

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter February 2015



North Mangahao Biv found – far from where shown on the map

[Peter van Essen]

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.

12 February

We Are Not Lost

Warren Wheeler

We were just never found. Navigation with map and compass is a skill that is easier to learn than you may think; and really handy if your GPS runs out of batteries. Maps and compasses supplied.

26 February

Inca Trail

Woody Lee

In November 2014 Woody and his family walked the Inca Trail (4215m) and visited Cusco, the Sacred Valley, Ollantaytambo's ruins and Machu Picchu.

Upcoming Trips

1 February

Atiwhakatu Hut E/M
Geoff Phillips 356-4223

Note change in leader

For those who remember the old Forest Service style hut the new hut is a revelation – how DOC is now catering for “front country” visitors with bookable huts on the challenging Jumbo–Powell Circuit. The improved track up the valley to the hut makes for a pleasant and relatively easy trip, with a notable variety of bridges. Back out the same way after lunch.

6-8 February Waitangi Weekend

Kayaking Whanganui River
Kathy Corner 356-8186

Early bookings were essential so if you want to go on this trip you will now probably have to rely on a cancellation. Give Kathy a call.

8 February

Beehive Creek E/Family
Doug Strachan 353-6526

Just north of Pohangina, this easy walk paddling down the stream makes for a fun day out for the kids and the young at heart.

14-15 February

Carkeek Hut F
Mary Lund 06 374-7811

A seldom visited hut in the middle of the Tararua Ranges. Well worth a visit.

15 February

Iron Gates Gorge E/M
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

A classic summer river trip for beginners. We follow the Oroua River side track towards Iron Gates Hut until it meets the river and then follow the river down to the spectacular gorge. Wet feet and more. Depart 8.30am.

21-24 February

Maropea and Ruahine Corner Huts F
Grant Christian 354-5843

A four day circuit in the northern Ruahines. Start at the end of Wakarara Road and travel via Sparrowhawk Biv, Maropea Forks Hut, Colenso Hut, and Ruahine Corner Hut. Back out via the Ruahine Range and Colenso Spur. Please contact me at least week before.

21-22 February

Te Matawai M
Martin Lawrence 357-1695

A good 4 hours of criss-crossing up the Ohau River then climb steeply up the Yeates 500

track and along to Te Matawai hut for the night. Return options via the Dora Track and around to Waiopehu Hut or directly down Gable End track.

22 February

Manawatu Walking Festival E/M
Dave Grant 328-7788

Come and join this tramp to Rangiwahia Hut that Dave is leading for the Manawatu Walking Festival. The Walking Festival participants will arrive by bus at the Rangi carpark at 9.30am and wander up to Rangi Hut for lunch, returning back to the carpark and the bus by 3.30pm, so it's a nice easy day to wander through the bush up to the tussock slopes around Rangi Hut and enjoy those expansive views. Contact Dave to carpool from Milverton carpark leaving at 8.00am.

28-1 March

Kime Hut M
Woody Lee 357-2390

You are invited to join me for this late summer tramping to top of the Tararua Range up from Otaki Forks. It is part of the popular Southern Crossing and we climb Mt Hector if the weather is friendly. Leave PN at 8am.

1 March

Maharaha/Matanganui Meander M
Peter van Essen 355-9076

My March meander is a mosey up Maharaha and Matanganui mountain from Mangapuaka Stream. A medium moderate trip so not much mud or other mayhem. Marvel at the much maligned mighty leatherwood as we munch our lunch, then maybe a mid-slope minor detour to make the return more memorable. Depart 7am.

6-8 March

Mid Waiohine Hut M/F
Craig Allerby 323-7913

Note Pohangina River trip now 21-22 March

Leave PN at 7.30. We will head up the Mt Holdsworth Track, stopping at Powell Hut or Mt Holdsworth for lunch. From Mt Holdsworth we descend down to the Waiohine River valley to stay at the excellent little backcountry hut for a night. Good camping is also possible.

