

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter March 2010

Club Nights

Club nights 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. All welcome! Please sign the visitor's book at the door.

11 March

Routeburn and Caples Murray Gifford

Last summer Murray and his daughter Hannah walked the Routeburn and Caples. The trip starts at the head of Wakitipu, over the divide at McKinnon pass, up the Hollyford at high level, back over a low saddle and down the Caples and lower Greenstone, back to the lake close to the start point. The presentation will include some history of the area, touching on the Hollyford Valley and Homer tunnel. The area has been a tourist destination for over 100 years and now thousands walk the route every year.

25 March

Annual General Meeting Current conservation issues including the mining debate: Brent Barrett

The mining debate is a hot topic. Come along to hear Brent Barrett, chairperson of the Manawatu Branch of Forest & Bird, speaking on this and other conservation issues.

The AGM is also your chance to hear about what the club has done over the previous year, and to elect the committee.

If you are interested in standing for office or being on the committee, please contact a member of the current committee.

Visitors welcome.

Articles for the newsletter

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

Upcoming Trips

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.

Trip leaders

Please advise a trip coordinator, as soon as possible, if you will be unable to run your trip as scheduled. This is so that alternatives can be arranged, put in the newsletter, or passed on at club night.

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
Terry Crippen	356-3588
Janet Wilson	329-4722

Change to dates for trips in March

Two trips have different dates to what is on the trip card. Richard Lockett's Magahao-Ohau trip which was to be on 27- 28 March has been moved to 20-21 March. Chris Tuffley's Back Ridge hut trip which was on 20-21 March will go ahead on 27-28 March.

28 February

Whakapapaiti Hut

E/M

Trevor King

356 4557

Leaving Countdown 6.30am for Ruapehu. Expecting a 5 hour downhill summer jaunt through very pretty scenery back to the Chateau. Possible joint crossing of the Whakapapaiti Stream if rain beforehand, and bring windproof gear if the weather is inclined that way. Dinner at the inexpensive Countryman Chinese in Taihape if we are running late.

6-7 March

Waihona Gorge **F,T**
Tony Gates **357 7439**

This is a true Tararua Classic, traversing a great Tararua gorge on inner tubes, and seeing some fantastic country. Definitely fitness essential, with a touch of craziness needed. Nick over Mt Holdsworth late Friday or very early Saturday, squeeze into wet suits, all gear in dry bags, pump the tubes, and then a combination of floating and tramping downriver to Hector Forks. We will probably make it to Totara Flats by mid morning Sunday, then continue on down to the Waihona Gorge road end. Come prepared! Contact Tony for more details.

7 March

Blue Range Hut **E/M**
Woody Lee **357 2390**

We drive to the Kiriwhakapapa Road between Mt Bruce and Masterton and walk toward the Blue Range Hut in the eastern Tararua Forest Park. Despite the fairly steep hill at the beginning of the track, this is a delightful trip. Expect to have lunch at the hut before returning the same way. Depart 8am from Milverton Park.

13 March (Saturday)

Feild Hut and beyond **M**
Peter Darragh **353 0922**

Peter hasn't seen the track to Field Hut in daylight in years so this your opportunity to share this experience with him. Also anyone wishing to go on from the hut will be encouraged to do so. This is a Saturday trip to cater for those of us that work Sundays. Trip departs at 8am Saturday. Be in.

13-14 March

Whirinaki forest **M**
John Feeney **354 2940**

The Whirinaki Forest Park is accessed from the northern section of State Highway 5 Napier-Taupo Road. This trip should be a pleasant 2 day walk through undulating beach forest with one section of river walk. We will stay overnight at either the Central or Upper Whirinaki Huts. The plan is to travel up on the Friday night to get an earlier start for the walk on the Saturday.

