

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter February 2013



Warren admiring the scenic Tararua Main Range from near Maungahuka.

Photo Lance Gray.

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.

14 February

Navigation

Warren Wheeler

Navigation with map and compass is still an essential outdoors skill that is fun to learn. Come along and Warren will give you a hand.

28 Feb

Where have all the Yeti gone?

Dave Grant

Join Dave as he relives a trip to Everest Base Camp in September last year.

Upcoming Trips

2- 3 February

Atiwhakitu Hut **E**
Kathy Corner **356 8186**

This pleasant hut has many good tracks leading to and from it. Close to Mt Holdsworth.

3 Feb

Roaring Stag Lodge **E/ M**
Dave Grant **357 8269**

A lovely new-ish riverside hut in the north eastern Tararuas, with great forest, and swimming holes in the Ruamahanga River.

9- 10 Feb

Mangahao Flats **M**
Warren Wheeler **356 1998**

Warren Wheeler 356-1998

Depart 8.00 am. Behind Shannon is the gravel access road built to construct the Mangahao dams and power station back in the 1920s. From the upper dam we follow the track up river to the big hut and return the same way or rock hop and pool float down the river. A good taste of Tararua tramping with bog, bridges and beech forest.

10 Feb

Rangiwahia Hut **E**
Malcolm Parker **357 5203**

An ideal way to gently ease back into tramping after the Christmas break. Leave town at 8.30. Plan to amble up to the hut and then further along for some great views.

16- 17

Keritaki Hut (SeaMac Motel) **M**
Richard Lockett **323 0948**

A lovely hut with a lovely view, located between Woodville and Dannevirke. Good forest, tracks and creek beds here, but warning - some pretty good scrub too.

17 Feb

Iron Gate Gorge **M**
Warren Wheeler **356 1998**

Depart 8.45am. A classic easy river trip not to be missed. From the Heritage carpark we follow the track until it meets the Oroua River. After first lunch and a swim we will enjoy making our way downstream for a few hours until reaching the gorge, then either float through or retreat out via the stoat track. Expect to get wet feet!

23 (Sat)

Burn Hut **E/ M**
Woody Lee **357 2390**

This is a nice local trip to the northern Tararuas. We will drive towards No 2 Reservoir Dam behind Shannon and walk up to the ridge via the

leatherwood field. It is not a loop track- retracing back down the same route. Leave PN at 8am.

23- 24

Maungahuka **F**
Chris Tuffley **359 2530**

The best and most rugged of the alpine Southern Tararuas are found in this area. A trip via the famous steel ladder between Tuiti and Tunui (refer cover photo) to Maungahuka Hut on the Tararua Main Range. Depending on interest we may tack on the Friday for a three-day loop through Waitewaewae; and we may also head up to Field Hut the evening before, to get a head start on the day.

2- 3 March

Gold Creek camp **4WD/ all**
Tony Gates **357 7439**

If the Makaroro River permits, we plan to drive up to the Gold Creek confluence and camp next to our vehicles. It is a delightful place, with good swimming holes, walking and mountain biking.

2- 3 March

Sparrowhawk Biv **M**
Peter Darragh **353 0922**

As an extension of the easy tramp, Peter will take a more energetic stroll up onto the Ruahine tussock tops, and meet the campers back down at the river. This is real William Colenso country.

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:

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

PNTMC 2012 Annual Awards

At our Christmas 2012 BBQ at Ashhurst, an exceptional list of interesting and often humorous incidents was recorded for posterity in the form of the annual awards. Congratulations to all these worthy recipients who have helped make 2012 so memorable.

Queens Stoat Mangler Award (QSM) – Janet Wilson for services to Oroua Blue Duck Project.

Worn Out Boots Award – Tony Gates for promoting outdoor recreation in his four decades memoir.

Mother Hen Award - Anne Lawrence for keeping everything in order for the painting team at Colenso Hut – the porridge was perfect!

Alison Holst Hostess Award - Edith Leary for her roast dinner after the farm walk.

Best Foot Forward Award – Nicola Wallace for being unperturbed by stepping thigh deep in bog at the Daphne track road end.

Bushells Best By Award – Penny Abercrombie for the odd supper coffee taste from October 2005.

Rock Solid Award – Terry Crippen for his dehydrated quince compote.