Trip Grading

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

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

Other grades:
Technical skills (T)
Instructional (I)

Trip participants

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

Gear for trips

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

Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips

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

Trip leaders

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

Overdue Trips

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

Janet Wilson	329-4722
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695

Articles for the newsletter

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

Notices

Gates Family Donation

It has been a year now since Tony passed away and thanks to Yvonne van der Does and the Gates family we have received a \$2,000 donation to help the club maintain the Mid Pohangina and Ngamoko huts in Tony's beloved Ruahine Ranges.

Many thanks and Happy Anniversary Tony.

PNTMC 50th Anniversary 2015

Plans are under way to celebrate the club's 50th anniversary and Camp Rangī Woods at Totara Reserve has already been booked for the last weekend of November 2015.

A Jubilee book is also being prepared as a record of events and activities over the years.

If you have any ideas or are interested in assisting then please contact the club President Dave Grant who is heading the organising sub-committee of Terry Crippen, Peter Darragh, Doug Strachan and Martin Lawrence (Treasurer).

We would like to invite past members to join in the celebrations so if you know of anyone please let them know or give Terry their contact details.

PNTMC Annual Awards

Our end of year BBQ at Ashhurst Domain was as usual the venue for our annual roundup of notable achievements by club members, again presented by Warren Wheeler.

Chain Gang Award – Malcolm Leary for lugging a 17kg chain to Rangī while in training.

Silly Sausage Award – Richard Lockett for leaving biersticks at home in the fridge.

World Expeditions Entertainer of the Year Award – Grant Christian for his "We Are Trekking" rap song at the end of Nepal Trek.

Once Bitten Award – Malcolm Leary for flying out with frostbite from Meru, Nepal.

Bucket List Award – Woody Lee for taking an (unneeded) bucket into Mid Poh hut.

Blown Away Award – Craig and Michael Allerby for retrieving gear left behind by a couple of lads in windy conditions above Triangle Hut.

Pretty Good Award – Terry Crippen for his penchant for faint praise.

Wong Way Award – Woody Lee for attaching his ice axe upside down to his pack coming off Jumbo.

No Pressure Award – Mike Allerby at Waiopēhu mistaking his cooker ignitor for a pump.

I Hate Tramping Award – Geoff Phillips for noting that the worst thing about tramping is that you always have to go home after great trips like Jumbo-Powell.

Day Tripper Award – Anne Lawrence for breaking her finger after falling over on an easy Waiotauru trip.

Off the Edge Award – Dwight Swainson for enthusiastically launching himself during crevasse training on Snowcraft.

Voltaren Soldier On Award – Karen Tutt for walking out from Totara Creek on a twisted knee.

Sitting Duck Award – Conan Strachan exposed on the doorless damaged toilet at Sunrise Hut.

Dave Hodges Award for Excellence in Pursuit of Forgetfulness – Richard Lockett for leaving his keys in his ute at Milverton Park and the door wide open (Thanks to Anne for remedying this after a cell phone call from Otaki).

Tararua Hut Bagging

Following the success of our previous Ruahine hut bagging and peak bagging competitions, PNTMC is running a new hut bagging competition focused on the Tararuas.

The challenge started on 1 July 2014 and will run over the 12 months until 30 June 2015.

3 points per visit to Tararua hut, bivvy, shelter, Holdsworth Lodge etc – as long as they are on DoC website. **Only 1 point for 2nd and 3rd visits, not 3 points.**

1 extra point if the visit is on a club trip.

1 extra point if you stay the night. (One hut only per night) Camping outside crowded huts counts.

1 extra point for a first visit.

All other DOC huts in the country - 1 point per visit (no extra points)

All huts maximum of 3 visits to count for points.

Please take photos to record the visit, as well as for producing a new poster. As our Ruahine hut bagging poster was a huge success, the club would like to produce a similar one for the Tararuas.

