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## Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz  
P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

### Newsletter August 2019

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*This photo taken near Turoa skifield shows a magical frozen waterfall with glistening icicles - both icicle-mites and icicle-tights - joining in columns of clear and blue frigid pillars soaring up to the cliff top. Clambering up to the icefall provided a nice opportunity for participants in our first Snowcraft course to practise their new-found snowcraft skills... read more about this in the Stephen Legg's trip report inside.*

### Club Nights

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

**8 August 2019**

**Cycling Moselle France**

**Arthur Todd**

Come along to learn about Lis and Arthur's experiences while cycling the Moselle.

**29 August 2019**

**Photo Competition**

**Martin Lawrence**

Taken any good photos lately? Enter them in our annual photo competition and let our expert judge decide the best three images in each category - an audience vote (show of hands) will then determine first, second and third places. Place-getters in each category will be entered in the Interclub Photo Competition and the FMC Photo Competition. See inside for details.

**Wed 21 August 2019**

**Interclub Quiz**

MUAC is hosting the interclub quiz this year. 7pm at the MUSA lounge at Massey.

## Upcoming Trips

**3-4 Aug**

**Blyth Hut**

**Family**

**Elly Arnst**

**022 682 3136**

An easy winter jaunt to Blyth Hut on Mt Ruapehu - a great spot with mountain views and a good fireplace. Plenty of icicles and stream crossings along the way (we should be able to keep our feet dry) and possibly even some snow if we're lucky. Contact me if you're interested - departure time flexible.

**3 or 4 Aug (Best Weather Day)**

**Atene Skyline Walkway**

**M**

**Anne Lawrence**

**357 1695**

The start of the walk is on the Whanganui River Road, 36 km from Whanganui. The track starts with a steep climb from the River Road to a height of 260 m. It then follows an old, gently graded roadline for approximately 3 km to the Taumata Trig, the highest point of the track at 572 m. The track then winds around the edge of sandstone bluffs to reach Taupiri Trig before descending steeply back to the River Road. Weather permitting, expect spectacular views of the Whanganui River, Mt Ruapehu, Mt Taranaki/Egmont, the Tasman Sea, and the Whanganui River's tributary valleys. Depart from Milverton Park at 7.30am.

**10-11 Aug**

**Ruapehu Peaks and camp above 1000m**

**FE&T**

**Grant Christian**

**021 117 6921**

Leaving Friday night, or earlier if possible. Travel to Tukino and camp at road end. On Saturday walk to the Plateau and camp there for the night. Walk back down on Sunday. All dependent on the weather and conditions. I have room for one other person in my tent. Others will need a tent, bivvy bag or to sleep in a snow shelter. Earn five points for camping above 2,000 metres!

**11 Aug**

**Waiterere Beach Walk**

**E**

**Janet Wilson**

**329 4722**

Last year we explored the coast North of Waitarere. This year we will explore the beach and forest to the south as far as

Hokio Beach. Perhaps we will find some sign of the Hyderabad, wrecked in 1878. An easyish day out, with an optional cafe visit at the end of the day. Depart PN 8.30am.

**17 or 18 Aug (Best Weather Day)**

**Pinnacle Traverse**

**FE&T**

**Grant Christian**

**021 117 6921**

Travel to National Park the night before. Head up the mountain early on the best day and attempt a traverse of The Pinnacles. Getting to the top of the Great Pinnacle is straightforward. We will need to use a rope to abseil off the Great Pinnacle and there are some other challenging sections requiring a rope. Travel home in the evening.

**18 Aug**

**Rangiwahia Hut**

**Family**

**Doug Strachan**

**353 6526**

Ideal Ruahine day tramp for beginners; a child and dog friendly trip. Show the kids what snow looks like before global warming really kicks in. Not too taxing. One time it took 2.5hrs for an easy ascent to the hut, and exactly 1.5hrs to come back down. Da hut loo don't flush but da outside sure is plush - a work of art. Depart for the art at 9am from Milverton Park.