14 March

Taranaki East Ridge **F**
Alasdair Noble **356 1094**

This will be a one day trip to Taranaki. Depart 4.00am from Milverton Park, or 7.30am from Stratford car park. Ascent by the East Ridge descending the "tourist" route with a final stretch on the round the mountain track. Return in the evening. If the weather looks a lot better on the Saturday Alasdair may change the day, and the final decision to go will be weather dependent.

20-21 March

Mangahao-Ohau **M/F**
Richard Lockett **323 0948**

The plan is to travel via Ohau River to South Ohau Hut and continue up river via Dowling Falls, up onto the Girdlestone Saddle before dropping down to the Mangahao River. We will fly camp somewhere not far downstream. Return is via the same route or down the Mangahao. Depart 7.30am on Saturday.

21 March

Keretaki Hut combo with MTSC **E/M**
Terry Crippen **356 3588 or 027 643 3637**

Close to Palmerston North in the South-East Ruahines, this is a nice hut to visit giving good views. We will do a bit of a loop, wandering up the Oruakeretaki Stream, before scrambling up the spur. A chance to meet some of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing club. Contact Terry for departure time.

27-28 March

Back Ridge Hut **M**
Chris Tuffley **359 2530**

Come and enjoy the Kaweka tops! We'll head up Makahu Spur and over Kaweka J to Back Ridge Hut. Coming back, we'll take a side trip to North Kaweka, and then have the option of going back down Makahu Spur, or descending via Pinnacle Spur if we're feeling ambitious. 7am Saturday departure.

28 March

Arawaru Scrub Bash **F**
Trip leader wanted

Peter van Essen is no longer available to lead this trip so if you are keen to lead it, contact one of the trip card coordinators (Janet Wilson or Terry Crippen).

Pre-Easter Trip

27 March - 1 April (approx dates)
Mt Kendall, Kahurangi National Park **M/F**
Terry Crippen **356 3588 or 027 643 3637**

Mt Kendall (1762m) is a prominent infrequently climbed peak above the Karamea river. We plan to chopper into Karamea bend, head up valley to near Trevor Carter Hut, climb Kendall, then exit via the Wangapeka in time for people to go on their Easter trips. Contact Terry well in advance for details.

Easter weekend

Monday 5 April
Mitre Flats Hut **M**
Malcolm Parker **357 5203**

Join us on this wander into Mitre Flats Hut, in from Masterton. You may have heard all the stories about the track - this is your chance to come and see for yourself. Return the same way. Departing from Milverton Park at 7.00 am.

Notices

Discounts for FMC members

Bivouac offer discount for FMC members. Just remember that to be given the discount, you do need to show your FMC card – so take it with you when you shop!

From Annett Patzold

I would like to thank the people from PNTMC who gave me the unique opportunity to experience the genuine way of kiwi tramping: how to cross rivers, how to bushbash, how to prepare for a trip with Tararua biscuits and where to find the most beautiful places.

I would have never ever been able to see and enjoy all these places without you for which I am more than grateful.

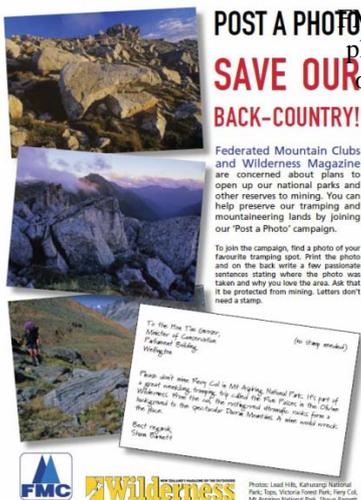
I will never forget Sawtooth Ridge with Warren or the trip up Tongariro where almost the entire club came along (Warren, Anne, Richard...). Then there was the trip up Rangitoto with Terry and Grant, one walk to the hut in bright moonlight, two peaks and one beautiful crater lake in bright sunshine or the trip up Mt Earnslaw with Bruce, Terry, Nigel, Malcom, Don, Angela and James, the hardest trip I have done so far.

