick Leyland has stored and distributed this equipment for years. Thanks Mick. Thanks should also be given to Terry Crippen and Alasdair Noble for their work on the gear collection. The club also gratefully acknowledges the support of the Eastern and Central Community Trust.

One item that was mooted at the last AGM was personal locator beacons. The committee discussed this item of equipment at length and drafted some ideas and strategies about how the club can effectively administer/rent this item. It was decided that we would pursue getting funding for a beacon. We noted, however, that there are other local options for obtaining this piece of equipment.

Community and Outside Activities

Several of our members engaged in activities related to tramping that helped the community and other clubs. Through their efforts the profile of our club was raised. These outside activities indirectly help the club secure funds from grant bodies such as the Eastern and Central Community Trust.

I would like to first note that 22% of our membership is involved with SAR. We have some 14 members currently on the SAR list available for callouts. Club members have been on four SAR operations (Rangi Hut, Rangi Reserve, Field Hut and Waitotauru). In addition, members have been put on standby several times.

Members assisted the Lido summer programme with its Gorge walk, and members have continued helping DoC with its stoat control programme.

Once again the indefatigable Terry Crippen has been heavily involved with alpine instruction for the Wellington section of the NZAC. He helped with all of their courses this year and somehow found time to help with all of ours. Both clubs benefited.

Thanks to everybody for these wonderful contributions.

Acknowledgements

We all know that it is the members of a club that makes it what it is. Our success this year is due the efforts of the members. It is to them that I give thanks first.

Although administration is seldom a glamorous task, this work needs to be done to ensure a smooth running club. The committee has been instrumental in the operation of the club. This group met monthly to discuss all matters pertaining to the running of the club and helped plan various strategies for the club's direction. It is from this group, for example, that a programme of speakers and the trip cards come into being and decisions on gear purchases are made. This is where, as a club, we respond to various proposals from DoC and suggestions from the FMC.

I gratefully acknowledge the enormous help given to me by all the members of the committee: thank you Warren, Terry, Janet, Mick, Dave, Tony, Martin, Anne, Alasdair and Penelope. Thanks also are given to the club archivist, Peter Wiles.

Bruce van Brunt,
President PNTMC
22 March 2010.

Trip Reports

Whakapapaiti Valley, 28 February Report and Photo by Richard Lockett

A full car load of trampers headed north for a days walking on the volcanic soils of our Mount Ruapehu. Old campaigners' Trevor King, John Feeney, myself along with new comers Daisy Bai and Marly. On arrival at the car park at the Whakapapa village we kitted up and headed up the road hoping to thumb a lift up to the start of the round the mountain track. A lack of suitable vehicles on the road saw us give up on that idea and instead drove Trevor's car to the track start up the hill and just below Iwikau village. The cloud cover on top of Ruapehu slowly lifted as we made our across undulating volcanic rock covered terrain towards the Whakapapaiti Valley, a new experience for our two overseas companions. On the crest of the ridge above the valley a large boulder proved a suitable perch for Marly and Daisy to be snapped with the Ruapehu in the background, the start of a day of photography. A look across the valley and memories of my previous visit came flooding back, a trip up to the waterfalls at the head of the valley. Trevor was keen for a look but not this trip, next time perhaps. A steep drop into the valley before turning our back on the mountain and heading downhill towards Whakapapaiti Hut

for lunch stopping at a small waterfall for more photo's with the mount in the back ground. With lunch consumed it was off downstream and the crossing of the Whakapapaiti Stream which on this day was running clear and low although still a challenge for Daisy and Marly. Good flat track soon saw us at the junction with the Mangahua track and our second crossing of the Whakapapaiti Stream, this time on a substantial bridge where the stream flows through a narrow channel cut in the rock. Boardwalk was encountered as we crossed boggy ground before the track turned east back towards Whakapapa Village. It was at this stage where we encountered other walkers coming in from Whakapapa, one woman pushing a buggy with infant aboard, didn't think anything at the time but as the track got rougher the further along we went we became somewhat impressed with her efforts considering that it was going to be slightly up all the way hill on the return trip. John decided that he was the man to get the car from high up the mount just below Iwikau Village so he shot off ahead to nip up the silica rapids track and out onto the road. Looking at the map while writing this a good trot up the road was still required before the car would be reached. (Must have got lift?) He turned up as we were finishing our first icecream from the campground shop. Thanks John. A pleasant day out thanks all.