**24-25 Aug**

**Tony Gates Memorial Howletts trip M/F**

**Warren Wheeler**

**356 1998**

Tony Gates loved Howletts Hut, especially in winter when the comforts of the wood burner would be augmented by carrying in coal, with the help of his bemused tramping companions. Late August is famous for perfect snow conditions and fine weather in the Ruahines... with luck. In from Kashmir Road via the river and Daphne Hut or alternatively via Longview and the tops.

**24 Aug (Saturday)**

**Herepai Hut**

**M**

**Woody Lee**

**021 044 4552**

A trip into the eastern Tararuas behind Eketahuna. We will walk up from the Putara Road end and climb steadily up the hill after the second swing bridge then getting to the hut through lovely bush. Leave from Milverton Park at 8 am.

**31 Aug – 1 Sept  
Gold Creek Hut  
Graham Peters**

**E  
329 4722**

This is an easy overnight trip to a hut I've never been to. It's a modified NZFS S-81 design 4 bunk hut that we'll get to either off Glennie Rd or up the Makaroro.

**1 Sept  
?????????**

**Trip leader needed.**

Please contact Anne or Janet.

**Trip Grading**

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

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

Other grades:

Technical skills (T)

Instructional (I)

**BWD = Best weather day of a weekend**

**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.

**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:

Anne & Martin Lawrence	357 1695
Graeme Richards	353 6227

**Notices**

**Trip card for July – December 2019**

The latest trip card has been posted out to club members. This is the first time that we

have sent out an electronic copy as well as the printed card. Apologies as we spotted some errors on the trip card after it had been printed.

Corrections are:

- Grant Christian's Pinnacle Traverse (BWD) should be on 17/18 August (not 10/11)
- Janet Wilson should be the leader for the Cattle creek overnight on 19-20 October
- 19 October (Saturday) trip is an M/F trip to Stanfield/A-frame led by Elly Arnst.

As always, please check the website and newsletter for up-to-date information about trips.

**PNTMC Photo competition**

This year, we are introducing a new category, 'long exposure' which makes us more consistent with FMC's photo competition.

Categories are:

- **ABOVE BUSHLINE** (With no Human Element)
- **ABOVE BUSHLINE** (With a Human Element)
- **BELOW BUSHLINE** (With no Human Element)
- **BELOW BUSHLINE** (With a Human Element)
- **NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA**
- **LONG EXPOSURE**
- **OVERSEAS**
- **TOPICAL**

Photo competition rules are consistent with those of FMC – winners of our competition are automatically entered into the FMC competition.

Entries for all categories must be taken after 1 Jan 2016.

The definition of a "human element" is flexible but the general intention is: Where the photo contains as anything other than as a very minor feature: people, a hut, a track sign/marker, bridge, ice axe and anything else that has been introduced by

humans into the environment then we would define that as having “a Human element”. But if a photo has what could be called a Human Element but that element is very small, inconsequential and not a feature in the photo then you could count it as “No Human Element”.

Definition of “Long Exposure”: The intention of the long exposure category is for photography of scenes that the naked eye cannot normally comprehend. These shots would require a very long exposure and the use of a tripod. The category is intended for highly technical images of shots taken at night, (including star trails), or in extremely low light situations such as caves or canyons. The category is not intended for normal dusk/dawn photography, or images where a long exposure is used to ‘blur’ the image (such as flowing water, or movement of the subject). This category is intended to encourage more entries, by separating such highly technical photos into their own category. We hope to get more participation from entrants who are not put off by the thought of having to compete with such highly technical photos.

Definition of “Topical”: People in tramping-related activities.

PNTMC photo competition entries need to be given to Martin Lawrence via email or on a USB stick. Entries need to be with Martin **on or before 18 August**.

**NZ Avalanche Advisory Competition**  
Last winter the Mountain Safety Council (MSC) rebuilt the NZ Avalanche Advisory website [www.avalanche.net.nz](http://www.avalanche.net.nz) which is up and running advisories this winter. As part of the rebuild, they included a ‘Public Observation’ function, allowing members of the public to submit avalanche and snowpack observations.

This winter MSC are running a competition to promote this tool. They would love to see this tool used by tramping club members as it not only contributes to wider public safety but it’s a great

information source for their avalanche forecasters.

