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# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

[www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz)

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter March 2012

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*Chris Kelly and Doug Strachan crossing the Waipawa river [David Vydra]*

### Club Nights

All are welcome to our club nights. These are held at 7:45pm on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North.

**8 March**

**Extraordinary General Meeting: Managing Ruahine Huts**

Refer notices, PNTMC website information, and previous Newsletter.

**29 March**

**AGM**

The PNTMC Annual General Meeting 2012 will sort out routine club business, offices, and finances, then offer you a good supper and chance to catch up.

*Please note that the previously advertised date for the AGM of 22 March was incorrect.*

## Upcoming Trips

**3-March**

**Knights-Shorts Track loop** **M**

**Craig Allerby** **323 7913**

Head up the Knights track to the Ngamoko Range and Toka peak, along the range, then return down Shorts track. Depart 8.00am..

**4 March**

**Rangi Hut** **E/ M**

**Woody Lee** **357 2390**

One of popular huts in Western Ruhanine Forest Park. It will be an easy tramp to the hut and we will explore the tussock tops of the Whanahuia Range. Leave PN at 8am.

**10- 11 March**

**Pohangina River Full Length** **F**

**Warren Wheeler** **356 1998**

Depart 7.00am. Is this the ultimate summer river trip? Easy waterfalls, gravel flats, rock hopping, crisscrossing, mostly river travel with the odd sidle track down past Top Gorge and Leon Kinvig huts, and on to Ngamoko Hut - and that's just the first day. Then on past Mid-Poh Hut, the boulders get huge, an odd pool for a swim, almost a luge. All most excellent, the joy immense, bring a cut lunch but leave the tents.

**11 March**

**North Ruapehu Lava Field** **M**

**Peter Wiles** **358 6894**

You can visit some of the spectacular and easily accessible volcanic features of Tongariro National Park on this pleasant day tramp. Depart early.

**17- 18 March**

**McKinnon Hut** **M**

**Mike Allerby** **323 8563**

After a steep climb from the Kawhatau River, you reach the beautiful tussock covered terrain of the Hikurangi Range, enjoy great views, then reach McKinnon hut. Well worth the effort.

**17 (Sat)**

**Tongariro South Ridge** **M**

**Bruce Van Brunt** **328 4761**

A good late summer rock scramble to an easy summit, well away from the madding crowds tramping the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Bring a good water bottle. Depart PN early.

**24- 25 March**

**Pourangaki Hut** **M/ F**

**Janet Wilson** **329 4722**

Come along and visit a less frequented Ruahine hut. Several ways lead to this hut and I will decide depending on who's keen to come along

and bag this one. Options include via Kelly Knight hut and the river, or tops or a longer route via Purity Hut and the Hawke Bay Range. Great scenery and a well located hut. Depart 7.30.

**25 March**

**Centre Creek** **M**

**Warren Wheeler** **356 1998**

Depart 8.00am. Centre Creek is a major tributary of the Pohangina River and provides one of the nicest stream trips around, up to an impressive waterfall. Back via Takapari Rd or the same way and down river.

**31 (Sat) March**

**Coppermine Creek** **E**

**Janet Maessen** **353 0922**

This pleasant streamside stroll near Woodville will show you wild Ruahine country from the comfort of a good track. Some good cafes in the area where to finish the tramp. Depart 8.00 AM

**31- 1 April**

**Arete Biv** **M/ F**

**Grant Christian** **354 5843**

Walk in along the South Ohau river, past South Ohau Hut and then on to Te Matawai Hut. Climb up to the tussock at Pukematawai, across to Arete and drop down to Arete Hut. Return via Waiopehu peak and hut, or the same way.

**6- 9 April, Easter Weekend**

**Ruahine Corner** **M**

**Warren Wheeler** **356 1998**

Depart 7.30am. This northern area of the Ruahine Forest Park is a gem and well worth a visit. Plan A is to go in from the west via Mokai Station to Ironbark Hut. Lunch next day at Lake Colenso then up to Potae and the broad tablelands at Ruahine Corner Hut. Day 3 back to Colenso Hut, Day 4 is out the same way. Plan B is from the east up Colenso Spur, fly camp on the tops or Kylie Biv, then Ruahine Corner, Day 3 out to Upper Makaroro Hut then downriver past Barlow Hut or up to Parks Ridge.

