



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

www.pntmc.org.nz

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter September 2023



Snowcraft 2 - preparing to abseil down a slope using a snow bollard as an anchor. Pic by Jaqui Bond

Club Nights

Club nights are generally held on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Quakers Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. Doors open 7.15pm for meeting start at 7.30pm. All welcome.

14 September 2023

Everest Base Camp – Part 1

Roy Rolston

Roy joined a group of fellow Kiwis on a bucket list 20-day trek to Everest Base Camp in Nepal during May this year. In Part 1, Roy will explain how it all came to be, the trekking route and the first 10 days or so including video footage and pics. Part 2 will be presented with Kathy at club night 26 October 2023.

28 September 2023

Te Araroa Manawatu Update

Dave Grant

Dave is past-chair of the local Te Araroa Trail Committee that looks after the trail through the local district. He will update us on the work he and the other volunteers have been doing and what is planned in the future.

Upcoming Trips

2-3 September 2023 Ringatoto - Ruapehu FE/T Grant Christian 021 117 6921
 Walk to Rangipo Hut Friday night. Climb to Ringatoto via East Ridge on Saturday and return to Rangipo Hut. Return to vehicles on Sunday morning. Rope skills required. Ropes may or may not be needed on some of the steeper slopes. Please contact Grant no later than the weekend before.

3 September 2023 A-Frame-Stanfield M Blair Petersen 027 600 4263
 The plan is to start from the carpark at Tamaki West Rd, up to Traverse (A Frame) Hut, along the ridge and down to Stanfield Hut. From there it's back to the carpark via Holmes Ridge track. Meeting at Milverton Park (Victoria Ave) at 7.30am.

9-10 September 2023 Zzz @ Zekes Hut E Chris Tuffley 06 359 2530
 An easy overnight trip to Zeke's Hut in Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary. We'll keep an eye and ear out for birds as we go to see what's about. It's a small hut, so numbers are limited to avoid overcrowding.

9 September 2023 Kapakapanui M Ernie Cook 027 303 1363
 A full Saturday walk from in behind Waikanae. Wet feet guaranteed. Depart Milverton Park at 7:00 A.M. Please contact Ernie by Wednesday evening.

16-17 September 2023 Cow Creek Hut M Janet Wilson 06 329 4722
 This classic Tararua trip has a wonderful variety of terrain (both up and downhill) and vegetation (including a sustained section of goblin forest along the Blue Range) and to top it off, a beaut old Forest Service hut under the beech trees beside the Waipawa River. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

16/17 September 2023 Tahurangi Summit FE/T Grant Christian 021 117 6921
 Best Weather Day (Sat or Sun). A straightforward climb via Turoa Skifield to the highest peak. Gets quite steep towards the top but ropes are not required. Please contact Grant no later than the weekend before.

23 September 2023 (Sat) Manawatu Gorge by Moonlight E Verity Elder 021 260 1885
 Woodville end of the Manawatu Gorge Walk to the Windmill Lookout or Centennial Lookout, with the option of returning via Balance Bridge. The aim with this trip is to walk in during twilight and return in the dark, gaining some experience with tramping with headlamps. Bring supper rather than lunch and don't forget your head lamp! Depart Milverton Park 4pm.

24 September 2023 Blue Range Hut E Woody Lee 0210 444 552
 A trip to the eastern Tararuas between Pukaha Mt Bruce and Masterton. We could have lunch at the picnic table overlooking the northern tops and then return the same way. An afternoon break at the Mt Bruce café is an option. Depart from Milverton Park at 7.30 am.

28 Sept - 3 Oct 2023 Great Barrier Island E/M Barry Scott 021 070 4848
 Enjoy 5 nights on Aotea/Great Barrier Island – stay at Awana Bay (site of our house), do an overnight trip into Mt Heale Hut and summit Hirikimata (Mt Hobson), visit the hot pools and walk the Harataonga track. Specific plans will be subject to the weather forecast, but I would like to set aside a few hours one day for some native plant restoration work around the Awana estuary. Costs will include food, air travel from PN to Auckland return, Auckland to Great Barrier return

(currently \$150 each way for voucher tickets I hold), rental for extra car that will be needed and fuel. Contact Barry by phone or email: d.b.scott@massey.ac.nz

1 October 2023 Burttons Track E/M Richard Lockett 06 323 0948

Walk this forest section of the local Te Araroa Trail that links Scotts Road to Mangahao Road for those SOBO heading south to the Tararua section behind Levin. We will walk in for lunch at Burton's Whare/Shelter and return to Scotts Road. Depart Milverton Park at 7.45am.

7-8 October 2023 Ngauruhoe Plus M/T Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998

Our traditional ascent of the west face of Ngauruhoe to celebrate the 1995 Grandstand View of an eruption of Mt Ruapehu. Optional to do this as a day trip if that suits better (leaving PN at 6.00am.). Plan A for an overnight would have us staying at Sue's place with a day trip to Lake Surprise or just half way to explore the silica rapids and split rock fountain. Depart Friday night or Saturday to suit.