I hope there will be at least one opportunity to return the favour...and also I hope there will be more trips.

THANK YOU!
Annett

Post a Photo Campaign

FMC is urging people to send a photo of their favourite outdoors spot to the Government to support FMC's stance against the mining of schedule 4 land. For more information go to www.fmc.org.nz.



Trip Reports

Manawatu Gorge Walk

17 January

Report dictated by Minami Strachan (4 years old)

Photos: Doug Strachan

This report was in February newsletter without the pictures – apologies (Editor's mistake ☹)



There were many cobwebs in a spooky hole in a tree. I looked inside there and it was too yukky. I liked swinging on the vine hanging down, but I didn't like the spooky hole.

We found a crocodile [shaped] tree and many signs – tree signs.

It was a little bit rainy and a little bit sunny.



We sat on a bench and we ate chippies and biscuits and lollies. We could see windmills.



There was a curvy [loop] track. We went on one side and they came on the other side. There were bridges and steps. They went up and down and up and down. There was a house [shelter] at the end of the track.

We were: Duncan & Sandra Hedderley, Maho & Doug & Minami (4yrs) & Conan (2yrs) Strachan, Heidi the dog. The kids walked all the way, completing the trip in 5½ hours.

Lockett Range
Kahurangi National Park
11- 15 January

Report: Richard Lockett
Pics: Martin Lawrence

Six of us converged on a sunny Nelson Airport mid morning of the 11 January, Anne and Martin Lawrence with Woody Lee having flown down, Janet Wilson and Graham Peters and I having driven to Nelson in separate vehicles negating the need of shuttle bus transport. The compromise reached was to start and finish up in the Cobb Valley rather than coming off the range closer to Takaka. A stop at Harwood's Lookout on the Takaka Hill Road revealed Kahurangi covered in dark grey cloud - the remnants of a front which passed through late on Sunday afternoon.



A three-hour drive saw us at the car park beside Trilobite Hut with smoke rising from its chimney - "must have bin cold up here last night!", the cloud having lifted with us on the journey up. Some lunch, packs sorted, a car dropped off 8 kms back down the road at the dam, an exchange of pleasantries with the lone weka on sentry duty at the track start - and we were off on the four and a half hour walk up the Cobb River Valley to Lake Cobb where we camped for the night. Sunshine alternated with showers, (Graham put his raincoat to keep the showers to a minimum). We arrived at 6.30 pm at the lake which was full to the brim. A chilly evening with sandflies saw us well wrapped up and in our bags by night fall.

The morning brought clearer skies and we set off along a direct track across a rocky knob to the Fenella Hut swimming pool, one of many tarns around the area. We passed the hut briefly conferring with the inhabitants before the climb up to the start of the Lockett Range below and south of Waingaro Peak. A break for morning tea offered the chance to take in the views across the Waingaro River to the Snowden Range, Kakapo Peak to Mount Snowden, an ugly piece of rock from this view point. Our route followed along the ridge top undulating up and down over hard rock, loose scree, some with vegetation. We gradually gained height to 1450 metres before dropping down into a narrow gut to pick a sidle track around a rocky point 1503 metres. A 400 metre sidle along steep scree, snow grass and finally rocks brought us onto a saddle with Mount Benson directly

ahead. What a sight! A 250 metre climb up a scree-covered slope in the warmth of the mid afternoon sun. Graham led the climb with me leading from behind, well behind and then a rest stop on top looking over to Mt Snowdon again - still ugly.

There are two high points to Benson, the first a pile of fractured rock at 1672 metres which we had to climb over - good fun - before walking along a narrow ridge to our next pile of rocks at 1661 metres which were climbed over and around with the eastern edge being somewhat sheer and to be avoided. From the top, we had our first view of Ruby Lake 300 metres below - this was our campsite for the night - with Diamond Lake in the distance which was our camp for the following night.