Mr Muscle Domestic Goddess Award – Warren Wheeler for cleaning the mattresses at Smiths Stream Hut.

Matchless Rescue Award – Lawrence O'Halloran for being the only one equipped to light the cookers at Matiu Somes Island.

Slip Up Award – Janet Wilson for leading down the wrong slip from Sparrowhawk into the Maropea..and back to Sparrowhawk.

Head Over Heels Award – Ange Minto for her mountain bike fall that did more damage to her thumb than first thought.

Left Right Out Award – Thomas Robertson for taking two left boots – a great start to an epic Ruahine trip.

Dead Dog or Die Award – Bruce Van Brunt for his solo side trip to bag Dead Dog Hut and persisting calmly to find Dianne's Hut in the dark.

Blow Hard Princess and the Pea Award – Tina Bishop for not realising her new mattress was not self-inflating.

Déjà vu Fast Forward Award – Grant Christian for firstly arriving at "Heritage Lodge" down Triangle Spur on a big day trip from Rangitikei-Irongates-Heritage and out.

Booby Prize Award – Graham Peters for mistaking Charlotte Dawson for Nicky Watson at the Interclub Quiz.

Just Gremlin Award - Derek Sharp for just dropping off a car to do a Ruahine crossing only to find next day that he had left the keys in his pants in the car back at the roadend on the other side of the ranges.

Dave Hodges Award for Excellence in Pursuit of Forgetfulness – Warren Wheeler for leaving his raincoat at home so the party had to turn back from Howletts-Longview ridge and go the long way back.

Finally, the prestigious **Tararua Trophy**, crafted out of remnants of Powell Hut 3 (burnt down in 2004), was awarded to Chris Tuffley. This was for excellence in his Newsletter contributions, most notably several stunning photos. Some of these were sent on to the Interclub and FMC photo competition, and to Wilderness Magazine.

PNTMC 2012 Hut Bagging Awards

After a remarkable effort on behalf of the PNTMC as a whole, and of course of individuals (and tramping parties), the 2012 Hut Bagging Challenge was won by Derek Sharp. But first, some vital statistics.

- There were 34 club members actively involved in the challenge - this is more than 50% of club members.

- A total of 745 hut visits were made, which is on average 14 per week or 21 per actively involved member.
- 100 of these visits were to 'new' huts, ie huts that the person had not visited before so were new to that person.
- average number of visits per hut was 12.
- Heritage Lodge was most visited with 52 club members visiting it. Rangī was second most visited with 41 visits, and Mid Pohangina third with 27 visits. Iron Gate and Sentry box were next with 26 visits each. Ellis, Hinerua and Pourangaki each only had 1 visit

Awards went to:

Derek Sharp, for the most points (215) and visiting every one of the 62 huts in the Ruahines.

Bruce van Brunt for second highest number of points (203) and his sportsmanship in taking others to places they hadn't been before.

Janet Wilson, for third highest with 151 points and for providing the motivation and inspiration that got others into the Ruahines.

Warren Wheeler was fourth highest with 128 points almost all of which were achieved on club trips.

Thomas Robertson got award for most points from new huts (30 new huts).

Penny Abercrombie was runner up to this with second highest proportion of points from new huts (15 new huts out of 23 total huts visited).

Jolene Liu was youngest hut bagger (age 6 months)

Tony Gates got most points from accessing huts by car, and for providing support and sharing knowledge of Ruahines that helped others get out there.

Photographs of each hut are available at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8onuvt3hyoavpn1/cK0AkwpRVa>

Click on any pic to enlarge. Download with the wee button bottom right if you wish.

Hut Bagging Poster – Order Now

Thanks to Eric Liu we have a hut bagging poster with a stunning array of hut photos surrounding a map of the Ruahines.

Order your copy by emailing the Secretary d.a.grant@xtra.co.nz.

For club members the cost is \$16 plus P&P for A1 size (pictured), or \$8 plus P&P for A2. For non-members the cost is \$24 and \$12 plus P&P.

Deadline for orders is club night 14 February.

Once you receive your poster you might like to get it laminated (matt is good) – Warehouse Stationery charges about \$15.



Derek Sharp and his well earned Ruahine poster

DOC News

Tararuas: Kime Hut

The contract to replace Kime Hut has been let to Allan Berntsen of Walkway Solutions Ltd, with construction starting on the 21st January 2013. From this date the current Kime Hut will be available to the public at a reduced capacity of 10 bunks as the remaining space will be used by the contractors. When the new hut is closed in and weather tight the contractors will move into the new hut and the current hut will be dismantled. From this time there will be no accommodation at the Kime site, other than for emergency shelter, until the new hut is completed.