**Blue Range Hut, 7 March
Report by Duncan Hedderley**

The Kiriwhakapapa road end was busy when we got here; two sets of campers and one car, with

two more cars arriving soon after we did. The hills weren't that busy though – we only met a father, son and dog who'd stayed at Blue Range, and a couple who had been at Cow Creek overnight. There is some beautiful bush in there, from the redwoods near the car park to the goblin forest around the hut. There's also a good lot of up-hill – Woody and Isobel were fine but Daisy and I felt it. The hut has had a new coat of paint, and acquired a picnic table. We had lunch there, then headed back down.

Back at the car, Isobel gave Daisy some tips on pack adjustment; Woody gave us a taste of some experimental protein bars from work; and we were out early enough to stop for a cuppa at the Mt Bruce cafe. Woody rounded the trip off by stopping on Polson Hill Drive (Aokautere) to show us the view of PN.

We were Woody Lee, Isobel Holdaway, Daisy Bai and Duncan Hedderley



Blue Range Hut. Photo by Woody Lee

**Mt Kendall, Kahurangi National Park
26 March to 1 April**

Report and Photo by Terry Crippen

On a number of trips to the Arthur Range and Mt Owen areas of Kahurangi NP, some of us have gazed across at Mt Kendall, at 1762m the prominent peak above the Karamea river, and decided we had better try to climb it at some stage, especially since it's the highest peak in Kahurangi NP apart from summits on the marble massifs of Owen and Arthur. So this was the plan for this years Club "Easter" trip. (Actually Pre-Easter trip, as has been the case for a number of years, allowing a select few of us then to go off on caving or climbing trips over Easter itself.)

Needing a couple of days to get into the Karamea and a couple of days to get out, this trip had to be a six day trip. So it was more suited to those with flexible work arrangements. We headed across on the very early morning

ferry to the Rolling River car park at the eastern end of the Wangapeka track. The first two days were heading up the Wangapeka track with heavy packs, avoiding wasps, staying at Stone Hut enroute, eating lots of food and checking out the historic Kings Hut.

We crossed over into the Karamea via The Lost Valley and had a brief stop at Trevor Carter Hut. This was occupied by a group of (unsuccessful) hunters and fishermen. We then proceeded down valley to set up camp at the only suitable flat spot downstream of Apollo Stream which was just where we wanted to base ourselves being near the best spur for access. The previous day we had run into a party of HVTC bods. Jan Heine was in the party and had climbed Kendall at some stage so was able to give us good route guide info. We also ran into Terry (not the author of this trip report) and Francis – who we had been reading about in hut books. Francis being a bicycle. Terry apparently was doing a Wangapeka –Karamea –Flora Saddle trip. Which meant covering almost twice the usual distance as he had to do sections of the track first with his big frame pack then double back for his bike!! Stoic is what he said of himself.

Our climbing day started off cloudy and misty, but at least the spur was good travelling and had a very pleasant section of Dracophyllum forest. Some bluffs at the bush line were negotiated then it was tussock and granitic rock stairways onto the East Ridge. Still with a lack of visibility we eventually navigated to what we believed was just below the summit. This was confirmed by GPS. Only 50m to go. However above us was a damp slippery (even for coarse granitic rock) series of ledges, so after Graham had a go we decide to err on the side of caution. If we had had some sort of visibility we may have found an easier way for those last few metres. Oh well it will be there next time. It was a good recce anyhow. Back down to our campsite; an excellent 10hr + day.



The next day was our rest day, so we cruised along the valley to Trevor Carter Hut, marvelling at the huge earthquake triggered rock failures that abound in this part of the world. Lots of goodies left by the hunters, who had choppered out, so we had feeds of picklets topped with condensed milk, and also another feed of fried potatoes. Janet and Graham checked out the trout population while Terry tried to get rid of socks, shirt and underpants that someone (? one of the hunters) had stuffed in the fireplace?

The following day it was time to head out, this time over Biggs Tops. Unfortunately we went into mist again, so no views. Down to the Wangapeka and to Stone Hut for the night. The next day it was continuing down to the road end and off to Tapawerea for a cabin, shower, pub meal, drinkies and the end of an excellent trip. The following day off for more climbing or caving 'cause it was now Easter.

The team: Janet Wilson, Graham Peters, Terry Crippen

Sunset over Sunrise. 18 April. Report and photo by Richard Lockett

With not having been up to Sunrise Hut for about four years and a good weather day in the offing, I gave Warren a late call to see if there was room in the taxi for me. Not a problem as it will be yours which brought the group up to six, Margaret and Mike McKenzie, Kathy Corner and her Spanish lodger Nacho, Warren Wheeler and myself keen to tackle the shorter Sunrise Waipawa loop.

