

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter August 2012



Mt Ruapehu's summit plateau from Te Heu Heu. Tauranga peak TL, Paretaitonga TR. Crater lake hidden. [Terry Crippen]

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.

9 August Eastern Europe Walks, Tramps & Snowy Scrambles Terry Crippen

From easy walks to nice snowy scrambles; in the former communist block countries of Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, България (Bulgaria) & Romania. Visited last year; plenty of hills, extensive forests and very friendly people (apart from the odd run in with bogus police and bus inspectors).

30 August I Should Be Alive?

Matt Briggs

"Mad Pom" Matt Briggs will tell us how he survived with his dog after falling in the remote Douglas Valley. He was badly injured, and lost his emergency locator beacon. After several days waiting to be rescued he made his own way to the nearest hut, an agonizing two days effort. Two hunters then made the long walk out to get help. Medics were amazed at his condition and that all he really wanted was a nice cuppa tea. How well would you cope with such a mishap? A remarkable story of survival.

Upcoming Trips

28 July (Sat)

Foxtan Beach Walk **E**
Tina Bishop **355 5755**

Everyone welcome - we will explore the beach and dunes and decide on the day how long/far we go. Sports shoes will do and lunch supplied at "Bishops Beach Bach". Will be meeting you at the beach 9.30am - ph 355 5755 by Mon or Tues before, otherwise ph/txt 027 480 3342 by Fri.

28-29 July

Te Hekenga **F**
Derek Sharp **323 3028**

This alpine crag is located high in the central Ruahines, between Rangī and Howletts huts. This is a trip guaranteed to show you some of the best alpine areas there, including Sawtooth Ridge. Come prepared for snow and ice.

1 August (Wed)

Snowcraft 2 evening (for participants).
Refer to notices

4 August (Sat)

Manawatu Gorge **E/ M**
Gina Fermor **359 0096**

An eternal local favourite on a good trail, with the promise of a café visit after the tramp.

5 August

Knights-Shorts Tracks **M**
Craig Allerby **323 7913**

We will head up the Knights track to the top of the Ngamoko Range (behind Apiti) with a short ascent to Toka. Then following the ridgeline south for an hour it's a gradual descent back down the Shorts track. Possibly some snow on the tops! Depart 8.00 AM.

4 or 5 August

Snowcraft 2 (refer notices) **M/ I**
Terry, Bruce **356 3588, 328 4761**

Applications closed. See July Newsletter.

11-12 August

Dead Dog Hut **M**
Janet Wilson **329 4722**

This beautiful streamside Ruahine hut should be on any dedicated hut baggers list. Located in southern Hawkes Bay, it has many other huts within easy reach, and Janet will show you some of them.

12 August

Day trip
TBA

Leader to be confirmed. Contact Janet Wilson on 329 4722 for details of this trip.

15 August (Wed)

Snowcraft 3, evening for participants

18 August (Saturday)

Feilding Finder **E**
Jennifer Wilson **323 6693**

Nice walkways and cafes, with plenty of rural and river scenes to enjoy.

19 August

Takapari Road **M**
Graham Peters **329 4722**

Four wheel drive, mountain bike, or even tramping is possible up here, high in the southern Ruahines. A great way to gain altitude easily and to enjoy great views of the Pohangina.

18 or 19 August

Snowcraft 3 (refer notices) **M/ I**
Terry/ Bruce **328 4761**

Applications closed. See July Newsletter.



Snowcraft 2011, Whakapapa

26-26 August

Daphne-Howletts **M**
Peter Darragh **353 0922**

This classic Ruahine tramp will show you great river, forest, and tussock scenes, with two of the best huts available for accommodation.

26 August

Mania Track **M**
Martin Lawrence **357 1695**

Easy forest and a good track here lead to great tussock tops overlooking Rangī Hut. Come prepared for snow and ice.

1 September

Living Legends Planting Day **All**
Janet Wilson (contact) **329 4722**

Help with infill planting and clearing weeds from around the plantings done last year in the Manawatu Gorge.

Trip Grading

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

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs
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:

Tony Gates	357 7439
Janet Wilson	329 4722
Martin and Anne Lawrence	357-1695

Articles for the newsletter

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

Notices

A New Edition of "Safety in the Mountains"

The 11th edition of "Safety in the Mountains" has recently been written by Robin McNeill and published by FMC. We have ordered copies for PNTMC members, and these valuable little booklets will be available soon.

Our Far South

The Morgan Foundation project **Our Far South** is doing a national roadshow from 30 July to 16 August. Gareth Morgan will be talking about

the Our Far South expedition and the conservation issues facing the area. All proceeds from ticket sales go to the Million Dollar Mouse campaign. The great news is that he is coming to Palmerston North event on 8 August!