Hut bags, email to jwilson@inspire.net.nz.
Hut images, martin.lawrence.nz@gmail.com

Progress Update from Janet

The scores as I have them for the hutbagging are WW with a massive lead on 184, me 2nd on 124, and Graham Peters on 71. Woody has dropped to 4th on 61. So far there have been approx 280 hut visits by individuals (83 different huts), with an overall total of 896

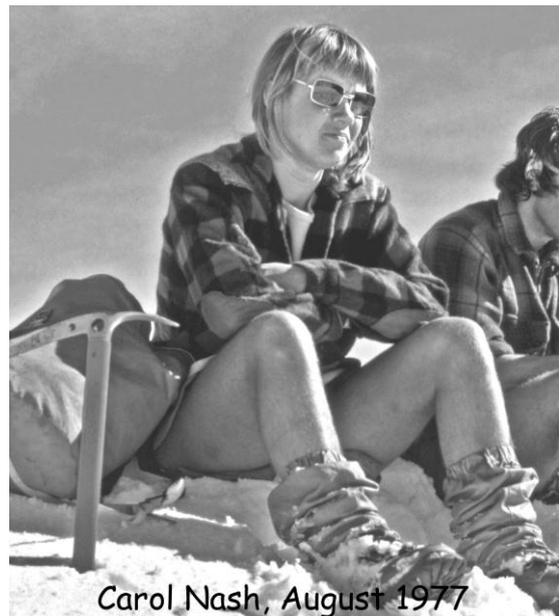
points, mostly gained on club trips and at Tararua Huts.

There are plenty of opportunities coming up in the next 5 months – remember, the challenge runs until the end of June.

The current Top 10 Hut Baggers are:

Warren W	184
Janet W	124
Graham P	71
Woody L	61
Graeme R	58
Richard L	52
Mike A	44
Craig A	41
Grant C	41
Bruce vB	36

Obituary – Carol Nash



Carol Nash, August 1977

[Photo Kevin Pearce]

You may have seen the recent news report about the death of Carol Nash in the French Alps.

What you may not have known is that she was a very active member of PNTMC in 1977.

According to life member Kevin Pearce she was a remarkable woman and arguably our most able alpine rock climber ever.

"Carol Nash, 58, originally from the lower North Island, was one of six experienced skiers who were swept away by the large snow slide in the French

Alps, near the town of Ceillac (near the Italian border) on Saturday 24 January, 2015. The physiotherapist, who moved to France in the early 1990s, lived in L'Argentiere-la-Bessee in the Alps region with her 16-year-old daughter, Jessye Hamilton."

"A very talented rock climber and violin player."

She was also known as a writer:

Women in New Zealand Mountaineering, by Carol Nash. 1985:

"New Zealand women are advantaged by an ongoing tradition of acceptance in tramping spheres."

She will be sadly missed and fondly remembered.

Trip Reports

16 November 2014 North Mangahao Biv Peter van Essen

Least frequented of the DoC Tararua huts, Nth Mangahao is a two person 'dog box' bivvy. It won't have a lot of appeal to most people as it is stuck in the pepperwood scrub with no marked tracks and limited views, but there are plenty of deer which is why it is mostly hunters who frequent the area plus a few curious trampers like ourselves.

The original plan of an overnight trip was changed to a day trip because of high winds and rain on the Saturday so a 7am start on Sunday saw us heading up through Gordon Kear forest to Scrub Peak. The informal track along the main range had been recently cut so travel was easy to Punga Hut, which we reached in good time.

Then the exploring began, we knew a sidle route from Punga to Nth Mangahao Biv was possible, from others accounts, but finding the best line across the scrubby faces and gullies was the challenge. From the hut we followed a flagged hunters trail in the right direction which took us up to the leatherwood belt but then abandoned us. So from this point we hugged the 600m contour as far as possible keeping in the pepperwood to avoid the impenetrable leatherwood/coprosma scrub above.

After two hours of sidling along deer trails, crawling through a few scrubby slips, and crossing several scrubby gullies we were close to the bivvy site (which is 1 km lower on the ridge than where it is marked on the Topo 50

map, important to know before you go looking for it!). So we pushed up through the leatherwood and coprosma and bush lawyer to gain the knob above the biv, then a short drop down the ridge had us at the biv before noon.

After lunch we scouted around to see if a route up the main ridge was feasible for a return via the main range but the scrub was very thick, with no obvious trails, so not practical or pleasant in the time we had available. So we headed back to Punga Hut on a lower contour to see if we could find a better sidle route than the one we had come in on. A flagged route we followed for a while took us ever lower toward the steep waterfalled stream below, where we did not want to go, so we sidled again at around 500m following deer trails where we could. A few scrubby gullies to get across some of the gullies eventually brought us onto a possum hunters trail close to Punga Hut, this trail branched off the one we had followed out and could possibly lead to a better sidle between our two routes (somewhere in-between the 500 and 600m contours).