### 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.

### Trip leaders

Complete the trip intentions form and leave with one of Overdue Trip Contacts or drop into 44 Dahlia St. 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:

Mick Leyland	358-3183
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695

### Articles for the newsletter

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

## Editorial

### Dreams of the South Island

I was lucky to see some competitors of the Speights Coast to Coast 2012 in action during February 2012. Of course this iconic New Zealand mountain-river-road (plus) event is only really for the super fit and skilled (and crazy), but it inspires people to become involved in the outdoors and in endurance sports, particularly in running through the mountains and paddling the rivers. And it is a great spectator event.

Richard Ussher won the men's one day event and his wife Elina the women's. Both have won their section previously. There was an all star cast of competitors in each section, including the remarkable Neelu Memon, who completed the two day race of the 140 km cycle, 36 km run, and 67 km kayak. She has lost 70 percent of her sight, and her sense of balance, so is totally reliant on her support crew. But she did it. So did 71 year old David Kennedy, because "I thought I'd better do it before I get to old", and former Green MP Mike Ward (69 yrs, completed 29 events).

### The Ruahine Hut Bagging Challenge

This club challenge is now underway. As you can read below, more than a few Ruahine Hut logbooks display the PNTMC name. The challenge is to encourage members to visit Ruahine Huts and bivs in a one year period, until December 2012. Enter names in the hut books and photograph the huts, with the aim of producing a poster of all the huts at the end. Wouldn't be great if all Ruahine huts could be included and every club member could be included in at least one photo!

### Rules

- You must be a club member
- Hut means those recognised by DOC (sorry to "secret huts")
- Period to go from this years end of year BBQ to next years ie from Friday 16th Dec 2011 to Thursday 13 Dec 2012
- All huts worth 2 points.
- 1st 2 visits to each hut = 2 pts per visit, thereafter 1 point for that hut
- Hut can only be claimed once per trip
- You must enter your name in the hut log book along with PNTMC and take a photo of the hut (with or without trip members)
- Kawhatau Base earns 1 point
- Unknown campsite is an exception and worth 2 points!
- Winner announced at next year EOY BBQ

Please advise Janet Wilson of your successful hut bagging within about 30 days of doing so, so that an accurate record can be kept. We will make a spread sheet, available at club nights, for you to check. Please also Email Tony Gates a digital photo of your hut. Our poster is progressing well.

I recall some years ago the VUWTC attempting to bag all the Tararua huts in one weekend. With military like planning, they sent many of their members scouring the Tararuas to complete ambitions circuits and bag all the huts. They did not succeed. The VUWTC web site has an interesting list and description of Tararua huts. This list inspired the similar lists on our own web site.

### Wasp Sting Warning

Recently in the papers there have been 2 reports regarding wasp stings. A man died in Marlborough after getting multiple wasp stings, and a woman had to be evacuated by helicopter from Aorangi Forest Park after being stung on

her face. Late summer and early autumn are problem times for wasp stings, especially in beech forests in such areas as Nelson lakes National Park. But anywhere else also. Wasp nests are typically in the ground or in hollows of trees, and so can be a problem when tramping, even along tracks. A few of us can vouch for that. So always be on the lookout for the wasps. Even if you have been stung by wasps before and not reacted badly, the next time could produce a hypersensitive reaction or anaphylaxis, which is definitely a medical emergency.

It pays to carry some items to combat wasp stings; antihistamine tablets (take immediately), antihistamine cream (apply immediately), Ventolin (or similar) inhaler, EpiPen (self injectable adrenaline), or needle and adrenaline; if a hypersensitive reaction is known to occur or a possibility. For more information check out both these sites:

<http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/biocons/invertebrates/Wasps/firstaid.asp>

and

<http://www.southerncross.co.nz/AboutTheGroup/HealthResources/MedicalLibrary/tabid/178/vw/1/temID/97/Bee-and-Wasp-Sting-Allergies.aspx#treatment>

## Notices

### **Extraordinary General Meeting 8 March 2012**

An Extraordinary General Meeting is being held to discuss the committee's recommendations that PNTMC support DOC by taking on some responsibility for huts in the southern Ruahines (Mid-Pohangina, Ngamoko and Rangiwahia).