Ruahines: track upgrade to Rangī

Contractors to DOC have been recutting the middle section of the track up to Rangiwahia Hut. This will take it well over the giant slip, and make the tramp much easier when it is complete.

Letter from Japan

Dear Tony

Thank you for wonderful presents. I am sorry that it becomes slow to give thanks.

Japan greets winter from now on and becomes cold. Surely the gloves which you gave to me warm my hand.

Meguru had been lively in your book. Meguru of that time seemed to have risen. I think, Meguru have travelled the mountains of NZ even now.

A lot of photos (from you) are treasure for us. Your book is treasure for us.

The photo that Meguru looks up at the sky at a grassy plain is very splendid. This photo proves that Meguru was happy in New Zealand. It is treasure for us.

Please come to my home with members of PNTMC. I want to see you again.

There is the place where we want to guide you a lot.

Thank you please be well.

Kazuko Inoue, from Takasaki

[Meguru Inoue was a good friend of many PNTMC people. The grassy plain was at Totara Flats, Tararuas]

Editorial

Land SAR news featured during the Christmas-New Year period, with a sad outcome to two incidents. The rafting tragedy on the Waiohine River reminds us of river dangers, and the mountain runner rescued on the slopes of Mt Holdsworth after one night out and one night in the Mid Waiohine Hut reminds us of the value of mountain huts. The unknown (and most likely tragic) outcome of the Palmerston North man who disappeared at Mt Owen, Kahurangi National Park, will remind us of the need for good SAR volunteers. And the tramping party on the Wangapeka Track, delayed and stopped

by a new landslide (then rescued by helicopter), reminded us of the value of a PLB.

Collecting poetry and quotes concerning the Tararuas, Ruahines, and Tararuas has long been a passion of mine. From William Colenso's colourful writings of the 1840's, to NZ Forestry Service deer cullers interesting ditties of the 1970's, I have found many interesting words. Various Tramping Club newsletters (including this one) print little poems about their club activities from time to time.

I was immensely pleased when I obtained a moving tribute by Nicola to some feelings from when tramping. Also, I received two of Trish's lengthy and interesting poems, both of which made me smile with my own memories of these places. You should too. Part of her first one is published below, and many PNTMC members should recognise some of the paces mentioned. There will be more to follow.

Here is a wee snippet from her second poem.

*The Kawhatau River runs clear and quite strong
Time to link up to cross; by ourselves might be
wrong.*

*Then several done solo and we reach grassy flat
See ahead the bright triangle marking where the
hut's at.*

*Waterfall Hut with its bright orange paint,
From old Forest Service days, modern, it ain't!*

Letter from Nelson Lakes and Fiordland

From Anja to Terry.

Good Christmas to you, and Happy New Year !!

I arrived safely at Nelson Lakes, first day office induction (yawn) but tomorrow helo up to Angelus with 5 boxes of food and pack and bag full of stuff for the season, yay !!! Walking back down after a day hut induction on Thursday and starting my roster on the Saturday, until 31.12. Bought 600 dollars' worth of food in Richmond should last for a few rosters. I will be working 10 on/ 8 off, not quite full time but good roster, and staying with Pat and Wendy (ex Yellow House) for the time being. A bit like coming home, I hope I made the right decision...

It feels like I'm being a bum being paid for tramping at the moment, after the hectic days on the boat (mind, the road closures provided for some good days, he he, though I do feel for the company as well, all the operators in Milford

Sound are hurting with the road). Also a TVNZ team is up here, and looks like I might star in a National Parks series, another helo trip on Friday, feels like a run of positive things, although I am not that sure I want to be in the media, but thought I better promote the Park after they paying me to be up here !! Watch this space, should air on TV One in April or so. And of course if you or any PNTMC are up here, make sure to be in contact and get a night in the hut warden's quarters for free :-)) ooooh, bring a newspaper and some chokkie biscuits and be here when I am on shift.