Janet scouting a route above the biv

Some bush lawyer and scrub scratched knees was a small price to pay for achieving our objective of reaching the Biv from the west (most hunters come in from the eastern side).

There was plenty of deer sign and we nearly stood on one in the thick pepperwood when we were walking into a strong wind and it didn't pick us up until we were nearly on top of it. The frequent deer trails made travel relatively straight forward.

This area is part of the Manawatu Gorge beech gap and in the absence of beech forest this area was mostly northern rata - kamahi forest, before people, deer and goats arrived and burnt or browsed the forest to the point of collapse of the main canopy.

Of the taller trees only scattered miro remain the rest is now a mixture of pepperwood scrub in the mid slopes and leatherwood above.

The deer and possums selectively browse and prevent any regeneration of kamahi or northern rata so this forest type will not return in the foreseeable future.

One of the last of the once majestic northern rata can still be seen as a decaying stump emerging forlornly from the pepperwood upslope from the biv.

So not a particularly easy biv to get to, but worth it for the curiosity value. Now there is the scrubby main range to the south to explore another time!

We were Peter van Essen scribe/leader, Janet Wilson, and Warren Wheeler.

6-7 December Totara Flats there and back Terry Crippen

Once the two cars had met at the Holdsworth road end relatively late on Saturday morning, the two parties headed off together, having a rest at Rocky Lookout then onto the Totara Flats track junction. We gave our farewells to Ange's party who were heading to Totara Flats via High Ridge and so we started to descend towards Totara Creek.

Once we got to the saddle between Totara Creek and Carrington Creek the new track started to head up the ridge on the true left of Totara Creek. It follows an old old track/route that links with the Sayer Hut track. So an extra height gain of about 100m +. Eventually it headed down a spur to the new bridge across Totara Creek, where the track follows the old track route to the swinging swing bridge across the Waiohine River. Then a short walk to Totara Flats Hut. Cups of tea and nibbles were then the order of the day.

Later we wandered down to the grassy flats and found an excellent bar to cross the river so we could investigate Sayer Hut – a very old hut. Back for more nibbles and cups of tea. By this time Ange's team had arrived, and it was soon tea time – plenty of food to be demolished. Only one hunter besides us, so the three flies became excellent pillows.



Crossing the riffle to Sayers Hut

In the morning we headed back, this time using the old track – since I reckoned it would involve less height gain and be quicker. It was very windy so the Waiohine bridge crossing was interesting! While it's a bit overgrown and the creek has cut into it in places it is still easy to follow. So I suggest if you are going to Totara Flats go in one way and out the other. One of us took a bit of a tumble and ended up with a painful knee – no names mentioned – so it was a bit slower coming back up.

Ange's party eventually caught up with us so we all headed out more or less together. A stretchy bandage and some drugs aided the sore knee. At the road end we couldn't find Warren and Raj – we had a good hunt for them, they were ahead of us – so we left without them back to Ange's house for a late lunch. Some ice was also added to the knee. Almost as soon as we had arrived I got a call from Raj, they had hitch hiked and were outside the Village Grinder (good place for coffee in Kuripuni), so I had to trundle off and pick them up.

Our party was Karen Tutt, Raj Palanismi (might have got the spelling a bit wrong – apologies Raj!) and me.

6-7 December High Ridge to Totara Flats Angela Minto

Our two groups meet at the increasingly very busy Holdsworth car park for a 9am start. Terry's easy trip to Totara Flats and our longer one up to Powell Hut and down via High Ridge to Totara Flats to meet for the night.

It was a hot steady climb up the well used highway equipped with plenty of steps to Powell (not sure if they make it easier or harder actually) but they unfortunately certainly

take away a bush climb experience for lots of people I think.



Setting off along High Ridge [Warren Wheeler]

A quick lunch sheltering from the wind at the High Ridge sign and we were off to find the newly marked route down. A fresh pile of deer guts and a wee bit of pink tape marked the entrance way leading into the bush. With Goblin forest on the left and thick scrub on the right of the wind exposed ridge it was a relatively easy ground trail to follow. Further on the tape became more elusive as branches have fallen etc and the ridge broadens, the trail becomes a lot harder to pick up.

