

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter October 2017



Intro Tramping 1 farewell civilisation at Holdsworth Carpark, Tararua Forest Park. [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 meeting start at 7.30pm.

12 October 2017

Mauritius

Bruce van Brunt

Mauritius is a small island nation in the Indian Ocean that Bruce had the opportunity to explore when he visited there earlier this year. Yes, it is more than just beautiful beaches.

26 October 2017

South Island High Adventures

Grant Christian

In December last year Grant went on trips to Mt Earnslaw and Rabbit Pass in the Mt Aspiring area and to Nina Hut in the Lewis Pass area. In February he returned to the South Island for a month and summited Mt Earnslaw, stayed at Mt Cook village and went over Ball Pass as well as visited Mueller Hut and Sefton Biv. He also did a couple of interesting 4WD trips. Come and share his adventures.

Upcoming Trips

30 Sept-1 October

McGregor Biv F
Chris Tuffley 359 2530

A favourite trip for those who have been there before, this classic ex-Forest Service 'dog-box' bivvie is perched on the bush line with a great outlook west over the central Tararua Ranges and coast. The steep climb out of the Atiwhakatu Valley is rewarded with some nice tops travel north over Jumbo. Return via the Broken Axe Pinnacles and Baldy Spur.

1 October

Intro Tramping 2 E
Anne Lawrence 357 1695

This is the second in our series of Beginner Tramps being held each month until December. Where we go and how far will depend on the group. Suitable for all ages from youth to those getting into tramping later in life. Interested? Contact Anne 027 4504212 or 06 357 1695.

7-8 October

Triangle Hut M
Graham Peters 329 4722

We have choices for the route to this hut. We may go all the way up the Oroua River or over the tops via Rangiwahia Hut. There could well be slight variations between the routes in and out and we may go to Rangi on the Friday night.

8 October

Ngauruhoe M/T
Warren Wheeler 356 1988

Depart 6.30am. Practise your snowcraft skills with a steady climb up the west side of "Mt Doom" and enjoy the Grandstand View from the crater rim. Crampons and ice axe essential. Optional leave Saturday afternoon and stay overnight at Mangatepopo Hut or a Backpackers in National Park.

14-15 October

Tarn Ridge Hut F
Grant Christian 354 5843

On Saturday we will walk into Mitre Flats Hut and then climb up the ridge to Mitre Peak, the highest peak in the Tararuas. From there we go over Girdlestone and then on to Tarn Ridge where the hut is located. Back out the same way on Sunday. Leaving Palmy at 7 a.m.

14 October

Tunupo M
Craig Allerby 323 7913

Depart 7.30am. From the Oroua valley carpark we head along the track to the Tunupo Track turnoff. It's a good steady climb up the Tunupo

Track to this prominent peak on the Ngamoko Range. We can also check the stoat trap line along the way. If the weather is kind we'll stop for lunch on the top and enjoy the views.

Labour Weekend

21-23 October

Kahurangi National Park M
Martin Lawrence 357 1695

A slightly extended Labour weekend trip as we need 4 days. The plan is to leave Friday morning and return Monday evening. We'll fly from Paraparaumu to Nelson and get transport to the Baton Valley carpark. We then follow the track to Flanagan's Hut, where we'll probably stay the night. We then cross Baton Saddle and head up the Leslie River past Salisbury Lodge to Balloon Hut. This is a lovely hut in a good location for exploring the area so we'll probably stay two nights here. On our last day, our route takes us past three rock shelters (Dry Rock, Growler and Gridiron) to Flora carpark where we'll get picked up and driven back to Nelson airport for our return flight to Paraparaumu. Interested in coming on this trip? Don't miss out - Contact Martin soon so bookings can be made.

22 October

Manawatu Gorge E
Duncan Hedderley 354 6905

9am start on the Sunday of Labour Weekend for a look at the Gorge track.

28-29 October

Tutuwai Hut E/M
Michael Allerby 323 8563

Leave PN at 8.00am and make our way down the Wairarapa until we reach Waiohine Valley Road End. Tramp off up on the Mt Reeves Track to Tutuwai Hut (serviced) nestled beside the Tauhorenika River and back out the same way Sunday.