Hope the garden is under control, and the knees are being subordinated!! My diet will improve (but not taste better...) that is I will lose weight now with having to do my own cooking) I think, but yay for the fitness !! Hope the bbq had good weather and went well. Henry is down in the Alps down from Hokitika somewhere as of last text. I had not been down the West Coast for some time and forgot how beautiful (albeit isolated) it is!!! Must explore on my time off, as I only speeded past on the way up.

You are welcome here anytime! Hi to all PNTMC and Ange.

Cheers Anja

For Sale

Book For Sale: "Worn Out Boots" four decades enjoying the New Zealand mountains

Tramper and Editor of this Newsletter has recently published volume one of his memoirs. As the title suggests, he has spent much time with PNTMC in the Tararuas, Ruahines, and other places.

Worn Out Boots. \$30.00, 160 pages, soft cover, with b/ w and colour photos. Phone Tony Gates 357-7439 for your copy.

Trip Reports

11 November 2011

**Blue Range Hut - Kiriwhakapapa
Nicola Wallace**

It was cloudy for the drive down to Kiriwhakapapa Road End, and chilly as we left the van, and headed off. At the bottom of the hill, you could be forgiven for thinking you were

in Rotorua, as a fine grove of Redwoods towered above us, seeming a little out of place.

Soon, the climb began in earnest: not really steep, just consistent. About half way up, it started raining, but we were sheltered in the bush. A quick photo stop was made at the Cow Creek turnoff. Soon after, we emerged into the open, and immediately noticed how windy it was. Woody, Sally & I climbed onto the large rock at the right hand side of the track for windblown photos and little view. Back into the bush and soon into the descent to the hut, we saw two young and fluffy whiteheads flitting in the trees above us.

Two hours after leaving Woody's van, we arrived at the hut. Blue Range is a real character hut, built in 1958. The hut and its outbuildings are adorned with various hospital signs, which add to its personality. Sally & I braved the steadily increasing rain to photograph it, before eating lunch. Woody improved all our lunches by giving each of us a "Choco-Pie", a triple layer chocolate biscuit – yum!

Too soon it was time to start heading back. Once up the top of the hill, we paused at the beautiful, almost gobliness forest at the top. This is a particularly lovely part of the walk, as the trees and ground are covered with ferns, mosses and lichens.

By now it had been raining for a couple of hours, and in places the track was getting soggy underfoot. On the way down, the sight of interesting white flowers occupied us, and we compared the performance of our raincoats. Mine is clearly losing its waterproofing, as rain wouldn't bead on the fabric. We also met a man heading up the hill.

We descended faster than we had ascended, and gratefully changed into dry clothes in the generously sized shelter in the carpark. It had been a really enjoyable way to spend a wet day, and we had all enjoyed it. Thanks to everyone for their cheerful company, and Woody for the driving.

We were: Woody Lee, (leader), Craig Allerby, Mike Allerby, Sally Hewson and Nicola Wallace.

25 November 2012

**Iron Gate Hut checking/ rebaiting stoat traps
Report by Woody Lee**

Warren and I met the Allerbys in Feilding and all packed up in Craig's Ford Laser for the day. At the car park we saw great views of blue skies over the ranges and surprisingly there were no

ash clouds over Mt Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe, although the Te Maari crater had erupted again and emitted a significant amount of gas on 21 November.

The trip was part of a stoat trap checking along the Oroua River. We started checking traps at the Tunupo junction with our first outcome near the Alice Nash Memorial Heritage Lodge of a rat. I was excited with our next outcome of a stoat which I took a picture of because I had never seen a flattened stoat before. We ended up removing 1 stoat and 7 rats from the track traps. We enjoyed our late lunch break at the hut as we had spent nearly four hours on this one way walk.



The stoat/ rat killing team at Iron Gate Hut.



Trap 45, with large rat



Trap 62, with flattened rat

For the first time we had a shared lunch and it worked very well – spicy instant noodles, various protein toppings, seasoned sliced gherkins as a side dish and a yummy dessert.

Checking traps along the river was also pleasant in the sunny afternoon and the water was not cold. We had several negotiations over crossing the river and I got my pants completely wet once. In that afternoon we found 8 rats from the river side traps.

It was a big day and I enjoyed working with Michael (leader), Craig, Warren and Woody.

1-2 December Mid Pohangina Hut Working Party

This was a very successful fly in- tramp out trip before Christmas to both Ngamoko and Mid Pohangina Huts. They were tidied up and prepared for a busy summer (at least in terms of Pohangina Valley huts). They are both well worth visiting during good weather, and have been well kept by DOC. Now, PNTMC is Manager of both huts.