This meeting is your chance to hear about the details, raise questions, and discuss issues and implications.

We need members support so come along and have your say. Supper is rumoured to involve home-baked chocolate cake.

For further information read Proposal A and Proposal B on the club website at

[http://www.pntmc.org.nz/events/EGM\\_2012.html](http://www.pntmc.org.nz/events/EGM_2012.html)

### **PNTMC Annual General Meeting 29 March 2012**

(note change from date in the Trip Card)

What is happening to DOC huts and tracks in our region? This is the focus for discussion after the business of the AGM. It is your chance to join in a discussion about DOC's latest funding cuts.

Come along and have your say as to who is on the Committee. Being on the Committee is not a huge commitment, as it basically involves a monthly meeting. If you are interested in being involved, talk to one of the committee members and put your name forward.

Once the business is over, enjoy a special supper (provided by some of the best cooks in the club).

### **Trip Card Corrections**

Please note that the current trips card for January to June 2012 contains two errors with regards to club evenings.

The AGM is to be held on Thursday 29 March 2012, and not as previously advertised on 22 March.

The BYO slides evening is to be held on 31 May 2012, and not as advertised, on 24 May.

### **Trip Leaders Reminder**

Just a brief reminder for PNTMC trip leaders to assist new members with understanding basic gear requirements if necessary. A water bottle, good jacket, puttees, torch (and the like) can be essential, but experienced trampers take for granted this sort of stuff that is always carried.

### **For Sale**

Various pre loved and well tested outdoor equipment from an extensive collection has recently become available for sale. Some stuff may be donated to PNTMC equipment hire. Owner wishes stuff to go to a good home. List of items include snow shoes, mountaineering boots and crampons, tents, helmets, flies, packs, books, and four wheel drive recovery equipment (including a very nice 5 tonne hand winch).

Contact Tony, at 06 357 7439, 027 246 1901, or at [kiwi@leatherwood.co.nz](mailto:kiwi@leatherwood.co.nz)

### **DoC News from the Ruahines**

The Hawkes Bay Regional Council is involved with a proposed dam for the Makaroro River, downriver from the Whakarara road end. The Makaroro valley up to about the Ruahine Forest Park could therefore be flooded, so associated access points and tracks could be effected. More information will come to light as this project progresses.

### DoC News from Arthurs Pass

Apparently, DoC at Arthurs Pass National Park are intending to get rid of the office paper intentions form, a safety feature that currently works very well. They want to replace it with an electronic form, so be totally reliant on the internet and electricity. You may be interested in commenting on this on the petition (below), so speak with Terry, or see Grant Pearson's face book page:

<http://www.softrock.co.nz/mg/index.php?page=240>

## Trip Reports

**22 January 2012**

### Beehive Creek

**Report by Duncan Hedderley**

Four of us had a good morning on the Beehive Creek walkway, lower Pohangina Valley-Richard Lockett, Andrew Kelly, Andrew's 7 year old son Chris, and myself. The weather in the morning was decent (though once we had got home it turned cool, southerly and the heavens opened), and there was some interesting insect life about. Andrew had been trying to find information on walks in the local area, and along the way discovered the Ruahine Park Map was no longer available, but Stationery Warehouse have a very good flatbed scanner and printer.

**28 January 2012**

### Awatere Hut and Beyond

**Part One: Report and photo-Woody Lee**

On a windy summer morning four of us departed the Milverton Park and picked Tina up at her place and then headed off to Norsewood via the Saddle road. The Manawatu Gorge has been closed due to land slides since August 2011.

There were already six vehicles at the Kashmir roadend despite the strong winds, but we were the only party heading in the Moorcock Saddle direction. We soon came across a couple of trampers returning to the carpark after their

overnight trip. Walking along on top of the saddle was a real challenge as the winds continuously pushed us to the left and we sometimes had to stick together to keep in balance. Then going down the hill was easy and a lot quieter.