Things change over the years, Doc have installed a long drop at the car park and it was put to good use before we set off across the paddocks and a quick look at Triplex Hut, warmer outside than in. Off up the zigzags and with a lot of yakking we were soon at the junction with the Waipawa forks track and time for a drink in snack. On the track here about we came across a large bird sunning itself on the track, wings out stretched and not to bothered by our presence. Creeping closer to get a good photo the bird revealed its face, a owls face must be a Morepork, a flap of the wings and it was off up into a tree still only about 5 metres above the track. We figured it must have of been still half a sleep. More zagzigs and the hut was reached and with the perfect conditions re the weather Warren and I had lunch atop the lookout east of the hut, the others enjoying the company of fellow trampers on the hut veranda. Being the school holidays there were a few groups about with young kids, good to see. Warren had dragged a water melon up the hill as he sometimes does and it was duly sliced up and

handed round. Mike having a set of dodgy knees from too much running in his earlier years decided that it would be best if he went back down the track and Warren arranged for two young women from Otane also lunching at the hut to accompany him back to the car.

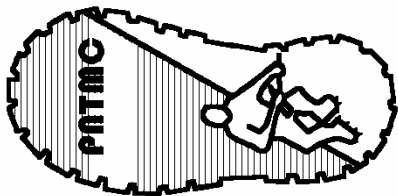


As they say “onwards and upwards” and its not often that you get total calm conditions as you travel the narrow ridge between Sunrise Hut and the Armstrong Saddle. An ugly bit of erosion on the Waipawa river side up here, not a pretty sight at all, which had me wondering as to how long before the ridge is cut in half. The saddle and pristine views of Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe to the west which I hadn't noticed until I had reached the Top Maropea turnoff, which left me wondering as to where the others were. Getting my camera out allowed for the regrouping of the team and a drink before dropping down towards the saddle below Te Atuaoparapara. A sidle down across the tussock grass brings you onto the scree slope although I seemed to find all the Spaniard hidden amongst the tussock. Kathy and Margaret opted to avoid the scree and go down the tussock leaving us blokes to sample the gravel, which was in excellent condition, nice fine chip size with a good covering unlike my two previous visits. It's the quick way down, Nacho very impressed with the time to descend the 150 metres of scree and a wait in the sun for the ladies to arrive then coaxing them onto the last of the scree to avoid a particularly ugly piece of stream. A little further on down the creek and our plans for the day were about to change as Margaret took a tumble while negotiating a gravel bank on the edge of the creek and it quickly became apparent that ankle bones were broken. Once we had made Margaret comfortable as possible decisions were made as to the assistance required to evacuate Margaret for medical treatment. Warren and Nacho set off back up stream to acquire cell phone coverage if possible which was gained not to far away alongside the scree. Being up in the hills help will take some time in arriving and having a few hours of daylight left we were confidant of being

out soon. Kathy and I kept Margaret warm and as comfortable as possible as the time passed not knowing how far Warren had had to walk to raise the alarm, Kathy even braking into song to pass the time.

Sometime later a helicopter was heard for real, rather than the imaginary one that Kathy and I kept hearing. I climbed back up stream onto a rocky slope so that the chopper crew could spot us and as I could see the machine clearly it soon became apparent that they couldn't see me as they were looking for us on the track above Sunrise Hut and not down in a creek. My bright red beanie and red fleece jersey weren't doing the job re attracting the chopper so I shot back down and got the bright yellow pack liner from my pack to act as an extra flag. In doing so I found a thermarest mat stuffed down inside my pack, which shouldn't have been there. I apologised to Margaret for this oversight but at least she was a bit more comfy for the last part of her stay in the creek bed. Further phone calls from Warren and the chopper was directed to our exact location and a paramedic winched down into the creek. A cardboard splint was applied to the ankle with lots of strapping tape and a harness was put on Margaret and up she went on the winch for her first helicopter ride to the hospital in Hastings. I can tell you that in windy, cold and very noisy being under a hovering chopper. With that it was pack up and head up the creek and onto the saddle meeting up with Warren and Nacho and back along the track in fading light towards the hut reaching it on darkness. We had to get back down to the cars as Mike was waiting down there for us and would be getting very concerned as where we all were. Being a good track to Sunrise we were able to descend using one headlamp no problems and finding no Mike at the car. Looking around the car for any message Nacho found a note saying that Mike had got a lift down to the first farmhouse to ascertain whether our non arrival and the earlier sighting of the chopper flying around were connected. Once we had met up with Mike and filled him in with what had happened to Margaret it was off to a much needed late fish and chips in Dannevirke.





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

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PNTMC Newsletter

May 2010

What's inside this month?

- ***Upcoming trips and club events***
- ***Reports on recent trips and events***
- ***Presidents Annual Report***
- ***Helicopter Rescue***
- ***Snowcraft Course***

Articles for the newsletter

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

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