Warren preparing for a cold winter at Mid Pohangina Hut.

17 December
Summer Solstice Scrub Slog
Report by Peter van Essen

Several of us survived the silly season with a Saturday summer solstice scrub slog to Arawaru. We only sustained superficial scratches so no need for surgical sutures. We first sped along the Sledge Track then sauntered and sidled up a salubrious section of new trap-line that avoided the worst of the skin scratching scrub. Soon we were in the short section of leatherwood to the summit where we stretched out in the swaying silver tussock for a snack and short sleep.

Sometime later, suitably satiated and having surveyed the scenic surroundings, we scouted the route to the south for our return via Scotts Road. The secret short cut spur track required some selective sleuthing by compass but still it eluded us, so continuing on we sought out the second route down.

Soon the scrubby pepperwood and scratchy bush lawyer slowed our progress. Since there was no surety of the suitability of the second spur for descent we sidled back the way we came only to suddenly stumble upon the first spur route we had sought. So we sped down the spur via the suitably stomped trail to Scotts Road. The sorest part of our sojourn was the slog on Scotts Road back to the Sledge Track start.

We saw screeds of scrambling kiekie, silver leaved scrub, and significant pig sign from sows searching for slugs 'n' snails and succulent squiggly scrub worms. The summit scenery was worth the seven a.m. to six p.m. effort in this seldom visited secluded spot. The scrub provides shelter from the southerlies and shade from sunburn and by sticking to the secret tracks to avoid getting stuck and scratched, makes this trip even suitable for sensible souls.

Scrub sloggers were Janet Wilson, Graham Peters, and scribe Peter van Essen.

4-6 January 2013
Maungahuka Loop
Report by Lance Gray

There was a brief period when Warren conducted the annual "Forks & Flies" trip across the Tararua Range to celebrate the New Year. In this vein I suggested to Warren that it was time to re-brand going forward with a similar product. For whatever reason Warren and I managed to find ourselves the only interested parties and so given the weather forecasts we decided upon a circuit of Maungahuka Hut from

Otaki Forks instead. To add to the excitement Wyn Pettus joined the fray at the last moment after a long period of self-imposed exile (she completed a Master's Degree). For Warren and me it had been a few years since our last foray over the infamous Tararua Peaks and that "ladder" with many gaps in our memory apparent as the trip progressed.

After a coffee and a bit of train spotting we spirited Wyn away from the Waikanae platform to an already packed Otaki Forks carpark. While the forecast for the lower half of the North Island was supposed to be outstanding the weather this particular Friday was a very "local" experience as we watched hail storms and small squalls blanketing parts of the immediate Tararuas while on the "plains" the punters were sweltering. For Wyn this particular "loop" was as new as the batteries that seemed to power her endless supply of excitement and enthusiasm.

The track up to Field Hut and then along to the turn-off to the Main Range were noticeable for the parents and children enjoying their early tramping opportunities. The immediate trail along the Main Range was comfortable walking, though we were always mindful of the inclement weather coming in from the south east. Unfortunately for us the clouds coincided with our arrival around the Tararua Peaks. What was quite intimidating became a bit terrifying for Wyn and me. Warren assumed leadership and we gladly followed. As is always the case the rock scrambling with packs was easier than we imagined. The ladder was the easy part and we all enjoyed the chain holds etc though a number of the young "thrusters" in the hut book noted how they had managed to down-climb the peaks without the unnecessary help of the blasted ladder.

As I reluctantly head towards middle age I am glad for such apparatus. My point is illustrated best I think by two examples: 1) the trumper who had to carry his dog down the ladder: very convenient, and 2) the case of a fellow trumper we met, John Atkinson from Eastbourne, who with his advanced years would not have entertained the idea of such a trip if he was required to perform such acrobatic calisthenics.

It is this variety of people you meet on such trips that is always fascinating. For example there were the party of four young men with one very new to tramping with the other three trying hard not to overwhelm him with how difficult their immediate passage was going to be next morning. Then there was the young man at Anderson's Hut with the beautiful dog who had "choppered" in with supplies as a treat. We had some respect for him as he had previously

walked the track. The deer though were not co-operating and, like us, were probably trying to find somewhere shady.