Thankfully my clever navigating companions, and the help of the GPS just in case, we continued on, periodically ferreting around to find the route again. It seemed a long way before we reached the point of heading down the southeastern spur directly to Totara Creek marked by a very old characteristic sign. Again that spur seemed to go on and on or perhaps it was just that we were getting tired. Eventually the pleasant sound of a big river welcomed us to Totara Flats with a short walk further downstream to the new and rather palatial Totara Flats Hut (it's position incorrectly marked on some topo maps). Arriving about an hour later than expected the gentleman headed straight for a swim.

The two parties shared the hut with only one hunter and two very polite pig dogs (who quietly slept outside untied up).

The next morning we visited Sayers Hut across the other side of the Waiohine to find a group staying here held up due to a severe migraine sufferer. After deciding they seemed well in control of their dilemma we headed off taking the newly routed track out to see what it was like. We caught up with Terry's group near the junction of the Powell track as they were moving slowly with an injured knee.

We were Warren Wheeler, Grant Christian and Ange Minto (scribe).

20 December Short-Knights Warren Wheeler

This was programmed as an easy overnight trip in the Ruahines, fly camping on the Ngamoko tops and enjoying the sunset and sunrise on the shortest night of the year. Great idea (!!), but the weather forecast must have put people off, as only two of us showed any interest. So we picked Saturday and made it into a day trip instead.

It is easy to get there, just drive out via Apiti to Table Flat Road and carry on to the carpark at the end of Limestone Road. Here we met a young woman who was also out for a pre-Christmas tripl, but she decided to go up the steeper Knights track to save her knees. For us the warm weather made for a hot start up Shorts Track, but a light breeze kept us comfortable as we climbed up the excellent track through the changing forest to the tussock tops at 1380m. With the help of binoculars we spotted our lady friend at about our level, progressing above the bush line on Knights Track toward the ridge line at 1480m. After carrying on along the Ngamoko ridge line we met up with her for a pleasant lunch out of the wind soon after she dropped off the high point.

After lunch we went our separate ways and carried on the short distance to Toka at 1519m. We could see the long shelf where Toka Biv is located but decided we didn't have time to nip along and down to do some hut bagging - the sign said 1.5 hours.

So we headed back down Knights Track without incident and at Coal Creek decided to take the river route – a good choice on such a nice warm day. It is pretty straightforward if you don't mind waist deep water in the odd place and swinging off a short rope beside the waterfall en route. It only took about an hour and we were back at the car, just as our lady friend was leaving.

We also stopped off to briefly explore the signposted Glow-worms where a natural bridge in the limestone lets you see at least a few glow-worms even when it is daylight.

We were Warren Wheeler and Graeme Richards.

**1-4 January
Taranua Loop Trip
Warren Wheeler**

Only three of us went on this trip, which started off with a hot late afternoon climb up from Otaki Forks to Field Hut. We were joined here by two other guys, one from the New Plymouth Tramping Club who was able to give us first hand account of their rescue from the Piriripiri last year, and one from Palmy who arrived after dark having already done a day trip to Kime ahead of his more heavily loaded wife and daughter who were starting a four day trip, except the daughter had found it too tough and had decide not to carry on, leaving him to take her place – now that's dedication !



Buttercups at Kime Hut

Day two we made our way up to Kime Hut and on to Mt Hector for lunch, in the saddle meeting a hunter we had met only a month or so previously at Tutuwai Hut – he had just made his best shot ever - 400 yards with a cross wind – and was happily loaded down with venison. While sheltering from the strong wind on Hector (1529m) we greeted a party coming up from Elder Hut - where they had spent the night – and who were heading out back to Otaki Forks, essentially doing our loop in two days instead of what we were leisurely doing in four (well, three and a half anyway).



Out of the wind on Mt Hector

We also watched a small group struggling up the Neill Winchcombe Ridge towards us but left before they arrived. Turned out to be Julie Millar and her partner Glenn (Julie is from Masterton and had recently given us a club night talk about her South Island Te Araroa Trek) – they met us at Alpha Hut later that afternoon. Their companion had suffered from the cold and cross wind so badly that he decided to stay at Kime and head out day down to Otaki Forks rather than carry on with them to Alpha and out to Walls Whare. It meant a long pick up for someone, but !