We dropped off Benson along the southern ridge to a gravel-crowned saddle and a route to the basin below, straight down the rocky scree slope then the tussock and the Spaniard - lots of Spaniard. A sidle around the western lake edge brought us to a camping spot amongst beech trees away from the lake shore and the main posse of sandflies. Our accommodation for the night saw Janet and Graham in their Olympus tent, Anne and Martin using a fly and ground sheets using Anne's Leki poles to prop up the fly with Woody and me using the outer fly from my old Firstlight tent and a ground sheet. Thermarest mats was the mat of choice for those in the know, Woody was clearly in the learning curve, re the good gear.

A good night's kip saw us fuelled and packed and retracing our footsteps around the lake to the south and gaining height for a sidle along the flank of the range through a beech forest to emerge at the top of the saddle between Ruby and Diamond lakes. Our walk through the beech led to the discovery of a hunter's hut built out of sawn beech poles and covered in black plastic sheets, with a fire place, cupboards and beds. Those familiar with SAR techniques spent some time going over the hut to reach the conclusion that it was last used in 2005.

Pushing on through the beech, we were soon out into the open with knee-high tussock just below the crown between the watercourses, to the west into Ruby Creek and onwards north into the Waingaro River, to the east into Diamond lake, onwards to Diamond Lake Stream and the Cobb River. Graham sussed out a good camping spot just inside the beech along the southern edge of Diamond Lake so we set up camp again shedding as much weight as possible from our packs in the process. Our mission for the day was to get up onto Mount Lockett, and follow along the tops around Lake Lockett before dropping down to the lake itself. With light packs on, it was into the 350 metre climb up onto the tops starting in tussock and Spaniard and snow grass picking out the ridge with the least vegetation on it before shattered rock made the going easier, natural steps and a sidle around high

point 1610m saw us regroup on the ridge between 1610 and 1621 Mt Lockett and a breezy sou' wester.

For some reason the team were keen for me to be first up onto Mt Lockett - a roundish upturned pudding bowl shaped affair devoid of any vegetation apart from a few clumps of snow grass (no jokes please). One couldn't describe it as a peak unlike Mount Benson but it would have to do. So lots of photo shoots of me beside the cairn with Mt Snowden in the background, still ugly from this angle. We had lunch just over the side, out of the wind, looking down into Lake Lockett.



We decided to stay on top and circumnavigate the lake, as it looked to be easy travelling, with just a bit of up and down over point 1581m until we reached the tail end of the lake. A 280 m drop down to the lake saw Janet leading the way across rocky scree and then a steep descent through beech forest very nearly being bluffed out by a large rock outcrop hidden amongst the trees. There's a good camping spot just by the lake outlet stream so we fired up Graham's MSR and made a brew. Being a Lockett, I thought it appropriate that I have a skinny dip in the waters, Woody also decided to have a splash. A nice hot drink was followed by another doze in the sun, soaking up the ambience before our return to Diamond Lake.

We set off through the beech on a compass bearing towards the lake, only about 1.5 km away, but with no tracks it took us about an hour. Graham's altimeter came in handy to keep us at the right height to avoid dropping into Diamond Lake stream. Expert navigation by Janet and Graham saw us pop out on the northern edge directly opposite our camp site. This left us with three options for getting to camp, around the lake - either clockwise or anti-clockwise - or swimming across it. No one was keen for the swim option but we did split into two groups in a race around to the camp, with me going clockwise to

check out what looked to be a beach at the outlet. A nice beach - it's made from the same rock as on the top of Mt Lockett, these rocks worn smooth by the action of the waters to about the size of our toes. With camping spots also at the tail end, here would be the ideal place to camp. Next time perhaps!

Woody's turn to cook for me so a good feed of Korean noodles (extra spicy) was had - very tasty. A card table was constructed and Woody taught us a Korean card game - a goody as it was played the next evening as well.