From a big triangle marker at the bottom of the saddle we crossed the river at an angle of 45° to the left and we saw another big marker indicating the Awatere Hut. Tina posed in front of the hut door for a photo and we also took a group photo.



*Warren, Richard, and Karen on the (very windy) track to Awatere Hut*

Richard led a detour trip to a hidden place on the other side of the river after having morning tea. This is the old Black Stag hut, a shelter made of metal sheets in the bush. It has a fireplace and frying pans hanging above the fireplace. It seems fit for 2, and looks like a stable structure (apart from needing a lot of TLC – ed). We then continued crossing the river until we came across a sign of “Happy Daze Hut 15 min” shortly after 1 pm. It was a good feeling getting back to the bush track but we soon faced a wee challenge as there was a muddy section with prickles.

I saw a white ute parked nearby the hut at the end of the track, which was a unusual scene in the forest park. The hut is a cosy 4 bunker with a fireplace and a small stainless steel top table. A family of four stayed the night and were out to the Makaretu Hut for their weekend expedition.

After lunch in the mid afternoon sun we had a discussion about the return route and then made a decision to split into two groups and to unite at the Snee road down the Makaretu River. Richard and I said ‘bye, see you soon’ and then traced back the track towards the Awatere Hut. It was a non-stop trip to the hut and we had a quick break just outside the hut. Again walking back along the saddle was our last challenge for the day and we discovered that we were the last party to leave the carpark.

It was not hard to find the junction to Snee Road on SH 2 with Richard's guidance and then I could easily spot three trampers lying on the grass and snoozing near the bridge.

### **Awatere Hut & Beyond Part Two: Report and photo-Tina Bishop**

It just didn't seem right to walk all that way to a hut and then see a vehicle parked outside it! After lunch and lots of photos it was decided that Warren would lead Karen out to Snee Road (near Norsewood), a quicker easier route which I also volunteered to take.

The track was wide and grassy through a bit of scrub and then out onto farm land, although there were no animals around. An abandoned old tractor fed Karen and my imaginations of hijacking it while Warren was fascinated by all its modifications. There were also a couple of private huts tucked away.



*We spotted a fairly unusual eel like creature in the Makaretu River . . . . .*

The track eventually led off further round into the farmland so we dropped down into the Makaretu River. The stones in the bottom of the river were very slimy and made for careful walking. Warren noticed that this was obviously the route of the vehicle at the hut. We could follow its tracks by the stones that had the slime removed by its tyres, eventually we lost them. There were some amazing swimming holes along the way which of course Warren looked at longingly but as it was not very warm I suggested we wait until we were closer to our destination. We managed two swims at two separate locations, neither of them as good as the earlier ones - typical!! Karen chose to take photos – piker.

Just around the corner we spotted the bridge on Snee Road – our waiting point which had lots of thistles and no decent swimming holes, so we ate the rest of our food and made cosy resting/

waiting spots. We waited, it got a bit chilly, the sand flies were biting but an hour and a half later Richard and Woody turned up having made a speedy 2 ¼ hour trip back to the car park. PS: Did Woody mention that the topic of the day was cannibalism??

We were Karen, Tina, Warren, Richard (leader) and Woody.

### **Saturday 28 January 2012 Toka Biv Report-Janet Wilson**

The Ruahine Hut Bagging Challenge provided the incentive for Graham to lead this (much anticipated) trip to Toka Biv - surprisingly a destination none of us had ever visited. Originally planned as a medium overnight trip, life intervened and it became a fit (F/E?) day trip.

Toke Biv lies on the edge of a swampy basin to the east and approx 200m below the ridge between Toka and Tunupo High points on the Ngamoko Range. The turn off is marked by 3 waratahs and there is the odd cairn indicating the correct spur.

Sat 28th was cool and fine- nice tramping conditions. Graham and I met Mike and Craig at the Pettersons Rd carpark at 8.00 am where we left one car, driving to the Limestone Rd carpark in the other. The tramp up Knights track was pleasant until near the top where the wind became increasingly strong and small icy patches appeared.