8 October 2023 Maharahara M Verity Elder 021 260 1885

Second try for this cancelled July trip. From Opawe Road (just before the Highland Youth Camp) the track climbs first through farm land followed by forest before reaching leatherwood and the Maharahara Peak. Fun fact: the southern Ruahine Ranges has the largest, unbroken mass of leatherwood in New Zealand. Depart Milverton Park 7:30am

Trip Grading

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

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs	Other Grades:
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs	Family (Fam)
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs	Technical skills (T)
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs	Inst (Instruction)

BWD = Best weather day of a weekend

Trip participants

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips usually 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, over-trousers, 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 as there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone Martin Lawrence 357 1695 or Graeme Richards 021 149 8267.

New Members

Welcome to Graeme Curwen who is looking forward to getting out into the snow with us.

Notices

Interclub Photo Competiton 2 October 2023

Lots of excellent entries resulted in some close judging at our Photo Comp on 31 August. Results will be announced in the next newsletter.

Placegetters will be entered in the FMC Photo Comp and the Interclub Photo Comp hosted by MUAC on 2 October 2023.

“Wild Ruahine Calendars” On Sale Now

Supporting the volunteer work of the Ruahine Whio Protectors.

Great Xmas present.

Sized for Economy Overseas Mail.

Only \$20.

Available from Janet at club nights.



HUTS AND HIGH POINTS SCRABBLE CHALLENGE

Totals to date

Club Member	Scrabble	Bonus	TOTAL
Ernie	163	206	369
Chris T	201	131	332
Elly	262	49	311
Blair	127	140	267
Monika	124	135	259
Janet	127	124	251
Heather	93	73	166
Adam	98	29	127
Kirsten	67	60	127
Stephen	67	60	127
Warren	77	106	183
Grant	47	27	74
Graham	38	29	67
Neil	46	15	61
Anne	34	24	58
Martin	30	19	49
Bruce the dog	24	23	47
Michelle	31	2	33

Trip Reports

7-9 July 2023

Snowcraft 1

Report by Jacqui Bond

Day 1

Our first snowcraft course gallantly went ahead with the prospect of a wet weekend.

Due to rain and strong winds, we started our training in the first valley at the top of the Ohakune Mountain Road. First up was learning to edge and go up and down slopes and cut steps in strong winds, excellent practice. We then practiced self-arresting with ice axes in all the possible ways we could fall!



Around lunch all our clothes were finally wet and it was time to have lunch in a warm dry place. Next project was to dry all our gear for day 2.

Day 2

On Sunday we were taking our chances with the weather and headed further up the mountain.

We found a larger valley to practice self-arresting to see if we could remember what we were taught the day before!

With all our new skills we confidently front pointed up steeper slopes and practiced coming down them with our ice axes.

We found an icy cave and small ice fall where we imagined what it would be like to climb up with two ice axes.

We then buried a willing course participant and practiced finding him with a snow probe (can we tell the difference between a rock and a person?).



Avalanche probe test to find missing person.

To finish off the day, Grant dug a snow profile and showed us the shovel tap method to determine how likely the snow is to break away. By 1pm we felt the need for a hot cup of tea and dry clothes.

Despite the wet and windy weather, I learned a lot about safely traveling in the mountains, met a great bunch of outdoor enthusiasts and built my resistance to less than ideal mountain conditions. Big thanks to Sue for letting us stay in her bach.

8 -9 July 2023

Snowcraft One

Instructor's Report by Grant Christian

We had nine students and three instructors for the practical session on the mountain.

Conditions on the mountain were unpleasant. We had snow close to the car park but it was not good for demonstrating and practicing the various skills. Saturday morning was very windy and wet, making it hard to talk to students and miserable to stand about in. We went through the programme quite quickly and headed back down about 12:30. Everybody was wet and cold. In the afternoon we demonstrated the use of transceivers and talked about avalanche safety. It was calm and sunny back at Sue's house.

On Sunday it was raining before we left. At the car park it was light rain but no wind so that was an improvement. We headed a bit higher to the west side of the ski field in search of some firmer snow. It was a little firmer and we again practiced the various skills for some time. We walked a little higher and inspected some ice formations over rock. There was some hard ice for people to experience how secure crampons make you feel. We had lunch at this point. After lunch we dug out a block of snow to inspect for weak layers. It was very solid and didn't move until I jumped on it. Some probing practice followed with Damien being our volunteer to be partially buried in snow while others 'found' him. The rain got heavier and people were happy to head back down.

A couple of the students were quite experienced and Natalia was repeating Snowcraft, having also done it in 2022. I was pleased that everyone seemed to get the hang of self arresting very quickly. Everybody seemed to be keeping their feet up from the start, which is unusual.

Course participants were Jamie Anderson, Jana Schmidt, Juanita Miln, Natalia Kravtsun, Caitlin Lipsham, Tom O'Sullivan, Damien Shearer, Duncan Piesse and Jacqui Bond.