29 October

Cone Hut M
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

Depart 7.30am. This historic slab walled hut is a popular day walk in the lower Tararuas, behind Carterton. We first cross the long swing bridge across the Waiohine River at Walls Whare, then follow the track up through the forest along the ridge and down to the hut. Return the same way (for an Easy trip) or loop back via the Waiohine River track.

4-5 November

Dundas/Bannister FE
Grant Christian 354 5843

Leaving Friday night to walk into Herepai Hut. Saturday will be a long day along the tops

over Dundas and Bannister and to Cattle Ridge Hut. An easier day on Sunday, heading out via Roaring Stag Lodge.

5 November

Intro Tramping 3

Anne Lawrence

E/M

357 1695

This is the third in our series of Beginner Tramps being held each month until December. For this trip we plan to head into the Tararuas from Otaki Forks. However, where we go and how far will, as usual, depend on the group. Interested? Contact Anne 027 4504212 or 06 357 1695.

11-12 November

Pohangina River

Janet Wilson

M

329 4722

This is an "Applied Tramping" trip – we will be exploring the river and rebaiting traps. Exactly where in the river will depend on conditions but a high probability is Leon Kinvig Hut. If you would like to know more contact Janet early as there is the chance of making this a 3 day trip starting Friday if people are keen. There is a very good chance of seeing some whio (bue duck) on this trip.

12 November

Nae Nae Road/Pukenaenae

Dave Grant

M/F

328 7788

Here is your chance to try a new route into the northern Tararuas from the eastern side. Ian Argyle and his team have opened up a new track through the bush that follows a paper road up Nae Nae stream to join with the Otangane loop (runs from the Platinum Mines track in Hardings Park) thence to Pukenaenae (the Nipple). See picturesque waterfalls on the Naenae Stream, varied bush, and great views on a fine day over the Mangatainoka valley from the top of Pukenaenae. The new track is steepish in places. Leave Milverton Park at 7.30am. Should be back by 4pm.

Trip Grading

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

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs

Other grades:

Technical skills (T)
Instructional (I)

Trip participants

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

Gear for trips

Minimum gear for day trips is appropriate footwear, pack, lunch and snacks, waterproof jacket, overtrousers, gloves, warm hat, torch, toilet paper, matches or a lighter, sunblock, first aid kit, and a survival bag or space blanket. Each person needs to be equipped to survive overnight.

Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips

The club has purchased two PLBs for members' use. If you want to take one of these on a trip, contact Martin or Anne Lawrence on 357-1695. Note that this applies to any trip you are going on - it doesn't need to be a club trip.

Trip leaders

Complete the trip intentions form and leave with one of Overdue Trip Contacts or drop into 44 Dahlia St or email to pntmctrips@gmail.com with the date and trip name in the subject line. If you are unable to run your trip as scheduled, advise a trip coordinator as soon as possible so that alternatives can be arranged.

Overdue Trips

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

Janet Wilson	329-4722
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695
Graeme Richards	353-6227

Articles for the newsletter

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

From the President

Change to some of us can sometimes be a bit challenging - those of us slow to take up new technology sometimes find it hard to keep up with this rapidly changing world.

Not your committee though - hard at work and aware that tramping clubs don't want to go the way of the dinosaurs in the future - we have been working on a couple of important things that we are now keen to share with you, the members.

Facebook - It has been decided that the club will start an Open public Facebook page that runs alongside the club newsletter. Its purpose is to provide up to date information on

PNTMC - upcoming trip, news etc. Martin Lawrence has started the page and has agreed to be the moderator for the time being. It is still in it's infancy - you can check it out and "Like" it at

https://m.facebook.com/Palmerston-North-Tramping-and-Mountaineering-Club-1577289419011545/?view_public_for=1577289419011545 (Terry will continue to run the Facebook Group that some club members already belong to but this is not the official club Facebook Page.

Club Logo - It has been agreed that our current club logo could now be considered somewhat outdated and should be replaced with something more professional. Club member and graphic designer Anthony Behrens has kindly volunteered a design which has met with the general approval of most of your committee - we will be putting this new design to the club for your thoughts and opinions. I look forward to showing this for the first time at this week's club night (28 September).

Happy tramping - time now to be getting fit for those lovely summer tramps.