Once on the ridge top the wind was very strong as we headed north - not at all nice - and we were glad to drop down to Toka Biv after about an hour. The spur to the biv is scrubby and sometimes well defined. The biv is out of sight until you are nearly there.



*Ngamoko Range leatherwood leaf - provider of shelter, firewood, and beauty.*

We had lunch there and then went back up to resume our battle with the wind, which if anything had got stronger. At least it wasn't a head wind! We got along erratically, with frequent breaks when we found shelter on the lee side. Once on Tunupo peak we travelled quickly down the well worn trail until the leatherwood once again provided shelter. [please refer to Herricks Hut Ruahine weather forecast below - ed]

We had each carried a dozen eggs to rebait the stoat traps on this track, which we now did. This made the day a bit longer and it was approx 7pm when we got back to the car- a good long day out. Thanks to Mike and Craig Allerby and Graham Peters (leader) for a memorable trip and for once again helping to Save The Whio.

### **The Ruahine Hut Bagging Adventures of Bruce Van Brunt**

Well, I have been out a bit during January, but a number of trips did not include huts. At any rate here are the Ruahine huts I have been to since the Christmas BBQ:

Triplex (w Alexander vB)  
Sunrise (w/ Alexander vB)  
Waikamaka (“)  
Waipawa Forks (“)  
Kiritaki (Maharahara) (w/ Derek Sharp)  
A Frame (w/ Alexander vB)  
Stanfield (“)  
Toka Biv (alone)  
Sparrowhawk Biv (w/ Penny Abercrombie)  
Mid Pohangina (w/ Anne vB)



*Kiritaki Hut and view, with headwaters of Orouakiritaki Stream behind.*

I am sure Janet, Warren, et co are well ahead of this meagre list. However, I hope to increase it a bit. I am still quite keen to see the north east end of the Ruahines. The weather pretty much killed the last trip, but Penny and I did make it up to Sparrowhawk biv, and we were ready to go

over the tops once the wind/ clag/ rain let up (it never did) [sounds a bit like the Tararuas there Bruce- ed]. Next trip there I will try it again, but I will use the Colenso spur and do a loop around to Kylie Biv then Parks Peak Hut.

### **5 February 2012 Northeast Ruahine Hut Bagging in Comfort Report and photos by Tony Gates**

Huts with names like Dead Dog, No Mans, Sentry Box, and Murderers, and places like Golden Crown Ridge, The Thee Fingers, Frying Pan Flat, and Apias Creek “Any point in a storm”, the north east Ruahines have fascinating history. The area is an interesting place to visit too, despite the long drive from Palmerston North. And you can drive right to three of the huts, and very close to the fourth. Other huts are within a few hours from the road end. You can admire steep, forested Ruahine ridges above you from the comfort of your vehicle.

Broom Hut was our first hut, but it doesn't really count in this competition. It was a NZ Forest Service deer cullers base on the farm edge of Big Hill Station and beside the road to No Mans. A few years ago, it was relocated to the Ongaonga DoC office to be a museum and a tribute to the Deer Cullers. A person can feel the presence of being in a hut in the hills by merely walking into Broom Hut.

With the farmer's permission, vehicle access was no problem to our first real DoC hut. At the back of the farm, we found the ancient Herricks Hut number one?, which was probably abandoned long before any of us were born, and has had no maintenance since. That slum definitely cannot be added to our score. A little poking around the delightful Kanuka forest soon revealed Herricks Hut number two, which dates from the NZ Forest Service era. Two ex army sheds join to make a cosy hut set amidst really lovely campsights.

Sentry Box hut was next on our list, near the Mangleton road end and on the popular tramping track to the new Parkes Peak Hut. A gentle ten minute climb over farmland then forest, through some good Ruahine mud, brought us to the rather shady and dirty Sentry Box Hut. DoC had recently painted the exterior a beautiful bright orange, the colour they were originally designed to be- great for identification from helicopters.