Our on-mountain instructors were Grant Christian, Dieter Stalman and Chris Rayner. Bruce Van Brunt, Chris Rayner and Malcolm Leary took the Wednesday evening session.

21-23 July 2023

Snowcraft 2

Report by Jacqui Bond

After Snowcraft 1, we had 2 weeks to perfect waterproofing our clothes, unfortunately we never got a chance to test our methods as we had fabulous weather.



Rosie and I getting ready to traverse the treacherous crevasses of the Turoa ski field.

We learned how to rope up and walk for glacier travel, with fake crevasses drawn out for us to navigate.

We tested the strength of the snow to hold us when we belayed or abseiled down a slope, learning to make a T-slot, put in an ice stake or make a snow bollard as an anchor (10 people were not able to pull the rope through the snow!)

As a finale to the course, we set up anchors and practiced abseiling down and then climbing up a rock and ice face in crampons! Who knew you could climb rocks with crampons on?

The second course gave us confidence to trust the snow when setting up anchors, using ropes and b-laying in the mountains and prepared us for our next mountain adventure (Climbing up to Te Heu Heu)

22- 23 July 2023

Snowcraft Two

Instructor's Report by Grant Christian

We had ten students and three instructors for snowcraft two.

Who can trust the weather forecast? We had a great weekend on the mountain with hard snow and mostly calm sunny weather. Although the MetService forecast wasn't favourable the YR forecast and Mountain Forecast showed a bit more promise and Metvuw was somewhere in between. The temperatures remained low so the snow stayed hard.

On Saturday we headed to my usual area in a small valley on the western boundary of the ski field. On the way we roped up for glacier travel and I drew lines in the snow to represent glaciers for people to negotiate. We had a nice slope there to demonstrate snow anchors and do some belaying practice. The snow was very icy after rain so upright top clips appeared to be the best choice. The snow stakes take a lot of pounding in these conditions. The hard icy snow seems to be more common in recent years. It was hard work digging out T-slots in this snow and upright mid-clips didn't seem to be practical. There was some fresh wind-blown snow that allowed me to demonstrate the strength of a T-slot in soft snow. I also demonstrated using a rock anchor and how you could belay off that using an Italian hitch. We did some belaying practice up and down this slope. After this we moved to some nearby steeper and higher slopes with a mix of some rock, windblown snow and hard snow. We did more belaying up and down these slopes using various anchors. We also demonstrated placing a couple of ice screws, although the snow wasn't hard enough to be actually using them.

On Sunday we headed back to the same spot that we had started on the previous day. Malcolm started off by demonstrating snow bollards and we showed people how to set up for an abseil. Every pair then did their own bollards and practised abseiling down them. Malcolm also prepared a much smaller bollard which, with the very hard snow, was up to the challenge of about 10 people pulling on the rope.

We headed over to the steeper slopes we had used Saturday. The slopes here were more serious for abseiling so we had every pair set up double anchors and do more practice. Everyone seemed to enjoy the extra challenge and most people moved on to the steep rocky section that Jamie and Tom had started out on. We also did some belaying from below, using a top rope so that they could climb safely back up the steep slopes with a bit of mixed climbing. This was also popular, with three or four of them climbing back up the steep rocky section towards the end. We followed up with a fairly brief demonstration of different types of double anchors. We didn't have time for people to practice these. I felt they had been introduced to enough new things. We headed back down just as heavier cloud rolled in and it started to snow.

It was a successful weekend with students gaining a lot and enjoying themselves. It is a lot to cram into one weekend and we didn't revise the things we had learnt on Snowcraft 1, although they had plenty of cramponing practice on the hard snow.

Although we had 10 students and three instructors, I think we were able to give everyone enough individual attention, partly due to the previous experience and training a lot of them had.

Course participants were Jamie Anderson, Jana Schmidt, Juanita Miln, Natalia Kravtsun, Caitlin Lipsham, Tom O'Sullivan, Hazel & Emma Gregg, Rosie Sargent & Jacqui Bond.

Our on-mountain instructors were Grant Christian, Dieter Stalman and Malcolm Leary. Bruce Van Brunt, Chris Rayner & Malcolm Leary took the Wednesday evening session.

28-30 July 2023

Scrabble Points Trip to Kime Hut

Report by Monika Coles

Huts: Kime, Penn Creek, Field Hut, Parawai Lodge.

Peaks: Tiro tiro, Hut Mound, Dennon, Table Top.