A good night's kip was had with an early awakening by the best dawn chorus I've ever heard. The problem was I dozed off again and I still don't know whether it was real or imagined - No one else thought it that special! Our long range weather forecast had Thursday wet. There was a choice between two routes across to the Sylvester Lakes, a high route and a lower one crossing the outlet streams from Lake Lillie and Iron Lake. With no sign of any inclement weather we opted for the high route along an offshoot of the Lockett Range. This involved a climb up from our campsite of 400 metres to point 1631. Staying in the beech, we followed animal trails until we picked up a rocky scar to avoid the knee high tussock and Spaniard and we were soon rewarded with views down to Lake Lillie. A further 100 metres of climb and we were on top and an undulating rock hop along the narrow ridge line with views down both sides with excellent views back across to Lake Lockett 2.5 kms away nestled in the side of the main range. The wind had got up at this stage, gusty in exposed places with me losing my hat at one point. Navigating around rocky spires along the crest to the right we were buffeted by the wind, to the left total calm but a dramatic rise in temperature due to the heat given out by the rock faces. Morning tea was taken looking down into Iron Lake with views across to the Sylvester Lakes at a point where a vein of marble cuts across the range.



The highest point on the Lockett Range is Iron Hill at 1695 metres, the high point a rock spire on the crest 400 metres down to Iron Lake on one side, 800 metres straight down to the Cobb river on the other. A

small tarn located in a hollow high above Little Sylvester Lake proved a perfect spot for lunch. With it getting hotter we decided to move on down over the side to pass by Little Sylvester before picking up the old bulldozer track around Sylvester Lake itself. Graham went for a dip in the lake while the rest of us scouted around for a camp site. Having been spoilt with our previous sites we reluctantly set up camp amongst the beech on sloping ground away from a good water source and with no views in any direction. While some read, slept, washed in a creek a couple of hundred metres away, Janet and Anne went for a walk and visited a newish hut in the vicinity called Sylvester and found it empty.

We decamped and proceeded to the hut. This hut has been built in a good spot with excellent views out to the north and a real sun catcher; the old bushline hut never saw the sun summer or winter. The evening was spent with further skills development in the Korean card game. While Anne and Martin took an after dinner stroll to photograph the lakes thick cloud descended down engulfing the hut to white out conditions, the bad weather turning up perhaps but our thoughts turned to how they would fare out in it with no compass. They soon appeared out of the gloom having picked up the bulldozer track and followed it back to the hut and in about half later the cloud had disappeared again.



Friday was a short day tramping-wise just 5 Kms down the old road to the car parked at the dam end of the Cobb Reservoir. No wind and hot, 5 Kms down hill was plenty. We noticed some beech with metal banding around them and yes, it was mistletoe and in flower. We all got cameras out - photo competition coming up! A steep zigzag down to the reservoir and the trip was over but the day wasn't yet. We had to go and get the other car before the drive down into the Takaka Valley and then up and over the Takaka Hill. A stop to swim in the Riwaka River, fish and chips at Mapua for lunch and back to the airport in Nelson for coffee and cake and goodbyes. Thanks all a good cruisey trip!

**In Search Of A View -
Holdsworth Lodge, Totara Flats, Main
Range, Mid-Waiohine, Holdsworth
23-25 January**

Report: Grant Christian

Janet Wilson organised this trip and was accompanied by Graham Peters and Grant Christian. The forecast was not favourable, so they hoped for Bannister crossing became something with less travel on the tops. Janet decided to adopt plan B, which was largely one of the hut bagging trips they had done previously in one 24 hour period. We were to travel clockwise, instead of anti-clockwise as they had done.