The Palmerston North event will be at the Convention Centre, starting at 6pm. Tickets cost \$20 and can be purchased from the Our Far South website.

<http://www.ourfarsouth.org/events/national-tour.aspx>

Tararua Forest Park Information

Booking System at Powell and Jumbo Huts

As of July 2012, a number of changes are taking place in the Wairarapa in the near future. This is for a variety of reasons and we anticipate that these changes will improve the overall visitor experience in the region.

After a booking system was trialled successfully at Powell Hut last summer, we are pleased to advise that this service will be available again during the 2012 / 2013 summer period. From August 1st 2012 Powell and Jumbo hut will be made available for bookings between October 1st 2012 and April 30th 2013.

Bookings can be made via the Department Of Conservation (DOC) website (www.doc.govt.nz).

A Warden will be in attendance at Powell and Jumbo to assist over summer to ensure visitors have a comfortable and enjoyable stay.

Gas Removal at Tutuwai, Totara Flats and Mitre Flats Huts

Due to health and safety reasons the gas cooking facilities at Tutuwai, Totara Flats and Mitre Flats huts will be permanently removed between the 20th and 31st August.2012. These facilities are becoming unsafe due to their age and are expensive to maintain.

The Department of Conservation will continue to supply firewood to these three huts, which will provide heating and a cooking source via the woodstoves available.

Closure of Tracks in the Wairarapa Area

After November 1st 2012 four tracks in the Wairarapa will no longer be maintained by DOC.

The four tracks are becoming increasingly difficult to maintain to the standard required and the number of people using these tracks is not high enough to justify the continuing maintenance costs.

The tracks affected are:

1. The Block 16 track between the Tauheranikau river and Marchant Ridge (including the track down the true right hand side of the river)
2. The Ruamahanga river track between SH2 and Cow Saddle
3. The Kaiparoro track (West of Pukaha/ Mt Bruce)
4. The Mt Ross track in the Aorangi Forest Park (end of Ruakokoputuna road.)

These four tracks will have their markers and structures (eg: bridges), removed and will no longer be maintained by DOC after November 2012.

The department is open to any expressions of interest from any tramping clubs or community organisations who wish to become involved in the management of these tracks.

For any further information contact the Wairarapa Area Office, Masterton.

New Members

Angela Minto (06) 376-2866

Lizzy Kent & Blair Crosbie
328-8022 or 027 293-6607

Dwight Swainson (06) 327-6346

Welcome to PNTMC to the above four, and happy and safe tramping. You have access to some of the best tramping in the world, and not far from town.

Editorial

We have enjoyed several excellent club nights recently. During July, author Paul Maxim gave us a fine presentation about Bill Denz: New Zealand's Mountain Warrior. Last year, Paul published a biography of this great mountaineer aptly entitled "Bold Beyond Belief", so copies of his book were offered for sale. At \$50 (\$40 club night special), and 303 pages (with many colour and B/W photographs), this is excellent value for a vital period of New Zealand's (and the world's) mountaineering history during the 1960's, 1970's and early 1980's. Bill Denz was a remarkable mountaineer - young, tough, and resourceful,

ascending some of New Zealand's most difficult peaks, faces, and cliffs- often in winter.

Paul's presentation began with a short movie, which included footage from a mountain movie entitled "Fool on the Hill" which starred Bill Denz. Paul showed images and talked about the life and climbs of Bill Denz, from teenage days to tough Mt Cook and Darran trips forging new routes, then to Patagonia and the Himalaya. Bill ultimately met his death in October 1983 on the slopes of Makalu.

And on the topic of books, there are several interesting books featuring the Tararuas, Southern Alps, and other areas, due to be published soon. Your Editor may be looking for offers of members to review these.

I reviewed here the new book about Whitcombe and Lauper a few months ago. Recently on prime time TV was the first in the series "First Crossings", featuring this amazing journey of 1863. Two well known adventurers in period costume set off from the Whitcombe Pass to re enact the wilderness tramp down the (now named) Whitcombe Valley to the West Coast. There were wonderful scenery shots of the mountains, forests, and rivers, and some acted sections like river crossings and abseiling down bluffs that looked to be fairly dangerous. The actors often were saturated. I never saw the film crew, but they must have had their work cut out for them. This TV series continues for eight episodes.

Trip Reports

Rangi at Mid Winter - The Overnight Trip 30 June-1 July 2012 Report and Photos by Janet Wilson

We couldn't have asked for better winter weather conditions for this year's mid-winter celebrations and there was a great turn out of a total 18 club members and one friend over the weekend - which is approx 1/3 of our membership.