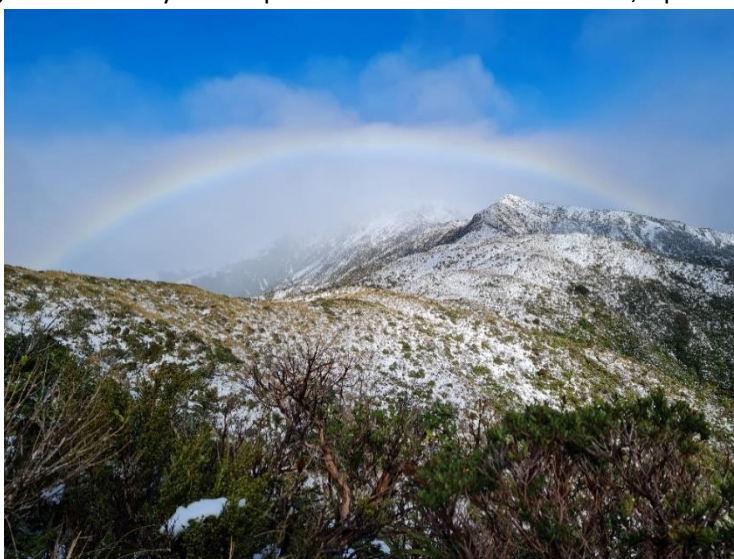


Dropping back down towards Table Top.

Palmy was having few nice warm winter days until the temperature dropped on Thursday night, making our Friday 6am start nice and chilly. I'm sure the aim was to make it more authentic and get us ready for the -5 degrees at unheated Kime Hut. We had a lovely drive in Ernie's heated car down to Otaki Forks though. I haven't been to Otaki Forks for about a year and half because of the slip. There is a re-route option available, but everyone seems to be going over the slip, which has wooden steps and a small walking bridge installed over it. From talking to locals, the slip is still moving. There are some small blue measuring boxes in the ground, possibly monitoring the slip activity.

The start of the track was pretty quiet. Only one other car in the carpark. Our first stop was Parawai Lodge to bag 'P' for the Scrabble Challenge. Then, we started to climb up to Field Hut in a bit of a drizzle, arriving at the oldest hut in the Tararuas, in time for lunch.

To my surprise, everyone but me have been to Kime Hut before. I started to witness all of them pulling gear out of their bags and putting on waterproof trousers, layers of clothing, hats and snow gloves over their current attire. I was like, what is going on? What's lying ahead? What do you know that I don't? I was getting nervous in anticipation. In my packing, I was going by the instruction 'if it is knee deep snow up to Kime Hut, we are not going' so my snow gear was safely in a cupboard at home. Nevertheless, I put on another layer of clothing and was awaiting what is going to be around the corner. Patches of snow started just before Field Hut and as we were gaining height, there was more snow on the ground. So far, pretty good going, so we happily carried on towards Kime Hut. It was beautiful and magical, with a full rainbow over the peaks ahead.



There was no wind and I relished in the feel of the snow under my boots and seeing it all around me. So cool. After the Table Top intersection with Penn Creek Hut, the snow started to get deeper and deeper. At the beginning, we were taking turns on making footsteps, but at the end, it was just Jorinna and Roy who's done most of the work. After having my turn in knee deep snow with no gaiters or over trousers, I ended up with two icy lakes inside my boots and my shins were pretty cold in the wet trousers pushing through the snow. I loved it. But I was happy to swap the snow plough with the others who were more equipped for the job - just in time, I reckon, as the snow became mid-thigh deep, making it for a slow progress. A few of us started to wonder if we'll make it to the hut in daylight... We carried on through the deep snow, where now and then, one leg would suddenly disappear into the giving snow. So great. Such fun.



Once we reached the junction with Maungahuka Hut/Tararua Peaks, the sun started to set on our right hand side, basking the snow in a beautiful orange glow. There was less and less light as the sun kept going down, but it gave us enough time to make it to the hut just before 6pm without the need of getting our torches out.

Kime Hut doesn't have any running water at the moment – there is an alert on the DOC website – but since there was plenty of snow around, we started to gather snow into our billies and began melting snow. A couple of us melted snow for



the first time and were pretty surprised how long it took to melt snow to boiling point. My gas bottle didn't like the cold and even though it worked, it definitely didn't perform to its best capabilities.

After a nice dinner and a couple of hot drinks I was not going to hang around in the freezing hut and with about six layers of clothing on, I snuggled into my sleeping bag like a larva into a cocoon ready for the night. I was warm all night. Some people said that they were too warm... What!!

My boots and the boot laces froze overnight even though they were inside the hut. The weather was looking great, with a lovely sunrise visible straight from the deck just in front of the hut. We were not in a rush, so had a nice breakfast, cleaned up and set off for Penn Creek Hut retracing our snow footprints back to the Table Top junction.