Janet

Interclub Quiz Results

Teams from MUAC and MTSC battled it out against 3 teams from PNTMC in the annual interclub quiz on 14 September. A mix of question rounds and challenges made for a fun night with plenty of head scratching and some special skill sets revealed from team representatives e.g. How long can you stand on one leg with your eyes closed? How well can you stand up from sitting cross-legged?

In the end it was MTSC who came away as the winners, just a few points ahead of the PNTMC top team. Their name will now be engraved on the Trevor Bissell Memorial Trophy, which is kept on display at Bivouac in the Square.

Thanks to our Quizmaster Graeme Richards and his assistant Anne Lawrence for an enjoyable and suitably challenging event.

Club Photo Comp Results

Congratulations to the winners in our 2017 Photo Competition.

Thanks to our judges from Bruce Watt Photography for the tough job of selecting three best pics in each category for us to vote on.

Thanks also to Martin Lawrence for collating the record number of entries and running the show on the night, with assistance from Anne Lawrence.

Martin has now entered the first, second and third place-getters in each category in the FMC Photo Competition 2017 – they will no doubt give the other club entries from around the country some stiff competition.

Interclub Photo Competition 9 October 2017

First, second and third places in each category of our Club Photo Comp will also be entered in the Interclub Photo Competition, which is to be hosted this year by MUAC at 6.00pm on Monday 9 October 2017 in the MUSA Lounge, Massey University. Hope to see you there.



Above Bush with Human Element

1. Elly Arnst – Mt Hector
2. Dieter Stalmann - Mt Ruapehu Descent
3. Dieter Stalmann – Girdlestone Climbing



Above Bush with no Human Element

1. Elly Arnst – Craigieburn Range
2. Hannah Lund – Hooker Valley
3. Elly Arnst – Deadmans



Natural History

1. Chris Tuffley – Gecko Square
2. Malcolm Leary – Oamaru Squatters
3. Dieter Stalman – Waipu Caves



Below Bush with Human Element

1. Anne Lawrence – Huxley Forks Hut
2. Kathy Corner – Beach Run
3. Kathy Corner – Weka Invaders



Topical

1. Woody Lee – Spring Fountain
2. Llew Prichard – Summit Ridge Banks Peninsula
3. Warren Wheeler – Look What I Found (weta)



Below Bush with no Human Element

1. Elly Arnst – Blue Lake
2. Elly Arnst – Sunset on Rotoiti
3. Kathy Corner - Ngauruhoe magic



Overseas

1. Chris Tuffley – Climbers Lights on El Cap
2. Chris Tuffley – Gum Trees in the Mist
3. Chris Tuffley – Morning still Cherry Creek

Judges Choice - Best of Show

Elly Arnst - Craigieburn Range

Trip Reports

2-3 September Taupo Cycling Explorer Ange Minto

Five club members managed to escape by mid-afternoon with 1 last minute cancellation: Graham, as he was required to stay home and nurse poor Brucey (dog) due to a badly slashed leg.

We piled into our regular Taupo accommodation, both affordable and comfortable, especially as they gave us the new rooms! Takeaways, blind beer tastings and an early night set us up for Saturday's explorer.

Rain threatened as we ventured out, conveniently cycling from our accom.

1st stop to view the Aratiatia Dam release (apparently performed only as a tourist attraction) and watch the downstream transformed into a raging torrent, cool, literally also, as by now the rain had arrived with a chilly breeze and we were all pretty keen to get back biking to warm up a bit.

2nd stop Huka Falls eventually popping out by what they call the Hub (site seeing helicopter, café depo) we ventured in to see if they'd serve wet n muddy mountain bikers a hot drink or two. Happily they obliged, not seeming to mind our wet puddles too much, I guess quite used to MTB bikers as we were at one of the entrances to the Craters of the Moon Bike Park, with an honesty-based charge of \$10 per day, or season and family passes.

From here the others seemed to race off like wet rats up drain pipes seemingly knowing exactly we're they were going weaving in and out of various routes. Good maps with track gradings are available....I just didn't get any time to look at them!

Six hours later the lead decided they'd had enough of up, down and around dale (thankfully, as my legs had turned to stone and the others were becoming smaller and smaller specs in the distance). We had only scratched the surface of good tracks available.

After a much needed clean-up we ventured into town, stopping on route for a lovely hot foot soak by a thermal outlet into the lake;

nice, just like a mini hot water beach. Then it was off for a yummy Turkish meal.