There are specific prizes on offer for public observations in some key regions. Full details here:

<https://www.avalanche.net.nz/resource/competitions/public-obs/>



### PLBs

The club has two personal locator beacons (PLBs) for members' use. If you want to take one of these on a trip, contact Martin or Anne Lawrence on 357 1695. There is no cost to use these. This applies to any trip you are going on - it doesn't need to be a club trip.



<https://tinyurl.com/pntmcfacbook>

## PNTMC Challenge 2019

### Huts and High Places Challenge AGM 2019 to AGM 2020

You can update your points by entering trip details, places visited etc in the online spreadsheet. Contact Martin if you have any problems with this.

The competition is hotting up for top scores. Elly has earned a bunch of points and has nearly caught up to Janet. But there is plenty of time yet, so join in the fun and see your points add up over the next 9 months. Scores as at mid-July are as follows:



Club Member	Huts	High points	Bonus	TOTAL
Janet	22.5	8.5	15	46
Elly	21.5	13	10	44.5
Chris T	17	8	10	35
Graham	15	6	10	31
Ernie	12.5	7.5	10	30
Mary	14.5	9	5	28.5
Michelle	5	3	18	26
Warren	15.5	2	5	22.5
Grant	9	0	5	14
Woody	6	1	5	12
Annett	3	6.5	0	9.5
Richard	5	3.5	0	8.5
Anne	4	2	0	6
Martin	4	2	0	6

## PNTMC Jubilee Book



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

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

## PNTMC Hut Bagging Posters



Posters are still available for both the Ruahine Huts and Tararua Huts that were produced following our Hut Bagging Challenge in 2012 and 2015 respectively.

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

Postage with tube is about \$15 extra depending on where it is being sent.

Proceeds from poster sales go towards the club's maintenance of Mid-Pohangina Hut and Ngamoko Hut in Ruahine Forest Park. Contact Warren (06) 356 1998.

## New Members

### Want to Join the Club?

Just fill in the Membership Application (available at club nights and on our website) and pay the subs. Enquiries to Warren (06) 356 1998.

Welcome to Roy Rolston, who enjoyed a club trip in to Burn Hut recently and has been seen at the last couple of club nights.

## Trip Reports.

### **Burn Hut**

**30 June**

**Report: Roy Rolston**

**Photos: Warren Wheeler**

After meeting at Milverton Park at 8am, Warren and I were soon heading south in Craig's trusty old Ford Laser. Our destination, Shannon, The Mangahao Powerhouse, the No 2 Dam and the track starting point to Burn Hut. Turning off at Shannon, we head up a short valley of lifestyle blocks and farms and see ahead the formidable foothills and the two large penstocks dropping nearly vertically down the slope.

The topic of conversation turns to the Mangahao power scheme and the realisation that we have many unanswered questions. Google to the rescue: a little history follows to fill some gaps. The Mangahao Power Station was the first of many large hydro power stations to be built in New Zealand under a government-resourced plan to provide a national supply of electricity. The Mangahao was to become the point of supply not only for Wellington, but also Horowhenua, Taranaki, Hawkes Bay and the Wairarapa. The 110 kilovolt (KV) transmission lines from Mangahao to these areas were the forerunner of New Zealand's extensive transmission grid. Whereas most New Zealand hydro stations are built on rivers or supplied by natural lakes, Mangahao makes use of small and remote rivers in the bushclad Tararua Ranges.

Detailed survey work was started in 1915 to establish river flows, levels and dam sites. Later surveys for road access had to be done in rain-soaked, steep and densely wooded terrain. War delayed the project but by late 1919 access roading and foundation testing was well in hand. Slow and difficult access made it necessary for camps to be set up close to the construction sites at Arapeti (No 3 dam and tunnel) and Mangahao No 2 dam. Unfortunately, No.2 tunnel construction claimed eight lives – seven by carbon monoxide in one incident. The Powerhouse

which is located on the Mangore Stream, was opened in November 1924, with first supply going to the local Horowhenua area. Supply lines was soon extended 100 km to Wellington followed soon after to Bunnythorpe for supply to the Manawatu. These 110 KV lines were the first lines at this high voltage in the southern hemisphere, and now the Power Station is recognized as a historic place.