On the way, however, Ernie could not pass the opportunity to climb up to Dennan to bag some more Scrabble points. Now, Dennan peak is off the main track. It's a bit of a distinctive knob and a bit of a climb on best days. With lots of snow and heaps of leatherwood on its banks, the first challenge was to find a route. We could not see a way up until just after we passed the peak, there was a ridge, that looked like it could be worth giving it a go. Ernie was adamant to get this done, he set off in a waist deep snow and through snow covered shrub. Roy and Jorinna were happy to wait this one out. I decided to follow Ernie. It was slow hard going and we took turns in leading, giving each other rests. Just below the final steep knob, I gave the reins to Ernie to conquer the peak himself. It took a while to decide on a safe way up. The left hand side looked a bit steep and slippery without ice axe and crampons, and after trying, Ernie went to explore the right hand side route instead. I waited for a bit. Ernie was making progress. I was getting cold, so I decided I might as well go up too and so we both made it to the top of Dennan Peak. I would have



lobbied for Ernie to get points even if he didn't make the top just for the effort on this one!! Poor Roy and Jorinna had no idea it would take so long, about 40 minutes return trip. They made a cute little snowman keeping themselves entertained while waiting.

The track from Table Top junction down the ridge to Penn Creek Hut had a bit less snow with mud



underneath, making the track a muddy slushy mess. By now it was almost 1pm. We were all pretty hungry, so we decided to stop for lunch even before getting to the bushline. Why not.

It's an 800m drop down to Penn Creek from Table Top junction. As we were dropping down, slowly our layers of clothing were coming off too. Layer by layer, it was getting warmer and warmer the lower we went. Arriving at the hut, I reckon none of us had more than two base layers on. What a difference! We had a fireplace and a river nearby for water. The fireplace did not perform the best, with wet wood and a broken baffle plate, but Jorinna kept it going until about 11pm, so we could have a nice warm sleep.

In the morning, it was another nice day, even though still a bit crisp. After our breakfast and bit of a tidy up, we headed for our 800m climb back up to Table Top junction. The views up there were excellent. Clear, except one cloud sitting on the top of McIntosh Peak. Roy had done the Tararua Peaks before and the loop from Kime, over the tops and down to Penn Creek Hut that way, so he was showing us which way that goes. Pretty long way! Glad that we didn't go that way, it would have made it for a very long, hard going day in the snow. Since my boots were wet from the melted snow, I spotted Ernie having a two bread bags on his feet... and thought that was a great idea... one way of keeping your feet and socks dry before putting them into your wet boots and for a bit longer after that too!



Ernie and Monika at Table Top - Tararua Peaks behind



Plastic bags to keep feet dry

Our next mission was to go off the track to bag Table Top Peak. On the way, we met a guy who stayed at Kime on Saturday night and said there was three of them staying there that night. They must have been all so happy to find the steps we'd made in the snow all the way to the hut! We were now approaching Table Top Peak and just below coming towards us was someone in short sleeve t-shirt and shorts. A bit differently dressed to us all in layers of clothing. The closer we got to each other, the more smiles came on our faces. It's Emma! Such a cool spot to meet another club member! After a brief catch up, we let Emma go on her mission and the rest of us got onto bagging Table Top Peak.



What a difference to yesterday's Dennan climb. Here, the snow was low and melting and there was an actual path all the way to the top! What a score.

Now with all the missions completed, we made our way to Field Hut for lunch, meeting few more people on the way and having a chat with some more people stopping at the hut. Walkers, walkers and dogs, locals with dogs, trail runners and trail runners with dogs.

Great adventure in the snow with great bunch of people.

We were: Ernie (trip leader), Roy, Monika and Jorinna (first time on a club trip)

Another of Janet’s Coastal Delight’s. Five of us set off early for Titahi Bay, Porirua to meet up with Anne and Martin who were already in Wellington. The day was sunny and cool but ideal for a steam up Colonial Knob which gave us lookouts to the Tasman Sea once we neared the top. This well signposted walk is semi coastal and took us around 2.5 hrs to “knock off”. This walk was the first half of the days loose plan to



explore more of this coastal -city meets the wild area. As we were in the city we made a dash to a nearby café, but alas! it was full, so we did the right thing and sat outside eating our packed lunches enjoying some of Janet and Graham’s hot fish and chips!



On our sunny seaside walk we looked for ice creams to finish a pretty nice day.

We - Graham, Janet, Michelle, Robyn, Warren, Anne and Martin - sat on Titahi Bay beach enjoying our afternoon tea admiring the brightly painted boatsheds at each end of the bay.

Early afternoon we parked in the Onepoto Reserve and set off to walk the Porirua Harbour coastal section of the Whitireia Park toward Onehunga Bay (aka Shelly Bay) then up and over the small hills in a circuit back to the carpark. Well satisfied with the



It was a long day but rewarding weather, views and a chance to enjoy the many aspects of another Coastal Delight.

5-6 August 2023

Te Heu Heu Summit and More

Report by Alyesha Candy

On the bluebird morning of the 5th of August our group of eight assembled at the base of the Whakapapa ski field. Chris, Caitlyn, Roy, and Juanita from Palmerston North, Natalia from Auckland, Jackie and me from Rotorua and Grant the trip leader from Taupo.

Introductions were made, gear distributed, sunblock applied, layers decided on and off we went.

As always, the first part of the trip was a bit stop and go, with crampons being put on and layers adjusted.



Left to right, Grant, Caitlin, Juanita, Roy, Jackie, Chris, Ayesha. Photo by Natalia.