Sunday: A much friendlier wx forecast. With a little fear and trepidation, we set off for what was going to be the big day. I'd seriously considered going shopping instead, not wanting to hold the others up or anything! Miraculously our bikes had loaded themselves neatly into the back of Richards ute, thanks fairies.



Enjoying the views over Lake Taupo.

All packed up we headed out to Whakaipo Bay to do the WK2 track through to Whangamata Road. After some bike mechanic tweaking (thanks, Richard) the 8km-ish initial climb began. The buttocks bones were reminding me of yesterday's efforts, thankfully the rest of the body was doing OK – might have been the mechanic fairy's skills, that's my excuse anyway. Once up we enjoyed the views over the lake then it was all fun *down-down* into picturesque Kinloch for **another** café stop, with really good pies.

Given the time (& *maybe a bit of tiredness*) we skipped the considerably longer trip planned and headed back up over to Whakaipo Bay adding on the extra 9km loop peninsula Headlands Track beginning and ending at the top. Mud, mud, glorious mud tested those of us with dodgy skills and being chased by a runner and then overtook was well a bit sad. On the bright side though, Janet and I congratulated ourselves at managing the switch backs a whole lot better than we had been.

Back to Feilding by about 5.30pm after enjoying a gorgeous red sunset from Vinegar Hill, with five very muddy bikes, two of which nearly brand new, and some fun memories and hopefully better skills.

Thanks guys for the company and expertise - a great trip.

Richard Lockett, Grant Christian, Tina Bishop, Janet Wilson and Ange Minto (scribe).

3 September 2017 **Atiwhakatu Hut** **Shaan Mocke**

It was a beautiful sunny day in Palmerston North when we headed out from Milverton Park at 7.30am for the inaugural Intro Tramping walk. There were 10 of us in total, 3 club members and 7 newbies, some of us relatively new to tramping or been out of it for a while, and possibly feeling a little apprehensive for the day ahead!

We drove over the Pahiatua Track, heading for Masterton and the turnoff to Holdsworth carpark in the Wairarapa, which is about one and half hours out of Palmerston North. From there we planned to walk up to Atiwhakatu Hut. The weather started to turn grey with drizzle, with a sharp drop in temperature, so we were glad of Anne's suggestion to wear warm clothes. At the carpark we were met by Emma's parents who lived locally, so the group was now 12 trampers in total.

Atiwhakatu Hut is about a 2.5-hour hike from the car park, on a well-maintained track with lots of fun bridges to cross (I think we counted about 11). We even had a slight detour to avoid a slip, where we walked along the river and over river stones. The path undulated from the level of the river, to quite far above.

A few of us were educated and entertained by Warren who told us about the various flora and fauna we passed, including numerous types of ferns, trees and fungi. We also learned an important lesson about the pepper tree - don't ever taste it as it burns like chili on your tongue!

Lunch was at the hut (which is very tidy and looks quite new), swapping stories, checking out each other's lunches and enjoying delicious banana muffins baked by Ewen (a tasty surprise!). Warren said Rule No.1 with tramping was never to refuse any food that was offered, so the muffins went down well. The hut has a woodburner in the lounge/dining area, and drinkable water. There are 3 separate sleeping rooms (sleeping 26) with

bunk beds and mattresses. There are also 2 outside toilets (very important!).



"Hobbit" in the tree roots

Even though the rain still drizzled down, we were very sheltered under the tree canopy so didn't get very wet at all. The hike back to the carpark went quickly, where a quick change of clothes and shoes got us ready for the next stage of our journey - the all-important coffee and treats at Mt Bruce visitor centre.

We were: Anne and Martin Lawrence, Warren Wheeler, Shaan Mocke, June Wirihana, Grace Hoy, Deborah Sayer, Ewen Cameron, Mark Le Bas, Anna, Claire and Gillivray McKay.

10 September 2017 **Back Track – Arapuke Loop** **Nicola Wallace**

On yet another wet Sunday 7 enthusiasts set off from Milverton Park, bound for Kahuterawa roadend. Fine when we arrived, as soon as we exited the cars, it started raining. We noted the absence of mountain bikers, and after walking through a squeeze pipe arrangement, we headed over Black Bridge and up the Back Track.