Ruahine poet Lester Masters had a road end shelter built in his honour during the 1970's to replace a hut at Mathews Stream. This was one of his favourite haunts. A good track leads from here to into the Ruahines. Masters Shelter was

our last hut for the day, and a pleasant place for a brew. There is good camping there, and some pretty wild and steep creeks above draining the Ruahines. Some of Lester Masters poetry has featured in previous newsletter editions here.



*The cosy Herricks Hut, north east Ruahines*



*The sign in Herricks Hut*

**6 February 2012**  
**Coppermine Creek-Wharite Peak**  
**Report and photo by Karen Tutt**  
**Leader: Duncan Hedderley**  
**Followers: Douglas, Kerry, and Karen.**

This was my third outing with PNTMC. The thing that makes these trips memorable, apart from being out amongst the Manawatu's beautiful

landscapes and ecosystems, is, of course, the conversation. On my first trip with the club, the party consisted of myself and two other women. The conversation was varied, but dwelt considerably on subjects which are not generally discussed when there are males present, including the delightful peculiarities of male evolutionary psychology. On my second trip, both sexes were represented, and the conversation was, again, very varied; there was, for some reason, a great deal on the subject of cannibalism. It was a scholarly discourse, about the sociology and psychology of this method of obtaining nutrition.

So this time, I was expecting . . . well, I'm not sure what I was expecting. Especially when I found myself the only female in a party of males. The conversation was again varied and erudite. Cannibalism was discussed briefly (only because I brought it up). In general, the subjects were cheerful and optimistic, beginning with the story of a trumper breaking her hip in a fall, and moving on to a general discussion of tramping accidents, broken bones, shock and hypothermia.



*PNTMC on the track at Coppermine Creek*

I participated in this conversational buffet as I could, in between gasping for oxygen. The trip was graded easy to medium, and I am graded unfit and inexperienced. I had discussed this with Duncan our leader prior to the trip, and he kindly accommodated me, giving only the shadow of an ironic smile when he called me back and pointed out the almost vertical (so it seemed to me) start of the climb, as I walked straight past the turnoff without seeing it. And graciously saying at one point that he was enjoying the slower trip because it gave him more opportunity to look at the scenery.

Unfortunately for us, said scenery disappeared at an altitude of approximately 880 metres. In spite of the weather forecast being fine, the top of Wharite peak was in thick cloud, so visibility was low. A couple of us didn't have quite enough

warm clothing to make standing around on the windy top of a high hill a comfortable experience, so it was decided that we would turn back. Next time I will pack that extra polypropylene top, and some gloves. As we drove back to Palmerston North, the television aerial on the top of Wharite peak was just starting to be visible as the cloud began to lift. So even if we had gone to the top, it seems likely that all we would have seen was the inside of a cloud.

It was nice for me to have been able to do this tramp; unlike previous trips, I was not hobbled by sore muscles for three days afterwards. Even though this was an easier trip, I think I must be getting fitter. I'd like to go back to Wharite, to see the distinct vegetation of those upper reaches, the lichen hanging from the trees, and tiny white flowers carpeting the tree trunks. We didn't see or hear many birds, sadly a common state of many forests on the mainland, but we did see one that I've never seen before, and none of us could identify. It was feeding on nectar from flax flowers, and was about the size and colour of a tui, but without the white neck feathers. The keratin of its beak extended up onto its forehead in what I think is known as an operculum. Next time I see a bird book I'll try to identify it.

**11- 12 February 2012**  
**Sunrise Hut Trip**  
**Report-David Vydra, photo-Doug Strachan**

My name is David Vydra and I am from Germany. The tramp to Sunrise Hut was my first one with the PNTMC but before that I tramped four times in New Zealand, and sometimes in Germany. The four tramps I did in New Zealand before were the Manawatu Gorge tramp, a forty minute tramp in the Trounson Kauri Park, a seven hour tramp in Abel Tasman National Park and to the Silvester Lake in Kahurangi National Park. But the Sunrise Hut tramp was the most difficult of all. Strange was that the first day was much more difficult than the second day, but I thought it would be the other way around, and the second day would be the harder one.