History done, the Laser negotiated the winding road beyond the powerhouse for some kilometres with some careful driving by Craig to avoid leaving the muffler behind or something worse. However, we arrived at No 2 Dam without incident. After booting up and slinging on our day packs we immediately crossed the dam itself in overcast cloudy conditions. The dam, a highlight in itself, had us in awe. Amazing how a huge cliff of concrete can give rise to the wonder of man's ability to build stuff especially nearly a century ago. After a delay to look and see, we got started on the track marked by a large orange marker off to the left across a short grassy terrace.

The track sidles downstream of the Mangahao River itself for about an hour. A well-formed track with a few tricky sections crosses about 4 side streams; the last one is bridged with an impressive wooden curved structure. Shortly beyond this the track heads fairly steeply upwards onto a leading ridge to the Hut. The three grey-haired trio of dubious fitness set a spirited pace and we made good progress up into a clearing sky. It was of note that we were still able to discuss and try and solve the world's problems almost every step of the way and it didn't seem long the track leveled out and further on broke through the bush and continued on through a good cut track through the leatherwood.

A vantage point had us see Burn Hut standing out on an exposed point further up the ridge in brilliant clear skies and sunshine. So glad of that as the author was last on this track just a month previous in foggy and very windy conditions. Actually, I was up with two other fellow Old Dog Trampers from Wellington for a overnigher. We intended to return doing

the loop via College Creek and No 1 dam even leaving an extra car there. Come the morning however (the same morning the overdue trumper doing the Tararua northern crossing was last heard from), we woke to fogged out gale-force winds and threatening southerly rain. It was our first time here and with concerns about an overgrown track ahead we decided to change our plans and return down the same. It was a good call as we made it back just before it turned really nasty. It must have been ten times worse for the now deceased trumper up around Arete Bivy on that day.



*A short section due for some maintenance.*

From a good track through the leatherwood it turned into an overgrown track which was tougher going but after about 300 meters or so it was back to a good track before arriving at the hut soon after. It seemed strange that most of the track was pretty good. We figured that track clearing DOC workers must have run out of fuel or something and never got back to finish it. Reaching the hut took just under three hours, with us getting there bang on lunchtime. It was great to have lunch in the sunshine on the newly cleared grassy heli-pad and taking in the great views as well.



*Lunch at the heli-pad enjoying winter sunshine.*

Burn Hut is a small six bunker with (5?) mattresses with no heating but in good order, however the toilet needs some urgent attention. My Wellington tramping mate has already notified DOC about the various issues and a reply from the Masterton office that administers the hut said they plan to have a working party on site around October. After about an hour or so we made our way back down.

Again, a spirited pace was combined with much discussion on all sorts of topics and it seemed like no time until we found ourselves back at the dam and the car at around 4pm. All in all, a very enjoyable stretch of the legs on a brilliant sunny winter's day.

In my opinion the Mangahao area, Burn Hut and beyond in general offers a great opportunity to advance your adventurous spirit in what seems a wild and remote wilderness area attached with nostalgia of history. At the same time being very accessible as a good day or overnight walk that in my view is not well utilized and road in is not too bad really. I think also there is an opportunity to open up other routes to link old tracks to destinations further afield and/or create a true northern crossing that could be easily done in a weekend.

*We were Craig Allerby (Trip leader), Warren Wheeler and Roy Rolston.*

**Upper Makaroro**  
**28-30 June**  
**Report: Bruce the Dog**  
**Photos: Elly Arnst**

Friday morning, this isn't the usual Friday. Graham's not heading off to work and they're getting those things they carry around on their backs ready. Maybe we're going for a walk in the bush. Lots of exercise and things to smell. They make life hard for themselves carrying those things they call packs, much easier to run free as I do. Thinking about it, that's where my food comes from. Maybe that's why Graham calls me a total bludger.