We started from the Holdsworth car park on a cloudy Saturday morning. I was equipped with a new Aarn pack that I had purchased at a clearance sale. These packs are reputed to be very comfortable and better balanced because of pockets on the front. We headed up the Gentle Annie in light rain, stopping to admire the recently completed platform at Rocky lookout. Unfortunately no view today. A bit further up, we turned off this track and descended towards Totara Flats hut. Thankfully Totara Creek was safe to cross despite the rain. We continued along the valley beside Totara Creek, where we heard the call of a native cuckoo and spent some time trying to spot it. It seemed to follow us and keep calling. At each call we would look again, but it proved elusive.

Totara Creek flows into the Waiohine River and just above the confluence is a bridge across the river. Totara Flats hut looked comfortable & spacious, unfortunately we were only stopping for lunch. There was a group of teenage women there with some or maybe all doing the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award in tramping. They were accompanied by a woman observer and a male companion. The woman was busy untangling the string on the end of a mountain radio aerial. None of the teenagers were owning up to having created the tangle. We noticed she had a large pack and she said it weighed about 20kg because of all the gear she had in case of emergency.

After lunch we had an arduous 700 metre climb up the Cone Ridge track until we altered direction and headed down a knee-straining and quad tiring descent to Neill Forks Hut. On reaching Neill Creek we scouted about trying to find the track to the hut. After a small detour we got it sorted and thankfully were soon at the hut. It is a traditional old forest service 6 bunk hut with wire beds, which has been greatly improved by the addition of a small porch and a wood burner installed in the open fireplace. The porch was appreciated in the steady rain. It was a good place to hang out wet gear.

We had soon got into dry clothes and enjoyed a cuppa. My pasta and sauce from the packet looked very spartan when compared with Janet & Graham's ham and fresh vegetables. I am sure my knees appreciated the lighter weight though!

The conditions had not improved on Sunday morning. We set off optimistically, hoping the cloud would clear by the time we reached the top. With a 950 metre climb up to Mangahuka on the Main Range it seemed there would be plenty of time for the sky to clear. The drizzle continued as we climbed up the steep track. I opted not to wear a coat, as with the warm weather I was going to get as wet in a coat as without. Shortly before the bushline, extra clothing and coats were added as the temperature dropped and the wind increased. Above the bush it was still cloudy. It appeared we were going to miss out on the hoped-for views a bit longer.

A short way along the ridge we arrived at the Mangahuka Hut. We had a well-earned lunch stop and made sure we were dressed for the unpleasant conditions along the range to Aokaparangi. After lunch we continued along the range, passing two men heading in the other direction. Hardy soles with bare legs. I was finding that my long johns, worn without shorts, didn't want to stay up once they got wet and it isn't easy hoisting them up repeatedly when wearing a rain coat and pack! I'm sure I would have looked at home with a group of lo-ridin' teenagers. We reached the track to Aokaparangi Biv still enveloped in cloud. Nobody seemed overly keen to take the optional 40 minute return trip to the Biv for a look, so we continued to Aokaparangi peak where a track heads off the range and down to Mid Waiohine Hut. I had vague recollections of passing through Mid Waiohine Hut about 27 years ago in a long day from Anderson Memorial Hut to Holdsworth road end.

By the time we headed downhill and into the bush the rain had stopped and there were flashes of blue sky but it didn't clear any more. We eventually reached the hut, the same as Neill Forks but without the added porch and no wood burner, just the open fireplace. Wet clothes were hung out to dry and hot drinks enjoyed. Next to the hut is a stand of big Rimus, very impressive.

On day three we faced another big uphill of 1100 metres over Mt Holdsworth. The track seemed a little gentler than the uphills on the previous days. I could recall when I came through all those years ago how it made me think of Goblin forest. Up towards the bush line the stunted trees were draped in long strands of moss, just as I remembered. No little folk to be seen though. Although still covered in light cloud I could tell it wasn't far through to the sun. It was also very still, much more pleasant than the previous day. We arrived at the summit of Holdsworth and took a break. It was warm and you could feel the glare of the sun through the cloud. That night I discovered I should have had my hat and sunscreen on, because I had been burnt during the time we were crossing the tops in the cloud.