On the first day we tramped to the Triple X hut, and from there we took the track up to Sunrise Hut. We couldn't make any breaks because it was drizzling and everything was wet. So Andrew, Doug, Chris (the seven year old son of Andrew) and I tramped three hours to Sunrise hut. When we came to Sunrise hut it was in clouds and it was so misty that we could see only 50 Meters. I hoped that we would have a good view from Sunrise hut into the valley but we saw only clouds. There was also no wind to blow the clouds away. But luckily the weather in New Zealand is very changeable so that the next day

we had nice weather and only some clouds. From Sunrise Hut we walked to the place where the plane crashed, then we came back and followed the path to Waipawa Forks hut and then along the river back to the car. But the part on the river was not so hard like the first day despite being twice as long, and in relation to the first day the second day was very nice. We saw mountain cabbage trees and of course many ferns and other plants.



*Wet feet in the Waipawa River*

At Sunrise Hut, Chris enjoyed free-falling from the top bunk to a pile of 3 mattresses below. Sunrise Hut is a comfortable hut and it was my first stay in a hut ever. But after the long tramp I slept very well. From this trip I got a very good experience of New Zealand tramping because in Germany you have huge tracks and every track is well sign-posted and you do not go through water. I know now that you have to be prepared for really low temperatures even in the summer so gloves aren't a bad idea. But altogether the tramp was a lot of fun and I look forward to going on the next tramp to Iron Gate Gorge on 19 February 2012.

Trip members: Andrew Kelly, Chris Kelly (7), Doug Strachan, David Vydra (14)

**12 February 2012**  
**Purity & Beyond**  
**Report-Warren Wheeler**

No worries, we won't be rushing off and leaving you behind, just go at your own pace and enjoy yourself. So it was that the three of us more experienced guys spent a pleasant day

accompanying three ladies up to Purity Hut and beyond. The hardest part is the steep climb up the fence line to the Ruahine Forest Park boundary – and the equally steep reverse ascent on the way back. Otherwise it was an almost perfect windless day although a bit warm even in the shade of the beech forest so we were more than happy to stop for el fresco style lunch on the decking at the nice new 6 bunk Purity Hut. DoC has spent some effort to fix the niggles such as the leaky door vents in the hut door but still haven't moved the coat rack above eye gouging level – still, the toilet is delux with the fantastic view unimpeded by the large window in the door (no one way glass, but). Its reputation must be spreading because according to the hut log book there were 208 trampers from 83 parties during 2011 compared with 175 in 2010. Our view stretched across the Kawhatau valley to the cloud covered slopes of Ruapehu.

Shall we check out the alpine flowers and see how far we get – too right. Well, Lotte made it the hour to Wooden Peg, while Donna and Alison

peeled off sooner, but all agreed it was well worth the effort.

We were Richard Lockett, Woody Lee, Donna, Lotte Bald (Germany), Alison and Warren Wheeler.



*Lotte on Wooden Peg - Photo Woody Lee*

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### **A Climb of Hochfeiler, Zillertal Alps 16-18 Sept 2011 Report and photos by Terry Crippen**

Last year, while in the Zillertal in Austria, scrambling around the Berliner Hoherweg and up various peaks, the big peak at the head of the valley looked very inviting. Its called Hochfeiler (its Austrian/Tyrolian name) at 3510m, or if you prefer its Italian name Gran Pilastro. But from the Austrian side it was definitely too steep and too glaciated for us. So it was a few days later, after returning to Innsbruck for a bit of a rest that we headed across the famous Brenner Pass into South Tyrol, Italy to Sterzing (or Vipiteno in Italian). Sterzing is a small town still in the Alps and is still very much like the rest of Tyrol across the border in Austria, since it has only been part of Italy since the end of WW1. Most people here are bilingual, and all the signs and publications are in both German and Italian – German being the preferred language for most of the population, I expect.

After staying in town a couple of nights we caught a local bus up the Pfitschtal to Stern. From here a narrow road leads up to a relatively low pass (2251m) across into Austria. It was decided a number of years ago not to make this a major road but instead to create a Nature Park of the Zillertal in Austria. (The narrow road over the pass is not open to vehicles, but makes an excellent cycling or tramping route).