Yep we're off – I can't wait to get in my crate in the back of the ute. I wonder where we're going? It's not long before we stop and the back is opened. We can't be there yet. No another pack is being put in and a person I haven't met before is peering in at me and saying hello. I hear her being called Elly. She seems all right but time will tell I guess. Before too long we stop again briefly and then again and Graham lets me out. I get a bit of a run around while he fills his face with a pie and cream donut. He's such a pig - he's not long had breakfast. Maybe we're going up a big hill and he reckons he needs the energy. We're off again and this time when we stop they're getting their packs out.

Yippee, we must be off. After a few minutes Janet and Elly stop at a little building [Sentry Box] while Graham and I carry on. They say we need a head start. The cheek of them, I'd run rings around them any day of the week. Oh maybe they're not talking about me. It certainly starts off steep and there's a certain amount of muttering from Graham. It's a beautiful day however and it's not too hot.

Eventually we get to a rocky knob with a bit of a view by which time Janet and Elly have caught us up. I'm definitely going with them - I'll show them I'm no slow coach. We're back in the bush going up and eventually I get to a place where I have choice of direction. You never know which way they're going to go – I'm not dumb so I usually wait for them. Elly and Janet turn up and a few minutes later Graham. The ground is frozen and so there are no puddles for me to drink from but fortunately Graham gives me a drink of water from his bowl. It's lunch time but they decide to carry on. We stay pretty much together with Janet and Elly stopping often to play with a box beside the track and often taking something dead out.

I'm a bit peckish but I'd rather wait and maybe Graham has some lunch for me. Not long and there's an awful banging and crashing going on – not the normal thing you hear in the bush.



We arrive at another hut [Park's Peak] to find stuff spread all around and 3 people working. Not to mention a big black machine parked in front of the hut. They seem friendly and there seems to be plenty for them to talk about so it turned into quite a long lunch break – and yes Graham did have a couple of biscuits for me. I think Elly will be alright. She pats me quite a bit.



Finally we're heading off, now downhill again with Elly and Janet playing with those boxes and a couple of times, after much discussion, hanging something [acoustic recorder] in a tree. Again we leave Graham behind until we eventually get to a river. Janet and Elly stop – don't they want to cross. I go across anyway but Janet yells at me to lie down. You've got to be joking. The ground is all white and cold, they can lie down if they want but I'm not going to. They've obviously decided that they should harden up and go barefoot like me but immediately after crossing the river they put their boots back on – sooks. Graham turns up and we move up to a hut [Upper Makaroro] and get the fire going. There's water inside the hut but it's frozen. I look



longingly at Elly and she says she doesn't mind me staying inside. Phew, it's 3°C outside and bound to get colder.



Next morning no-one seems particularly keen to get up, maybe because it's -3.3°C outside. Eventually Elly does and puts the billy on and the best part, scruffles around and finds my breakfast and gives it to me. She's my friend. Finally we're off up the hill behind the hut, playing with things beside the track and hanging some more things in trees. It's a beautiful blue sky day but the higher we get you can hear the wind and as we get to the bush edge they stop to put more clothes on. Once we leave the bush it certainly is windy and the clouds are scudding over the ridge some way above us. I think they planned to go further but decided that back in the bush was a better alternative so we headed back down and found a nice sunny spot out of the wind for lunch.

Back at the hut they had something to drink then proceeded to wander around in the bush picking up stuff, making it smaller then stacking it in the alcove by the hut door. Before dinner I went off with Janet to look for whio. She got really excited when one whistled to me. At the same time another Bruce turned up. I know this one as he lives just up the valley from us. Later, after dinner Janet went out again and this time a pair of whio came in when she whistled. This got her really excited.

Next morning I decided that there was to be no sleeping in. I tried to rouse them by quietly suggesting that it was time to get up but to no avail so eventually I had to get

more forceful. That worked although I got a bit of abuse as well. Bruce, Graham and I headed off whilst unbeknown to me, Janet and Elly stayed behind to do the final tidy and clean at the hut. Bruce stopped to play with his boots at the river while Graham and I headed off back the way we came in. There was a good downriver wind and my nose told me that Janet and Elly weren't coming.