We had lunch at Powell Hut, it had been busy overnight but only had one other person while we were there. I looked forward to the nice track down to the road end. Eventually other trampers started appearing and when the dress standard improved and the women started smelling of perfume I knew we must be close to the road end. We passed many people out doing short walks. The car park was busy, with people obviously making the most of Wellington Anniversary day.

I felt satisfied at having completed a solid three day trip and having visited some new and some familiar places.

My verdict on the new pack: It was very comfortable and had kept out the rain. The front pockets are also useful to get at snacks, gloves, hats etc easily while on the move and they didn't get in the way. The only negative feature is that it takes a bit longer to get off and on with extra buckling required to stabilise the front pockets.

Iron Gates Gorge

7 February

Report: Warren Wheeler

Nine of us enjoyed near perfect summer weather for this classic "medium" river trip. After a leisurely couple of hours along the sidle track above the Oroua River we dropped down to meet the river itself. The river was running a bit deeper than usual and flowing quite strongly so wasn't very inviting for a pre-lunch swim. It was still about 200-300mm above low flow levels after heavy rain early in the week. We could see that the flood level had been about 2m higher by the flattened grass and bits of debris caught on the vegetation along the banks.

We enjoyed lunch sitting on the sunny stones in the river bed or the cooler shade while contemplating the adventure ahead. Warren gave some quick tips on walking down the river, how to walk with the flow, how to cross in pairs holding each others packs for support and bracing against the flow. This was an all new experience to our German au pair who had only been in New Zealand a week and for several of the kiwi contingent as well.

We made good progress without any real difficulty or deep spots, although it was over the knees in places. Along the way we recognised a side stream we had crossed earlier and sections of the river we had seen from view points along the sidle track. Nearing the gorge we had to skirt above a large rock where Paul got hooked by a branch snagging his pack and was pulled off balance to tumble head over heels off the rock to land feet first into the river.

“Why did you do that” yelled Warren above the raging torrent as Paul emerged shaken and stirred but safe and unhurt with only his hat to be retrieved along with his composure. Unfortunately this incident found him on the wrong side of the river and rather than another swim back across he had to scramble up and over an outcrop just downstream.

However the rest of us were not let off much easier for in front of us was a deep pool – time for a swim says Jeff, and off he went while the less exuberant (?) of us took the easy detour up behind the rock.

And so, now suitably charged, we arrived at the Gorge itself. With the river threatening to sweep us away we edged around a rock... “it’s only knee deep!!”...and over to the huge rocks at the bottom end of the tumble into the smoother water in the steep sided gorge.

It looked pretty daunting for a swim through but once Jeff said I’m keen there was no stopping us. Well, half of us. Duncan escorted the ladies back across the river upstream and they followed the arrow on the big rock to climb steeply up to the beech flats above, then back along the storm damaged, but recently remarked, track through Pederson Bush to the farmland and back to the carpark.



John Gummer age 12 at Iron Gates Gorge

The boys meanwhile swam through the gorge; first taking care to bash their knees against the odd rock hidden in the foaming flow. There are two swims of about 30m each separated nicely by a gravel beach, then you’re out of the gorge and wading and swimming another short section to the old wire bridge.

Here we checked our gear was still nice and dry in our packs before scrambling up the steep bushy slope to the beech flats above...just mind the stinging nettle, ouch! There is a lot of windfall from storms last year and the old track is hard to follow in places but is in the process of being restored - thanks to those concerned for the new markers and track cutting. From the river it took less half an hour to get back to the carpark, where the others were

reminiscing on a great day out (I hope!!). Until next year, then :-)

We were Jeff Cook, Paul and John Gummer, Colin Wheeler, Marly from Germany, Kathy Corner, Isobel Holdway, Duncan Hedderley, and Warren Wheeler (leader).

Some Summer Climbing in the South January and February

Report and pics: Terry Crippen

Some club members had a good spell of climbing in the Southern Alps and elsewhere down south from late Jan though to late Feb.