We were heading into the Unterbergthal, a side valley of the Pfitchtal. A 1200m climb along a well formed and used track would take us to Hochfeilerhutte at 2710m. Various persons were heading down, some no doubt having climbed Hochfeiler as a day climb! As the valley turned north the views became even more impressive; the ridge on the far side of the valley, very steep and with spiky schist peaks. The Gliderferner (glacier) had obviously receded a huge amount in the recent pass as an intact moraine wall traced its way up the valley side. Hochfeilerhutte is perched on a rocky ledge above one of the lateral moraines. A leading ridge behind the hut, with glaciers on either side, leads up to the summit of Hochfeiler at 3510m.

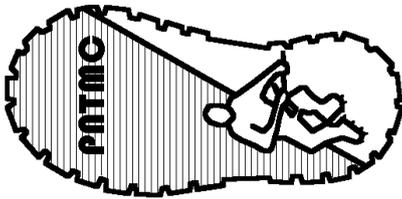
Settling into our accommodation took a while. The hut custodians knew little English, and us no Italian or German, and I think they were a little confused what to do with these foreigners even though we had phoned in a booking. Travelling light, we now buy our dinners at the huts. This one being a SAV (Sterzing Alpivern) one not as one might expect a CAI (Italian Alpine Club) one. We proceeded to order our meals, with some "lost in translation" effect; we ended up with a combine meal of two large helpings of different Vienna Schnitzel, fried potato, potato salad and cabbage salad! The biggest meals we have had so far on our travels (including in Mongolia).

Come morning along with most of the others in the hut it was a quick departure up onto the ridge behind the hut and a steady scramble towards the summit. The weather was deteriorating unfortunately. Overnight snow had fallen, accompanying a “Donner and Blitzen” show. So conditions were not the best and we hoped that not too much mist and cloud would obscure our views from the summit. A number of people turned back about halfway up the ridge due to the approaching weather and the snow which was getting thicker on the ground and a bit slippery as we headed up. A steep scramble up the final section of the ridge, with the help of walking pole or ice axe ensured we didn't end up sliding off down the ice face on our left above the Weisskarferner - there would be no stopping on that face if one slipped! The summit cross greeted us, cameras were exchanged and some reasonable views were had from the summit, at 3510m – the mist however blocked our view of our previous trips in the Zillertal. No summit lunch though, so it was a careful decent down the slippery snow covered rocks – made icy by the tread of the numerous scramblers. We lunched at the top of the bluffs directly above the hut. Back at the hut most people were retreating down valley as the forecast for the next day was not very encouraging to say the least – rain and snow. We stayed on, as our plan was to cross over the Gliderferner and to the hut in the next valley.



No such luck though as we awoke the following morning to plenty of rain, cloud and a light covering of snow higher up. Also the barometer had plummeted by the equivalent of 100m height gain. So like the other small group in the hut it was down valley for us. The river coming out of the Gliderferner was up and a very mean brown colour! We were lucky with the rain until we got down into the forest then it started in earnest making us quite wet. Arriving onto the narrow road we set off at a fast pace to Stern to check out any available zimmer frei. We were in luck and sorted out our accommodation and where to dry our gear out in our minimal German and the landlady's minimal English. We settled into a relaxing afternoon to the sound of rain and cowbells outside.

Come morning we were greeted to a white wilderness outside, plenty of snow had fallen overnight and it was still falling. So after the usual German/ Austrian/ Tyrolean breakfast of coffee, buns, ham, cheese and jam we donned our storm gear for the half hour walk down to St Jacob to catch the bus, preferring the comfort of a café while we waited than the open cold bus stop. The snow kept falling as we enjoyed coffee and fried potato before catching the bus back to Sterzing and accommodation, albeit a day earlier, for a relaxing afternoon.



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## PNTMC Newsletter March 2012

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

- Notice for EGM and AGM
- Tramping and hut bagging all over the Ruahines, including tramps to Toka Biv, Coppermine Creek, Awatere Hut, Herricks (etc) hut, and Sunrise Hut.
- More European alpine adventures

### **Articles for the newsletter**

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

**Get out and about with us!**

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