In the bush the rain was barely noticeable, but what we really noticed was the profusion of what looked like a fern, with greeny-red leaves and very flexible stems. Warren informed us that it was named "Parataniwha". It grew in profusion on the banks, especially in the very shady areas. Further up, still in the bush, we came across a "Powelliphantia" snail, who lay peacefully in his shell, in the palm of my hand while he had his photo taken.

Another walker passed us up the hill, as we were having plenty of stops to enjoy waterfalls and the like. I hadn't been up here for a few years, and there are a few new side tracks.

After a substantial wooden bridge we came to an open spot. The rain had now intensified and we stopped for a very soggy morning tea at a picnic table. It turned out that this is a very significant spot – the halfway point of Te Araroa, as told to us by a beautifully made sign. It told us this was 1500 km along, welcomed NOBOs (Northbounds) to Palmerston North, and informed SOBOs (Southbounds) that soon they'd be enjoying the high Tararuas, followed by a Cook Strait Crossing.

Gloves were donned, and 7 soggy trampers set off and startled a kereru out of a tree, then soon left the Back Track behind, arriving at the large MTB carpark. From here it was exposed and colder, definitely beanie time. We followed Arapuke Road, gradually uphill, gazing at the piles of logs everywhere, and the profusion of MTB trails, all named. I guess that this area has been logged in the last year or so, and that previously it would have been a very sheltered walk among large pine trees. Every intersection was signposted, it would be hard to get lost! Looking North to Palmy, it looked quite bright and fine down there.



Gloves were donned then the cloud lifted.

After about 20 minutes in the open, we followed the signpost to the Arapuke Bridge, and abruptly headed downhill and back into the bush. The bush track was a wonderful downhill zig-zag track, and partway down Warren counted the rings on a felled log: 25 rings so 25 years old. Not far from the bridge I heard the distinct *kek-kek-kek* of a falcon, and by turning around, got a good look at the bird flying.

The swing-bridge is a sturdy one that can handle 10 people at a time, and has a wooden plank base. From here we got a good look at the rushing, brown Kahuterawa Stream. Just over the bridge we had second morning tea at another picnic table (the whole area is well

supplied with them). Woody had a bag of nice, salty chicken flavoured chips that went down well with all of us. The rain had eased off now. Sally went for a wander a little further up the Sledge Track, and returned with reports of seeing a robin.

From here it was about an hour's walk back along the Sledge Track, which is undulating, and has lots of steps. You're very close to the Kahuterawa Stream, and various features of the track and stream are given names pertaining to people: e.g. "Crippen Saddle". I guess that Terry and others have helped construct the track. It was pleasant walking back and not getting rained on.

Back at the carpark, mountain bikers were arriving and the weather was looking better. Woody told us the walk had taken 3 hours and 20 minutes. These shorter walks that only take the morning are excellent for cold, wet days, good exercise and you're not out in it all day.

Thanks to Woody for leading the trip and driving, and to Sally for driving her car out too.

We were: Woody (trip leader), Debra, Grace, Warren, Sally, Caroline, Nicola.

Snowcraft Reports

Snowcraft 1 and 2 Report by Anthony Behrens

Snowcraft 1 - The Meeting

It was a cold August night that didn't start well for Fiona and I. We got lost on the footpath outside the Quakers' Hall. Once we did find our way in we were pleased to find a large group waiting for us. 18 mountaineering newbies had booked themselves in for the first of 3 sessions and most, if not all, had made it to the hall that night.

A large group from the Whanganui Club, a father and son team from Tauranga and a couple from Auckland promised to make the Ruapehu trip one of new connections. Other local clubs were represented too - Paul and Sarah from Manawatu and Alysha from MUAC.

We were issued our gear, introduced ourselves, got given a run-through of things from our instructors then excitedly blundered back into the dark; Fiona and I found our way back to the car.

Snowcraft 1 - The Trip

The weather forecast was pretty murky, but we ended up making a break for the mountain on Sunday morning. The Palmy crew met at Milverton Park in the rain and we made our way pessimistically up the island in the dark. As it got lighter the rain lessened and by the time we reached the Ohakune visitor centre, where we changed into our snow gear, things looked promising. Not ideal...but the cloudy day was gentle and there were glimpses of sun.