We made quick work across the ski field into the valley below the Pinnacles, while enjoying Jackie’s knowledge and tales of the ski field throughout the years.

A steep section next to a frozen waterfall had us front pointing our crampons and digging our ice axe points in to feel secure. For most this was child’s play, having just completed or taught snowcraft. For me, who had not worn crampons for five years, this was a good confidence building exercise – I can still do this!

With moderate avalanche risk we were careful to assess the aspect of slopes climbed and stick to the ridgelines where possible. This led to walking over some



Along the Pinnacle ridgeline



View of Mt Ngauruhoe



Juanita on an exposed section

exposed sections along the Pinnacles ridgeline where, while unlikely, the consequence could have been quite high if someone fell. However, this was no problem for our group who moved confidently and carefully over each obstacle.

The group spread out as we crunched our way around and over the sastrugi ice that coated the slopes from a storm earlier in the week. Eventually we made the summit and celebrated with a well earned lunch.

I was surprised to see that we did not have the upper mountain to ourselves. There were many small groups walking and exploring different areas. Over the course of the day, it was neat to see how so many people could enjoy the mountain. There was an activity for every person, whether it was through mountaineering, snow sports or sightseeing.



Natalia and Caitlin on Te Heu Heu summit

Back down Te Heu Heu we went. Chris, Juanita, Natalia and Caitlyn zoomed up and down the neighbouring Tukino Peak to bag an extra summit. Grant, Jackie, Roy, and I decided to skirt around the side of this one.

A steep slope provided the perfect spot to justify all the gear hauled up the mountain and practice some rope work. Anchors were made and people belayed as they descended to the Summit Plateau and back up.



Jackie and Caitlin roped up and climbing



Grant scoping out icy lines to climb



Bottom of the Whakapapa Ski field

From here it was the cruisy long walk down the mountain, easy at first then a bit strategic as we tried to select routes that left the skiers and snowboarders alone. Almost nine hours since we started, we got back to the cars and said our farewells to the Palmy crowd who were heading home that night and our see you later to Jackie who was staying at a lodge on the mountain. Grant, Natalia and I were staying at the Tongariro Holiday Park and managed to book a slot for the spa pool. How luxurious for our aching muscles.

Sunday the 6th of August provided another beautiful day. After saying goodbye to Natalia, who had to get back to Auckland, then goodbye to Jackie, who couldn't join due to a bad headache, Grant and I set off for a day of playing in the snow and practicing rope work.

We strolled back to the valley below the Pinnacles, enjoying the feeling of knowing it would be a less physically demanding day. We practiced some rope work up an icy chute. Due to the snow conditions we needed to dig a T slot anchor. I had forgotten how much work these can be! We snacked in the sun to keep warm, tried more icy climb routes using a variety of snow and rock anchors. Then snacked in the shade to keep from getting burnt. We roped up as if crossing a glacier and eyed up a good spot for abseiling over snow and rocks. Then called it a day to get home at a reasonable time.

All in all, a fantastic trip.

13 August 2023

Pukerua Bay to Plimmerton

Report by Anne Lawrence

Eight of us left Milverton Park in reasonable weather despite the forecast showers. The walk from Pukerua Bay to Plimmerton is do-able in pretty much any weather, but you do need to avoid high tide. I had previous experience of skirting waves at high tide, so I was careful to check the tide tables beforehand this time!

In this report, I refer to the various tracks we followed by the numbers shown on the map below. I think it helps give you a good understanding of our route. Much of the inland track that we followed is also part of Te Araroa.

We made use of at the car parks and toilets at the end of Beach Road in Pukerua Bay and headed off along the beach. Somewhere along the beach, the walk becomes the Wairaka Walkway (#23). The coast is rugged but beautiful— pebbles have been smoothed by wave action and the driftwood adds interest. Kapiti Island was clear but there were rainclouds to the north. There was little wind. A few raindrops fell – but not enough for anyone to don a raincoat – and that was all the rain we had for the day.

Porirua's Great Walking and Cycling Tracks

1 Ara Hakakeke Pathway The 8.7km sealed pathway runs alongside rugged coastal areas, two beaches, a nationally important wetland, a steam train operation and WWII pillboxes. It passes through three villages offering great places to stop for refreshments. 1 1/2 hours ♻️. 45 mins ♻️, one way. Grade: easy - Airlie Rd south, moderate - Airlie Rd north. Wheelchairs - Yes; Links to Tracks 2 and/or 22 to make loop walk.

2 The Taua Tapu Track A 15km rural track that features views out to Mana Island, Porirua Harbour and the surrounding countryside. 40 minutes one way ♻️. Dogs not permitted during lambing season from September to December, but on leads at other times. Grade: moderate - challenging. Wheelchairs - No; Links to Track 1 & 23

3 Whitireia Park (Greater Wellington Regional Council) 6.5km pathway through farmland following coastline or cliff tops. 1.5 hours one way ♻️. Farm stiles to cross and amongst grazing cattle. Grade: Easy - Onehunga Bay east; Moderate - Onehunga Bay west. Wheelchairs - No; Links to Track 8

4 Camborne Walkway A 1.6km sheltered, flat pathway along coast with spectacular views across Paoutahanui Inlet. 30 mins one way ♻️. Home to the colourful, iconic Camborne boatsheds. Grade: Easy; Wheelchair - possible with help; Links to Track 1 via beach.