Bruce van Brunt and myself had planned to arrive via the tops from Pourangaki Hut on the Saturday around lunchtime. However on the Friday we battled horrible snow conditions high on the Mania track only to turn back not far from the top when travel slowed to 100m in 15 minutes! A nasty icy crust left us with bruised and battered shins. We retreated home and drove back up the next morning.



Well dressed PNTMC at Rangī Hut

Graham, Bruce, Craig and I arrived up at Rangī to find the lunch party in full swing - Xmas decorations and balloons festooned the hut veranda. The table was outside, strewn with delicious food and more decorations, including lovely icicles, collected by Sue. I added sets of antlers to those people without hats - Warren was particularly well dressed in jacket and tie! Llew, Jenny and Kaaren arrived a bit later. Around 2pm the daytrippers started heading back down, although Grant and his friend headed up the hill, intending to return to the cars via the Deadmans Track. Sometime later they returned having reached the nasty conditions near the top. They hurried back down to try to catch the others.

The remaining 9 of us headed inside as it cooled down. Craig produced a couple of \$5 gifts and one - a wind up spinning top with flashing lights and a repetitive tune - provided hours of entertainment - what a group of big kids! We were joined by 4 others ex MUAC and dog later and the hut was full. We enjoyed more shared nibbles, wine, port, ginger wine, dinner and dessert. Plenty of laughs and good company. Kaaren, on her first overnight trip, found her sleeping bag quite early on. The rest of us stayed up a bit longer but it wasn't too long before we were all tucked up in bed.

We woke to a beautiful frozen morning with great views to the Central Plateau. Llew and Jenny Pritchard had work to do and headed home early, followed by Terry Crippen, Mick Leyland, Warren Wheeler and Kaaren Tutt. Craig Allerby, Graham Peters and myself loitered around, enjoying the conditions. Care was needed on the way down and the track was well and frozen particularly icy around the waterfall. We got back to the car around lunch time.

Thanks to everyone who came and enjoyed a most excellent mid-winter trip - good company and Rangī Hut was a great destination that suited both day and weekend trips.



A well fed and impeccably dressed PNTMC at Rangī Hut



Michael Allerby in Ruahine mist and tussock above Rangī [Craig Allerby]

**Rangī Mid Winter– known to some as SAMX-
The day trip trip - 30 June 2012
Report by Sue Pither**

In due course, yet again, Club members made their various ways and times up to Rangī Hut to celebrate this special time of year. Some to stay for the day and a few overnight. Yes, the weather was the best possible with a little cloud cover, snow and a very slight breeze to make the central table decoration operate. Naturally the obligatory snowman was built as well!

So, on arrival, out comes the table to be stood in the snow. Sundry decorations and food appeared like magic and a very grand special time was had by all in this lovely location! Hungry eyes then studied the food for quite a long time until everybody arrived. Some things never change!

A few light-hearted thoughts:

7:30 AT THE CAR PARK – “Wot only two people with shorts and bare legs on a frosty morning. Is the club becoming soft or sane?”

11:30ish at the waterfall - Too old too cold!! No paddle in the waterfall pool. Settle for a drink instead? Done!

12:00ish arrived at the hut... or is it really a bush hotel now? No choking fumes from the old stove. What improvements! Far superior!

Study picture on the wall, this hut is really special to PNTMC ... Now how many can I identify in that photograph? I think I picked out four.

3:30ish time to leave after an enjoyable day, with no balloons banging off as we went down

the track, sufficient to make you jump out of your skin. Could hear the birds instead! Great.

**22 July
Wharite Peak
Report by Lisa Imai**

Warren and I went to Wharite Peak travelling in his interesting looking and comfortable car. I could see that it was quite foggy in some places as we passed by in the car. When we started walking there were cloudy skies but no wind. It was an interesting feeling to realise suddenly being above a massive amount of cloud where it was just sunny. We had lunch near the satellite towers before coming down. Some places were muddy near the top but it wasn't too wet. The cloud followed us and the skies became grey late in the afternoon.



Impenetrable Ruahine leatherwood, which grows in profusion at Wharite and Takapari Road. It is much worse than supplejack to tramp through

**22 July 2012
Another Ruahine Crossing: Tamaki-Diggers
Bruce van Brunt**

Derek Sharp and I hatched an idea to do a Ruahine crossing from the West Tamaki road via A-Frame, Diggers, Forks and Te Ekaou huts. Neither of us had been down the track from Takapari road to Diggers, so there was some novelty in the route for us. Although Derek had crossed between Forks and Diggers more than once, this portion of the route was clearly going to be the most uncertain portion of the trip (time wise). At the last moment on Friday we recruited Penny for this adventure.

We left a car at Komako church in Pohangina valley at about 6:45am, collected Penny in Ashhurst, and drove to the West Tamaki road end. We started up the track just after 8:00am.