Snowcraft 1 - Turoa

We arrived in the Turoa carpark as a convoy. Once we were ready (wearing our helmets), Grant lead us up to the lodge area where we put on our crampons and instantly got swooped on by ski guides who were concerned that we might want to crowd their slopes. Once they were assured we were only interested in finding a quiet corner somewhere we headed up to our little valley to the north west of the main ski area.

The day was slightly spoiled by a powdery topping of snow on the mountain. But the videos we'd all watched and Grant and Dwight's confident instruction (assisted by Dieter and Malcolm) saw us all happy to test ourselves in ideal weather conditions...not too windy, not too wet and not too cold. A bit more sun would've been good but there was enough to make the goggles seem worthwhile.

Once we all got our confidence up we were soon to be found hurtling ourselves off, or climbing up, any slightly steep slope we could find. Rounding us all up for the next lesson was sometimes difficult as ***WE JUST WANTED TO GET OUT THERE!*** We learnt how to use crampons and ice axe for walking up, down and across slopes. Self-arrest techniques were a challenge as the powdery snow meant that gaining any meaningful speed was restrained, but with practice most of us figured out how to get adequate acceleration.

A session on sampling snow and ice for avalanche risk gave us all a bit of a rest late in the afternoon as did a quick look at how to find someone who may have been buried after an event. Once the learning was over we all went for a bit of a walk that involved looking desperately for a challenge. I guess the fact that we didn't find much of one meant that those of us who were booked for the next session were ready.



Morning tea break. [Christian Offen]

The day ended with a bit of cafe confusion in Ohakune, but eventually we all ended up in the one place for a feedback session and group photo. Those of us booked in for Snowcraft 2 were chomping at the bit and the rest were more than happy with the skills they'd developed.

Snowcraft 2 - The Meeting

There were less of us sitting in the Quakers circle on the cold Wednesday night...but there was a good number of instructors amongst us - an ideal situation as the night focused on rope work. Bruce, back from an overseas trip was Camp Leader but the other experienced climbers were invaluable...especially for me...a self-confessed Knot Moron.

Snowcraft 2 - The Trip

We all made our way up to the mountain in small independent groups this time, so a meeting at Milverton wasn't necessary. Bruce wanted an early start because the weather was looking good and the idea of sitting in a queue on the road up to Whakapapa didn't appeal to any of us. It was such an early start for me I can't remember what the time was - implying that I was largely unconscious until we got to the Taihape BP for a coffee.

Snowcraft 2 - Whakapapa

An altogether different experience than Snowcraft 1, our second lesson took place on a calm and occasionally blue-sky day. The conditions were firmer, with actual ice for our crampons to dig into...although this had changed by the end of the day.

I can only speak for me here, but I was a bit intimidated by the idea of rope work. I get vertigo and as I've said previously, I'm a String Theory Retard. But trepidation melted away and was replaced by excitement as ropes were unravelled and harnesses were donned.



Look where you're going. [Graeme Richards]



Secure with a snow stake. [Graeme Richards]



Confidence on belay. [Graeme Richards]

Bruce, Grant, Graeme, Dieter and Malcolm were the perfect tutors through the day, and although I - and I assume others - had our moments, we were spoilt with plenty of calm, confident and often much-needed help. Most of the day took place on a single slope south of the Manawatu Club rooms. We were paired off into appropriate groups and I think I'm right to say that each pair had their own teacher. If ever there was a reason to join a tramping/mountaineering club this day was it.

The skills PNTMC has on tap are a real asset to the club. The patience and willingness of

our tutors made the whole experience a real pleasure.

Snowcraft 3 Report by Grant Christian

After two postponements Snowcraft 3 went ahead on 24 September. The venue this time was Tukino. I had stepped in as leader at the last moment to fill in for Terry and I had Dwight as my assistant on the day. We met at the top car park shortly after 8 a.m. in pleasant morning sun but with a chilly breeze.

Dwight took everyone through the procedure for roping up for glacier travel. It took a while for everyone to sort themselves out with harnesses, crampons, ropes, coils, prusiks, hammers, snow stakes, extra clothing, toilet visits, organising packs and gear etc. Sara did a great job of being mum, making sure Joel and I had our collars out properly and keeping our necks warm in the breeze.



Just pretend it's glacier, OK? [Christian Offen]

Some practised glacier travel in the car park while others got themselves organised. Once everyone was ready we headed for the steeper slopes, roped up for the hidden crevasses in the rocky route to the snow.