I tried to tell Graham and wanted to head back and get them to come as well. He wouldn't listen and I decided that he'd finally discover they weren't with us and then what would he do? Luckily for Graham when we got to the hut where we had lunch before, they turned up not long after we arrived, followed by Bruce. They decided it was too early for lunch so headed off. When we got to the place we had to decide which way to go, they left their packs and carried on and went to a high point [Pohatuhaha]. It was another blue sky day but unlike yesterday, it was almost dead calm. After going back and picking up their packs again it was down the hill before we finally had lunch at a lower down rocky knob.



When we got back to the ute there were some locals a wee way back up the road with a couple of big dogs. I wanted to go and play but Janet said I wasn't allowed and put me in the back of the ute. On the way back we went for a bit of a drive down a rough farm track where we stopped for a few minutes [Master's Shelter] before heading back the same way.

*As well as Janet, Graham and myself, Elly Arnst and Bruce van Brunt came along.*

**Snowcraft 1**  
**Ohakune, Turoa skifield**  
**29 - 30 June 2019**  
**Report & photos: Stephen Legg**

**Participants:** Stephen Legg, Kirsten Olsen, Zoe Matthews, Matt Compton, Melissa Tran-Trung, Michelle Benton, Joanne Allen, Wendy Yale, Catherine Jackson, Chris Sanson, Rosie Rochester.

**Instructors:** Grant Christian, Dieter Stalmann, Graeme Richards, Dwight Swainson, Malcolm Leary.

This trip started sunny and ended in more sunshine in a frozen waterfall. It had a rocky twist in the tale.



The sizzling sun shone in a still azure sky as eleven aspiring snow-walkers and five snow-craft instructors set off uphill from the carpark of Turoa ski field in search of a suitable patch of slightly sloping snow and ice for the first lessons in the craft of safely tramping on slippery-slidy terrain.

First up was kicking steps to provide a flat and secure foothold. We progressed to cutting steps with the first new tool of the snow-craft trade, an ice axe. This is a devilishly dangerous tool with an adze, a wicked pick and sharp pointy spike at the end of a shaft, that can easily impale an untrained or unwary snow-walker. So naturally the first lesson was how to hold and use the axe safely. More importantly, an ice-axe can also secure safety in the event of a fall and slide down a slippery snow or ice slope. Once mastered, we were shown how to use the axe to cut flat steps in steep icy slopes, and hey presto, we stopped slipping and sliding and started ice-walking - up, down and across icy slopes with consummate ease.

Just in case we were ever to fall (an eventuality we were assured was inevitable – and which was expertly and immediately demonstrated by one of our number in an inadvertent fall and long elegant rotating back-slide to the bottom of a gentle slope, into some rocks) we were then taught how to use the devilishly dangerous ice axe to arrest our sliding bodies from scooting to oblivion down a slippery slope. In real snow mountaineering, the end of the slippery slope could be a big drop to oblivion, so self-arresting using the axe was an essential snow-craft to master.

Self-arrest training started easily with a sitting slide, then progressed to headfirst facedown, then eventually head-down on your back, which was progressively increasingly scary, but once mastered, satisfying fun.

Of course, the real trick is to prevent falling. So the next devilishly dangerous tool we were taught to use safely, was a set of very pointy spikes that could be attached to the soles of our boots. These are appropriately called crampons, because they are cramped on to your boot and firmly secured with tight straps. When walking with crampons the spikes dig into the ice and provide a very secure foot-hold. With crampons, it is even possible to climb a vertical wall of ice by kicking the two front spikes, called points, into the ice wall, and simultaneously using two specially designed ice axes. But the spikes can also make it easy to trip. If they dig into the snow whilst sliding, your falling body can start to tumble and roll. This must be avoided at all costs, so it is essential to ‘keep your feet up’ when self-arresting with crampons.

Lunch and hydration breaks during the day were complimented by sound advice from our instructors about the nature of snow and ice conditions in varying weathers and the rudiments of how to avoid getting caught in an avalanche, and what to do if you were caught in one. At the end of the day we imbibed non-aqueous beverages or hot chocolate in a local Ohakune watering hole.