The swirling midday cloud lifted disappeared completely as we headed over the Beehives. Coming down off Atkinson into the Dress Circle we met two runners taking a breather before heading up on their Southern Crossing training jaunt.



Edelweiss on Alpha

Day three we climbed back up Alpha (1361m) and along to the Renata Ridge turnoff that we had passed the day before. From here we dropped down off the tops and eventually entered the amazing goblin forest that continued for the following several hours from Elder Hut along to Renata Hut.

We met one young fellow - "Dr Livingston, I presume?" –but otherwise had the place to ourselves. Renata Hut was built in 1956 and seems to be notorious for rats although recent

entries suggested they were now scarce.



Renata Ridge goblin forest

However just as we were clattering about finishing dinner a rat ran out of the roof, down the wall and shot off outside under the wood shed....it was quiet as a mouse all night, thankfully.

Day four started off with a magnificent glade of beech trees covered in kidney ferns, then a short climb up to the access road at so-called Maymorn Junction. From here we followed the old forestry road, which generally had a good surface and sloped gently down to the Waioatauru River, but has a number of slips and washouts that relegate this to four wheel drive only.

Fresh wheel tracks turned out to be from a short wheel base Pajero that was parked outside the Waioatauru Hut..no sign of the hunter though. It seems debateable how much longer this old converted bulldozer storage shed will last. There were no mattresses but despite a bit of vandalism it looks like local groups are keen to see it remain. After a morning tea break at the hut we headed downstream, up the old logging track high above the river.



Giant dragonflies were friendly

The old road is a bit overgrown and obstructed by small slips but it appears to be used by

possum trappers and hunters on quad bikes – we spotted one poor possum stuck in a trap so presumably they are cleared quite regularly.

The old logging road veers off up a branch of the Waioatauru Stream into what must have been a good valley to log rimu, while we dropped steeply down the short drop to the swing bridge. Here we stopped for a quick dip and lunch before carrying on out to the road end. The track in this section also follows old logging roads in places and is generally fairly easy going. We met a young family coming in and recommended they camp in a nice clearing above the river. An hour or so later we passed an abandoned boiler and other logging relics lying on a grassy flat and soon afterwards emerged at the roadend, which is also the head of the Te Araroa Trail over to Waikanae. From here we just to walk a sunny kilometre along the gravel road back to our vehicle at the Overnight Carpark at Otaki Forks itself.

A great start to 2015, thanks to my companions Richard Lockett and Graeme Richards.

2-9 January NZAC Climbing Camp, Tukino Terry Crippen

PNTMC was well represented at the New Zealand Alpine Club Climbing Camp held at the TASC lodge at Tukino on Ruapehu with five of us attending: Nick Allen, Grant Christian, Craig Bedford, Annett Patzold and myself. Normally it's at various South Island venues but every now and again it's held in the NI.

It was run by Don French (ex PNTMC member and our financial reviewer) and Jozef Croslands (who organized all the catering). There were generally about 18 to 22 people each day. Nick and I had the job of picking up all the food from Taihape for the whole week at the start.

While a lot of the snow had gone, higher up there was still ample white stuff to be enjoyed – crampons or glissading. Various activities were undertaken including putting up quite a lot of new rock routes.

And plenty of socializing and eating.

Everyone took turns in preparing the large quantities of food to be eaten.



A bit of rock climbing

On the 3rd we five PNTMC bods together with Ingo (from Germany) and Zsofia (Sofie, from Hungary) headed off to check out the Cathedral Rocks armed with plenty of climbing gear. Unfortunately the two gullies we wanted to climb were not in good condition but it still made for an enjoyable day. Some rope work was undertaken and a nice steep snow gully was descended. Coming back down the Whangaehu "Glacier" was a bit of a grovel; it's basically a dead glacier (like most of them on Ruapehu) and wasting away, so there is plenty of rockfall debris to scramble over. Other people were busy with rock climbing or scrambling, and even a bit of mountain biking.