Once on the snow, the students took off their coils and prepared for belaying up the steepest slope to the right of the waterfall. We started off using slings over rocks for anchors. We carried on up the slope where they did their best with belaying while Dwight and I pointed out some errors in their techniques, which could lead to serious consequences in the event of a fall on a steeper or harder slope. After three or four pitches we gathered for morning tea on a flatter section at the top of the slope, enjoying the sun and the lack of wind in this area.

After morning tea I went over the importance of anchor strength and the options available. We then started on up the next slope using double anchors. After a couple more pitches a ski patroller came along and said we were on the ski field and asked if we could move elsewhere. This was despite being on steep slopes away from the rope tow and where only a couple of skiers had passed through all morning. Not wanting to be a nuisance or create a hazard, we coiled up the ropes and headed for the top of the route we were climbing. It was more exposed to the chilly breeze up here so we crossed the plateau and found a sheltered spot away from the ski field. We stopped here and had lunch.

After lunch we went to some nearby slopes with small cornices and went through the procedure for abseiling. The always enthusiastic Alyesha was first to give it a go and then each of the pairs set up their own ropes and all of them had a few turns, both with and without prusiks for backup. I'm sure this was the most enjoyable part of the day, even though the snow was very soft. Anyone who had any trepidation about abseiling seemed to easily overcome that. A few people ended up by hurling themselves head first down the slope when we had finished.

Dark clouds started to appear overhead and we had a few spits of rain so we headed back to our packs. Alyesha asked if she could go down the steeper bit nearby and everybody else followed her, although it was quite steep at the top edge. Although the snow was soft Sara went for a slide part way down before self-arresting when the slope eased somewhat.

The threatening rain didn't eventuate so on the final slope before heading home we set up belays again, but this time practised lowering the lead climber as if they were abseiling. This was the final instruction for the day and after each student had a turn we headed for the valley below the waterfall. Everyone had had enough by now and it was getting cold. We all removed our crampons and headed back to the car park where I collected all the gear and some people changed their clothes or had a much-needed toilet stop.

We met again at the two wheel drive car park, where it was warmer, and discussed the day.

Everybody had enjoyed themselves and felt they got a lot out of the day. The husband and wife team of Paul and Sara and father and son team of Ted and Joel had appeared to get along fine in what can often be a frustrating and stressful activity when you are learning. Massey students Christian and Alyesha also appeared to make a good climbing pair. I had an enjoyable day with a great group of students.

Students were Paul and Sara Joice, Ted and Joel Ebbing, Christian Offen and Alyesha Candy. Instructors were Dwight Swainson and Grant Christian.

Snowcraft 2017 – Final Report

Despite some postponements and last minute changes we had a successful Snowcraft that was enjoyed by the many participants.

We had three Wednesday night sessions, all with several instructors, and three days on Mt Ruapehu on different weekends.

I led Snowcraft 1 which was held at Turoa. We had 17 students and four instructors. Seven students came from the Wanganui Tramping Club, we had three from our club, one from MUAC, two from MTSC, two people from Auckland, one other from Palmerston North and one from Tauranga.

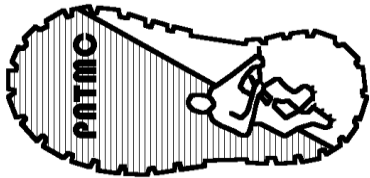
Bruce van Brunt led Snowcraft 2 with eight students and five instructors. For this day we had shifted to the slopes of Whakapapa and enjoyed good snow conditions and weather.

I lead Snowcraft 3 with six students and two instructors. We had good weather but soft snow.

In addition to myself the instructors were Bruce van Brunt, Dwight Swainson, Malcolm Leary, Dieter Stalmann, Graeme Richards and Terry Crippen.

Thanks to all these club members who gave their time to assist and without whom, this programme couldn't be run.

Grant Christian
Snowcraft Coordinator



Palmerston North
Tramping and
Mountaineering
Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217,
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PNTMC Newsletter

October 2017

What's inside this month?

- From the President - Facebook, Logo
- Interclub Quiz Results
- Photo Comp Results
- Taupo Cycling Explorer
- Intro Tramping 1 – Atiwakatu Hut
- Local Trip: Back Track-Arapuke
- Snowcraft Reports
- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

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

Get out and about with us!

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