An exceptionally good spell of fine weather saw Bruce van Brunt, Malcolm Leary and Terry Crippen team up with ex club member Nigel Scott for a week based at Centennial and Pioneer Huts on the Franz and Fox Neves. We climbed The Minarets (3040m) and Moonlight (at 2700m a minor knob by Graham Saddle) from Centennial. The hardest part when climbing the Minarets is the steep crevassed snow face up to the plateau between the Minarets and DelaBeche.



Bruce, Malcolm, Nigel and Terry at Centennial Hut

Once on the plateau it was an easy plod up to the summit. We also cruised across to Frenchay Pass to have a look at Conway, but decided a spot of lazy sunbathing and a long late lunch was in order for our rest day. We then headed across to Pioneer Hut on the Fox Neve from where we climbed Lendenfeld (3194m). Lendenfeld had a fair bit of ice on the slopes up from Marcel Col which necessitated getting the ice screws out. It is nice to actually use all the climbing gear you lug around – often it doesn’t get used!

After that we headed through to the Queenstown area, where some of us wandered up Ben Lomond and had a close look at Single Cone on the Remarkables. Then we teamed up with fellow club member Annett Patzold, and NZAC Wellington Section friends Don French (former club member and also our current

auditor), James Wright and Angela Minto, for a mass ascent of Earnslaw from Kea Basin above the Dart Valley. James opting for the West Peak (on the NZAC 100 peaks list) while the rest of us ascended the higher but easier East Peak (2830m). The NZAC 100 Peaks list was put out a few years ago to celebrate NZAC's centenary and various peoples are battling away at the list. Some of the peaks are very straight forward, such as Hector in the Tararuas or Ngauruhoe, so that anyone can start ticking some off.



West peak of Earnslaw from east peak.

After that, as the workers began to head home, Terry, Don and James headed down to Te Anau where we caught up with fellow club member Anja Scholz who has been working as a "lodge" at Glade House on the Milford track. We then headed into the Darran Mountains basing ourselves at Homer Hut. We successfully climbed Mitre Peak (another NZAC 100 peak) from Milford Sound, this involving a boat trip across to the base of the ridge, some damp steep bush bashing, setting up a high bivvy then some pleasant steepish rock scrambling, and finally being attacked by numerous sandflies down at the water line again as we waited for the boat pick up.



Summit photo shot on Earnslaw.

Next, leaving the lads to climb Tutuko, Terry teamed up with another NZAC Wellington section member and climbed Dragonfly (also a NZAC 100 peak) from the East Matukituki for excellent but seldom seen

views across to Aspiring and the Kitchener Cirque. Escaping a bit of poor weather we then headed up to Arthurs Pass and climbed Rolleston before slowly heading back to the North Island (and I suppose work at some stage).



Upper ridge of Mitre Peak from Footstool.

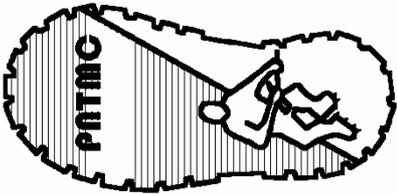
Other activities

LandSAR

A number of PNTMC members are actively involved in Search and Rescue. At a recent search in Otaki Forks, five of the ten volunteers from Palmerston North were PNTMC members. The attached photo suggests that it was an exhausting day, however, this photo was taken before the teams had actually seen any action – we were actually waiting for the helicopter to take us to our drop off point!



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PNTMC Newsletter

March 2010

What's inside this month?

- *Upcoming trips and club events*
- *Reports on recent trips and events*
- *Information about the upcoming AGM*

Articles for the newsletter

end by the 20th of each month to Anne Lawrence,
ie newsletter editor, via the club website
<http://www.pntmc.org.nz/mail/>.

Get out and about with us!

www.pntmc.org.nz

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