On the 4th Nick and Craig together with Petra (Germany) and Natasha (Australian) headed off to do the Tongiriro Crossing, starting quite late to avoid the crowds. I had the job of boiling up the t-towels and drying them in the sun, as well as being lazy. Grant and Sofie headed over to Rangipo Hut.

The next day Craig, Nick, Petra, Natasha and myself drove around to Whakapapa and headed up to the Summit Plateau. Craig headed back down to his vehicle while the rest of us checked out the surrounds or the Crater Lake and then dropped down to Tukino; an excellent crossing.



Heading up to the Summit Plateau

On the 6th, 7th and 8th there was plenty of rock climbing on all the various bluffs (Northern Bluffs, by the waterfalls and by Margarets Leap). Lots of new routes from grade 11 up to about grade 22. Nick battled away with a particular climb, falling off on one occasion but eventually leading it – a new route – *Bloody Vegetarian Stew* (grade 17). Others headed off to climb Tahurangi and Te Heuheu or just up to the Summit Plateau. Don, Denise, Morgan, Andy and myself one afternoon visited the recently renovated and re-opened Whangaehu Hut (it's about to have a combination lock on it as it needs to be booked). And swimming in the Tongiriro River with visits to the hot pools at Tokaanu.



Recently upgraded Whangaehu Hut

So an enjoyable week was had by all. The foreigners were certainly impressed with New Zealand conditions; 8 days of excellent hot fine weather, plenty of rock and plenty of uncrowded snow! If you want to get into more climbing – rock, snow or ice join the NZAC, it runs a range of instruction courses and meets, using professional instructors. See: <http://alpineclub.org.nz/>

19 January
Stanfield Hut
Duncan Hedderley



Nice day at Stanfield Hut [Woody Lee]

Woody Lee, Woody's daughter Emma, and I headed into Stanfield on the morning of Wellington Anniversary day. After a run of hot weather, it was overcast, with a cooling wind - quite pleasant.

We went in along Holmes Ridge, and encountered a group of hunters coming back out; when we got to the hut, there was another group packing up, having been up from Wellington for the weekend possum trapping.

We weren't feeling adventurous, so we went back the way we had come and got back with dry feet. Leaving, we passed a group having a picnic in the camping area; nice to see the place being appreciated.

What we did in the holidays



Syme Hut, Mt Taranaki [Harley Betts]

I've just managed to get our eldest, Alex, to Syme Hut for her first time, followed by a night on Taranaki's summit, together with a

friend of mine, Sam, and his 8 yo son Otis. A bit ambitious for the kids but they coped really well and Alex even wants to go again. A big tick and a proud Dad!
Harley Betts

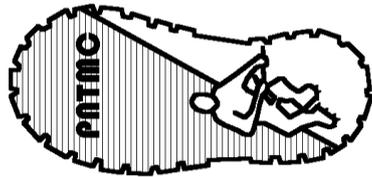
AA to D from Japan

Thanks to Doug Strachan for this item - what will those clever Japanese think of next?

You're rushing to Milverton Park to meet others for a tramping trip when suddenly you realise you haven't packed your torch, which takes D-size batteries. Horror of horrors, you find you have only AA cells. Fear not, the Japanese have a life-saving invention – a D-sized plastic cylinder that holds an AA-sized cell, converting your little battery into a big one that fits. That night, you need to leave the hut to use the loo and you take your torch, which you affectionately call 'Son of Ra' with you. Coming back, you lose your way. It's a moonless night and you can't see the blazed trail you made by bending over the fronds of silver ferns. You switch on Ra junior and there's a line of silver reflectors like runway lights leading you back to the hut. Saved again! You sigh and give the Japanese an A-grade for what seemed a D-grade invention.



All you need to convert AA batteries to D-size



**Palmerston North
Tramping and
Mountaineering
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PNTMC Newsletter February 2015

What's inside this month ?

- Gates Donation
- Obituary – Carol Nash
- Taranua Hut bagging Update
- North Mangahao Biv found
- Totara Flats direct and via High Ridge
- Ruahines - Short-Knights, Stanfield Hut
- Taranua New Year Loop Trip
- NZAC Ruapehu Climbing Camp
- Summer holiday on Mt Taranaki
- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

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

Get out and about with us!

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