The initial aim of the next day was to wander around and practice our new found skills. So we all wandered up the hill, fitted crampons and wandered and practiced everything in bright sun and hard ice. Then suddenly, and unexpectedly we had a wonderful experience, due to our intrepid leader, who returned from a short solo wander, to lead us up a small snow gully with, at its cliff end, a fabulous magical frozen waterfall, with glistening icicles - both icicle-mites and icicle-tights - joining in columns of clear and blue frigid pillars soaring up to the clifftop. Clambering up to the icefall used most of our new-found snow-craft skills, so it was a wonderful wander. Creeping behind the icicles gave surreal views to the distant horizon.

The twist in the tale was lunchtime entertainment, provided by several adventurous participants and instructors who competed in sliding downhill on their bottoms on a shovel. Starting ever higher it was inevitably crunchingly terminated by an intervening rock, hit by a slider. Both slider and rock came out winner and survivor. Both slithered unhurt to the long bottom of the gully. In the end, we all came home smiling and far more snow and ice-wise. Many were aching but none were broken.

## **Otangane Loop**

**6 July**

**Report: Anne Lawrence**

**Photos: Martin Lawrence**

This trip is the best value in terms of tramping time to travel time – you get a good 6 hour tramp with minimal travel time.

And it is not well travelled so if you want to get away from other people, have a decent tramp and not drive far, then this trip is a really good option!



You start by following the Sledge Track up the Kahuterawa to the Platinum Mines junction. Shortly after starting the Toi Toi Loop, you take a side branch and then follow a loop around the southern branch of the Otangane Stream with a short diversion to the top of The Nipple aka Pukenaenae.



We were very lucky with the weather on this particular Saturday: there was almost no wind and only a few patches of slight drizzle. There was more water than usual in the Otangane Stream but most of us got across with dry feet. Once you get further up, the lopsided trees provide evidence that the calmness of the day is unusual! We had good views over the Manawatu, and over to the Wairarapa side. The 3 minute detour to climb Pukenaenae is worth doing



– a named peak in the Tararuas so it is worth points in the Club challenge!!

*We were Anne Lawrence, Martin Lawrence and Lydia Warren.*

## **Jumbo Hut**

**6-7 July**

**Report: Ernie Cook**

**Photos: Warren Wheeler**

The original trip was intended to give Club members the opportunity to be some of the first to stay in the new Powell Hut and with the hut supposed to have been opened at the end of May this was a reasonable plan. However with the hut yet to be opened, in the words of Mick Jagger, "Maybe next week....." an alternative plan was required. So overnight to Jumbo Hut and complete the loop in reverse.

A leisurely start was made from the Mt. Holdsworth road end at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday morning. The Hutt Valley Tramping Club van parked in the car-park suggested other trampers were about. First point of interest was a new looking large metal sign that used images rather than words to advise hikers that only one person at a time was supposed to traverse the bridge up ahead. See Exhibit 1.



*Exhibit 1:*

*New sign - 1 person OK, >1 will collapse*

Lunch was taken at Atiwhakatu Hut amidst the convivial company of members of the Hutt Valley Tramping Club who had taken up residence. They informed us that four of their members had ventured towards

Jumbo on a day excursion whilst a separate party of four were headed to Mitre Flats Hut.

Snow was encountered on the track quite some distance from the bush edge. The final push from bush edge to the hut was through ankle deep snow and a strong bone-chilling wind. The hut was cold and only a couple of sticks of wood were evident though there were lots of empty coal sacks. A quick change into hut clothes was called for and some hot soup courtesy of the hut gas supply.



*Into the snow just below Jumbo Hut*

Warren cooked a nice evening meal followed up with Aunt Betty's steam puddings. The hot dessert was a real treat. Winds were forecast to be light in the morning and increasing during the afternoon so the option of completing the loop was still valid. A look out the hut door at 5:00 a.m. showed the twinkling night-time views out over Masterton and other towns in the Wairarapa and a star-choked sky.

No running water in the morning meant melting snow to cook the hot porridge and the winds were certainly not light. As we were preparing to depart, having decided to return the same way, two runners arrived with the intention of running across the tops to Powell Hut. As we descended Rain Gauge Spur we met another runner with the same objective.