5 Te Ara Piko Pathway A 2.3km pathway along the edge of the Paoutahanui Inlet through native salt marshes and wetland habitat. Dogs must be kept on a leash. Start from toilets at western end of Motukaraka Point. 30 mins one way ♻️. Grade Easy; Wheelchair - possible with help;

6 Paoutahanui Wildlife Management Reserve (Dept of Conservation) 2.2 km of tracks amongst estuary salt marsh vegetation. Nationally important wildlife reserve with bird watching hides. No Dogs or cyclists. Allow 1 hour ♻️. Grade easy. Wheelchair - restricted but possible in places with help.

7 Whitty Walkway A 1.6km, wide shared pathway that meanders alongside a stream and past a children's playground. Close to Whitty shopping Centre. 30 mins one way ♻️. Grade easy; Wheelchairs - Yes; Links to Tracks 10, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 & 32.

8 Southern Clifftop Walk A 2.8 km walk with views over Titahi Bay and Mana Island. Start at South Beach Rd, along the beach pass the boatsheds and into Stuart Park. East Moko St and return to South Beach access road via streets and Arnold Park. 1 hour return ♻️. Grade challenging. Wheelchairs - No; Links to Track 3.

9 Aotea Lagoon Sheltered public park with wide, flat, sealed 720m pathway around the lagoon. Has an adventure playground, rose garden and fenced toddler's playground. Dotted with grassed picnic areas. On most fine Sundays you can ride a model train. The lagoon is an ideal place to take children or visitors. Come for a leisurely walk or test your fitness on modern fitness stations. Grade Easy. Wheelchairs - Yes.

10 Bothamley Pathway A 4.7 km shared pathway besides the Keneperu stream with 3m wide gravel surface. 1 1/4 hour ♻️, 40 mins ♻️, one way. Grade - easy; Wheelchairs - restricted but possible in places with help; Links to Porirua railway station car park via Mepham Place underpass and Tracks 7, 16, 17, 18 & 37. No public toilets.

21 The Secret Valley Walk Short zoom walk in bush with sculptures

22 Raroa Walkway A gentle climb through a small forest of kohekohe trees emerging on to spectacular cliffside views Kapiti Island and coast. 0.8 km return, 30 mins ♻️

23 Waitraka Walkway A 2 km coastal route from Pukerua Bay Beach to Moa Rd, Plimmerton. Middle section shingle beach. On day views of Kapiti, Mana and South Islands. Near Waitraka Rock need to climb over rocks if high tide. Suggest park car at Plimmerton or Pukerua Bay Station and catch train to opposite station then walk back around coast going with wind. 4.5 hrs one way ♻️.

24 Karehana Bay Scenic Reserve 170 m track that descends through a mature remnant of native kohekohe forest. Links to Track 2 or Plimmerton Promenade, Track 24.

25 Plimmerton Promenade A wide promenade along the coastline with stunning views and access to sandy beaches and rock pools. Links to tracks 1, 22 & 23.

26 Golden Gate Low tide 2.3 km walk around peninsula offering inlet views. Rugged footwear needed as across tidal rocks and sand. Park at Ivey Bay and use underpass to access foreshore. 40 min loop ♻️.

27 Ivey Bay Walkway Zigzags to Kiriwai Rd through Manuka forest or follow the track up through regenerating native forest to Kahu Rd for views of the entrance to Porirua harbour. 0.75km, 15 mins ♻️.

28 Carvel Lane Walkway Walkway through regenerating manuka forest, links Postgate Drive with Carvel Lane and Kahu Road. 0.7 km, 15 mins ♻️. Links to Track 26 along Kahu Road.

29 Spinnaker Walkway Series of connecting paths, at the top there is panoramic views spanning almost all Whitty, Mana and Paoutahanui Inlet. 30 min ♻️ to the lookout from the Whitty Walkway

30 Quarterdeck Lookout 450 m path linking The Quarterdeck, Meridian Way, The Topdeck & lookout. 10 mins ♻️.

31 The Village Walkway 800 m path that links Endeavour Park with the Whitty Shops and Whitty Walkway. 10 mins ♻️.

We were pleasantly surprised that there was not more rubbish littering the shoreline. Some of us did pick up some litter, vowing to remember to bring a rubbish bag next time.

As we progressed south, the hills became steeper – there were signs of farming, and groups of goats skittered along above us. We came across plentiful paua shells from small to large, many in perfect condition. We had unanswered questions as to whether these were left over from someone illegally taking paua (paua fishing is banned in this area) or not. We had changing views of Mana Island as we circled round towards Plimmerton. And then there was a road of sorts called Hongoeka Bay Road (#23) before it becomes Moana Road– unclear as to whether the first part is private or not with one local warning us to stick to the beach to avoid a grumpy man ahead!