The weather was warm, dry and calm. The track up to A-Frame is in pretty good shape and we were enjoying a snack by the hut at 10:00am. The hut itself is in rough condition. The water tank has been removed, there is a hole in the window, the hut book is missing, and there are various bullet holes in the metal hut book case on the wall. Rough or not, I have often welcomed this place as a shelter. I hope that DoC recognizes the value of this structure as a strategic shelter for trampers and mountain bikers.

Leaving A-Frame, we began the trudge along Takapari Road to the Diggers Hut turnoff. Normally, I reserve this area for marginal weather days, so it was a real treat to be up there in good weather to enjoy the views. The track to Diggers is well signed and hard to miss. The track itself is in pretty good condition albeit muddy in the leatherwood section. The posted time down to Diggers is 3 hours, which is realistic. We arrived at this hut around 1:30pm and stopped for a well-earned lunch. So far, all was going to plan.

We studied an overland route on the map from Diggers to Forks. Derek had been over this ground a few times, but times varied quite a lot. (One would think with two huts in such close proximity that there would be a decent track between them. Alas, the maps make it clear that this is not the case. We were never under any illusions that such a track was there, but it does make one wonder.) We left Diggers around 2:00pm psyched up for a "bush bash" to Forks.

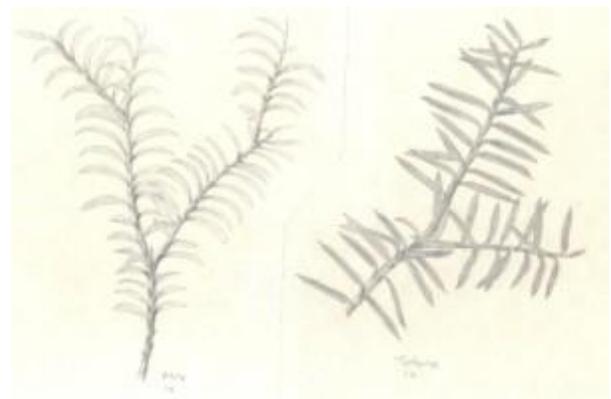
In fact, there is a vague track out from Diggers in the direction of Forks. This is probably known to all hunters and trampers that use the area. Just down from the hut on the true left at the first stream junction there begins a rough track up a steepish hillside. This was a lot better than I expected, and it even had a blaze or two marking the way. We followed the "Forks Highway" up the first ridge and then opted to stay high and descend down further up the stream that marks the ridge going down to Forks.

The bush before this stream is quite open and travel not too unpleasant. We followed deer tracks, keeping our bearings, and came out more or less where we thought we should. I looked at my watch: it was 5:00pm. Although the travel was not hard, it was slower than anticipated. The plan was to get to Forks in the daylight (the track to Te Ekaou is relatively easy to follow in the dark). The grim reality was that we would make the top of the ridge above Forks in fading light, but we would descend down to Forks in the dark. As luck would have it, we did find the

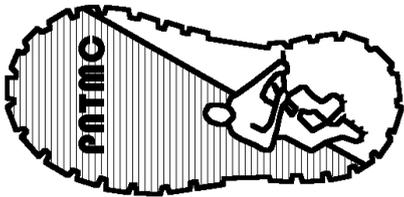
blazed route down the ridge and our spirits were lifted briefly, until we lost the route. Derek's navigation was excellent throughout the journey and I confirmed with my GPS that we were heading more or less straight to the hut. The problem, of course, is that the bush is seldom so accommodating as to allow one to travel in a semi straight line. Lots of short stops and navigation corrections to the course. *Penny was introduced to the delights of night time bush bashing, swinging on ferns, and the charm that comes from a thick growth of supple jack.* We reached Forks at 7:30pm, had a snack, and started up the track to Te Ekaou. Up until now, the rain held and the weather was pleasant. Now a light rain started.

It is a mystery to me why we should cover the ground to Te Ekaou faster in the dark, in the rain, and in our fatigued state than in good weather in the daylight. Nonetheless we made Te Ekaou in an hour from Forks. We had another snack and started the long trek down the farmland to Komako church. I did warn the landowner that we would be coming out late (i.e. in the dark) but none of us expected to stretch out the fun until 10:00pm. The light rain became heavy just as we reached the car. No worries, we are back safe in the car, but we still had to retrieve a vehicle on the other side. It was a long day/evening, but an interesting trip with a lot of variety. We were Penny Abercrombie, Derek Sharp and Bruce van Brunt.

Art Section



Miro and Totara. Botanical art by Terry Crippen.



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What's inside this month?

- Doc news from the Tararuas
- Mid winter feast at Rangī Hut
- Night time Ruahine Hut bagging

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 20th 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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