A break at a now vacant Atiwhakatu Hut allowed us to scout out the route to the Pinnacle Ridge just north of the hut as described by a member of Hutt Valley Tramping Club. Look for a coffin shaped



rock....Along the way to Donnelly's Flat we were over-taken by the first two runners who had made it as far as Jumbo but had fallen into waist deep snow if they strayed off track.



*Jumbo Hut - a welcome shelter even with no coal or wood.*

Lunch at Donnelly's Flat and out to the car-park. Returning to the road-end were two hardy looking types who had tried for Powell Hut only to be blown back into the bush by fierce winds. Hard not to feel some smugness with the decision that we had made. Nearing the carpark we met the resident DOC volunteer who advised us that DOC no longer intended to be supplying coal to the huts but wood was to be flown in.

*We were Ernie Cook and Warren Wheeler, trip leader, gourmet chef and chauffeur.*

## Final word.

### What's on our website?

PNTMC website has a wealth of information that many are unaware of. Want to know more about a hut in the Ruahines or Tararuas? Go to [www.pntmc.org.nzwebsite](http://www.pntmc.org.nzwebsite) and select **Hut Info**. Then select a hut and click on the link (see the list below).

Thanks are due to Tony Gates for many hut contributions, including photos and info.

The huts and information are gradually being added to. If you have info to add, please contact Peter Wiles.

Ruahine Ranges	Tararua Ranges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Frame Hut (Travers Hut)</li> <li>• Daphne Hut</li> <li>• Diggers Hut</li> <li>• Gold Creek Hut</li> <li>• Hinerua Hut</li> <li>• Howletts Hut</li> <li>• Iron Bark Hut</li> <li>• Iron Gate Hut</li> <li>• Kelly Knight Hut</li> <li>• Kiritaki Hut</li> <li>• Leon Kinvig Hut</li> <li>• Longview Hut</li> <li>• Maroepa Forks Hut</li> <li>• Top Maroepa Hut</li> <li>• McKinnon Hut</li> <li>• Otukota Hut</li> <li>• Parks Peak Hut</li> <li>• Pourangaki Hut</li> <li>• Purity Hut</li> <li>• Rangiwahia</li> <li>• Standfield Hut</li> <li>• Sunrise Hut</li> <li>• Waipawa Forks Hut</li> <li>• Waikamaka Hut</li> <li>• Waterfall Creek Hut</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alpha Hut</li> <li>• Arete Forks Hut</li> <li>• Blue Range Hut</li> <li>• Burn Hut</li> <li>• Cattle Ridge Hut</li> <li>• Cow Creek Hut</li> <li>• Dundas Hut</li> <li>• Field Hut</li> <li>• Herepai Hut</li> <li>• Holdsworth Lodge</li> <li>• Kime Hut</li> <li>• Mangahao Flats Hut</li> <li>• Mid Waiohine Hut</li> <li>• Mitre Flats Hut</li> <li>• Penn Creek Hut</li> <li>• Powell Hut</li> <li>• Roaring Stag Hut</li> <li>• Tarn Ridge Hut</li> <li>• Totara Flats Hut</li> <li>• Waitewaewae Hut</li> </ul>

There is also a section entitled **Tony's Tararuas**... a collection that preserves and makes available Tony Gates' enthusiasm and extraordinary knowledge of the Tararua Ranges.

Almost 20 years ago, Tony embarked on a labour of love - to write a series of articles for the newsletter on his joy of the Tararuas. It began in April 1994 with a storey called "Gorgeous Gorges". Over the following months emerged a series of articles featuring the various catchments of the Tararuas and the tramping to be offered within each area. Time will have caught up with some of the tracks and huts, with a number becoming defunct or downgraded. Nonetheless, these articles provide a valuable reference.



## PNTMC Newsletter August 2019

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

- Club Challenge update
- Trip reports, upcoming trips and more
- Avalanche observations competition



Articles for the newsletter  
Send to Anne Lawrence,  
the newsletter editor, via the club website  
<http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>.

**Get out and about with us!**

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