Anne heads south...

Photo taken by Monika

We lunched beside the beach, watching gentle waves and pointing out places of interest on the Whitty peninsula and Titahi Bay. Colonial Knob where some of us had walked a fortnight ago was lost in the clouds. We continued along Moana Road past the Plimmerton Yacht and Boat Club (public toilets here) and then turned into Cluny Road. A short way along this is a well-marked walking track to Karehana Bay Scenic Reserve (#24) which climbs through a mature remnant of kohekohe forest. This was our biggest climb of the day, earning us fantastic views to the south and southeast. From there we followed a road called 'The Track' which becomes the Taua Tapu Track (#2). Airlie Road took us to the paved path, Ara Hakakeke Pathway (The Flax Pathway, #1). This skirts above Highway 59 (now much less busy than when it was Highway 1). It's clear that a lot of effort has gone into the planting – not surprising to discover it is an award-winning cycleway and walkway.

We got to the Pukerua Bay dairy in time for an early afternoon tea – there was time for some of us to check out the rather good second-hand bookshop as well as to chat with the locals. We discovered the track we planned to follow from the end of Rawhiti Road down to the beach is known as the Goat Track due to its steepness. Rain was threatening so we moved on. The Goat Track lived up to its name – it was an efficient route down to the beach and our waiting cars. Back at the car with barely a drop of rain - a perfect day's walk!

Thanks to Jo, Lawrence, Monika, Jorinna, Roy, Heather and Martin for joining me.

The timing of the trip was off on two counts. We were a week early for the Full Moon and possibly a couple of days late for the best of the snowy conditions.

A conversation with a trampler in the carpark who had crossed from Powell to Jumbo the previous day without crampons or an ice axe had us contemplating leaving them in the car. However we resolved to leave them in and on our packs to at least give them a walk. The carpark was very full. Lots of locals out walking and exercising their canines on a pleasant Saturday.

We left soon after noon and arrived at Powell Hut three and a quarter hours after leaving the carpark having stopped for lunch at Rocky Lookout. Too early for dinner so we had a snack and donned long johns, coats, hats and gloves and ensured that we had our head lamps handy in our pockets.

There was a bit of snow beyond Powell Hut on the way to Mount Holdsworth and we were able to follow in the footsteps of others who had ventured on to Holdsworth trig or gone part of the way before returning to the comfort of Powell Hut. The wind was quite cold when we were exposed to it and there were good views out to the east when the clouds parted.



We set off from Holdsworth summit at around five o'clock for Jumbo Hut trudging mostly through snow though sometimes the gravel of the ridge. It was not very fast going as we had to exercise some care especially on down hill sections. I got my head torch out, not so much to find our way, but to find Warren's glasses that had pinged off his head when one of the frame arms had detached. Having got the torch out I used it to light the way until we reached Jumbo high point beyond the sign indicating the turn off down to Jumbo Hut.

Warren was able to discern the path down and regular poles confirmed that we were on the correct route. We did this section by the light of the half moon only and eventually saw the welcoming lights of Jumbo Hut. The snow had gathered in the worn track channel and had formed blue ice in places which was very slippery to stand on.

We reached the hut just after eight and with only ten others in residence were able to have a choice of mattresses which would not have been the case in a full and noisy Powell Hut. Warren cooked dinner and we had a good feed before retiring for the night. The westerly wind battered the hut for most of the night.

There was the suggestion of exiting to the carpark via Pinnacle Ridge and Pinnacle high point but the rain arrived as we neared Atiwhakatu Hut so we gave that idea a miss. We arrived back at a much emptier carpark about twenty four and a half hours after we left it.

Thanks Warren for organising the trip and the romantic notion that inspired it. We were Warren Wheeler leader and Ernie Cook scribe.



PNTMC Newsletter September 2023

- Upcoming Trips and Club Nights
- Interclub Photo Competition Coming, order your Wild Ruahine 2024 Calendars
- Trip reports: Snowcraft 1 & 2, Conical Knob Coastal Walk, Kime – Penn Creek, Te Heu Heu Climbing and More, Pukerua Bay-Plimmerton Loop, Moonlight Holdsworth - Jumbo.

Send articles to

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Senden PNTMC
PO Box 1217
Palmerston North

PNTMC Contacts

President	Janet Wilson	329-4722
Vice President	Bruce van Brunt	328 4761
Secretary	Anne Lawrence	357-1695
Treasurer	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Webmaster	Martin Lawrence	357-1695
Membership Enquiries	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Gear Custodian	Anne/Martin Lawrence	357-1695
Newsletter Editor	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Trip Coordinator	Janet Wilson	329-4722
Beginner Tramps	Anne Lawrence	357-1695
Snowcraft Coordinator	Dieter Stalman	027 450 9460