Ladder between Tunui and Tuiti - the Tararua Peaks - just south of Maungahuka peak and hut, Tararua Main Range. This notch in the ridge is visible from both Otaki and Carterton.

Our night at Maungahuka with Wyn on the veranda and Warren and me under the fly was suitably comfortable. Even after a very hot day there was a tiny piece of ice on the fly next morning to remind us of our 1300 metres of altitude.



Maungahuka tarn and hut.

The Saturday can only be described as baking hot with a miniscule southerly breeze making travel just tolerable. The bush in the saddle just before Anderson's Memorial Hut was soothing

before a brief chat at Anderson's and a hot slow ascent up to Angle Knob on Mt Crawford. Wyn was threatening mutiny because she did not want to leave the beauty of the tops but sanity or sun stroke prevailed and we took to the shadows of the bush and then the cooling waters of the Otaki River. At our "fly" camp we found a hunter who was very accommodating in allowing us to set up next to him, and the resident mosquito population! Warren and Wyn had very "bracing" swims while I feigned various injuries and got on with cooking dinner. Sleep was not so flash but the experience was worth it.

Sunday was another "broiler" but an early start and the cover of forest made for a tolerable walking experience. The Waitewaewae (YTTY) track however is a shocker topped off by a whopping great slip to gravel around just when you can sense the car and civilisation. After coffees at Waikanae sitting in the doorway of a magically cooling breeze we bid adieu to a still "bouncing" Wyn and gratefully "maxed" the air conditioner for the journey home and a cold beer or three at its conclusion. The Maungahuka Loop is challenging but with the right team and a bit of patience a very enjoyable experience.

Lance Gray, Warren Wheeler, Wyn Pettus.

21 January Wharite Report by Duncan Hedderley

This was a good day out with a bunch of people, most of whom I'd not met before. The weather didn't look promising as we headed towards the hills, but the cloud must have been banking up on the western side, because as soon as we got through the Gorge it was sunny and clear.

The first half hour on the Coppermine Creek track, was very pleasant. The next half hour, scrambling up onto a ridge through mud and overgrowth, was accomplished with plenty of breaks for a breather.

As we got a bit higher, we noticed the wind a bit more (so that's what was pushing the cloud against the western side...) and Wharite disappeared into some of the cloud which had come over the top (as Blair said, "You can see Greytown"). Just before the junction, a couple of people were finding the up-hill a bit much, so we stopped, had lunch and headed back down. Most of us ended up at the cheesecake shop in Woodville.

We were Laurel MacDonald, Lisa and Michelle (Laurel's friends), Karen Tutt, Nicky Hughes, Blair and Lizzie Kent, and Duncan Hedderley.

Up the Makaroro to the Barlow Hut
26 January
Report by Marjan Kloos

On the 26th of January 2013 I went out on my first adventure with the Palmerston North Tramping & Mountaineering Club. We had an early morning start and 4 of us were man/women enough to go on this exciting journey. Warren (our leader), Scott, Woody and myself (Marjan) headed out towards Ruahine Forest Park to master the mighty Makaroro River. This international party, 1 American, 1 Korean, 1 New Zealander and 1 Dutch person set out for the 16km tramp at 9:30 after arriving at the Wakarara Roadend.

Before leaving it was stated that wet feet was an absolute certainty and within 5 minutes of our tramp this was the case for everybody without exception. That did not get us down for the weather was more than fine and we were in good spirits.

There is no track as such; it is straight into the river bed, go left and keep following the river bed until you reach Barlow Hut. We had great discussions about the river's history and the beautiful landscape we were going through. This is a typical example of a breaded North Island river, I have found while doing some background checks on this river.

As we drove up we found that you drive away from civilization into the bush. This continues on the tramp itself as we walked from farmland into a bushier region. After about 1 hour walk up the river (and countless crossings) the Gold Creek joins the Makaroro River and this is the point where all civilization is gone and bush and trees are left. Here we also started to notice the wildlife around us. The river was filled with trout and the bush around was filled with birds. We saw some wood pigeons, yellow heads, fantails and some other native birds.

On the way we stopped at the Colenso Spur Memorial to take a group photo and have a tea break. What was stated at the Colenso Spur Memorial: Along this route in Feb. 1845 William Colenso made his first Journey to cross the Ruahine Range. But it fails to mention that his attempt failed that year. He made it across another time.

The most amazing wild life that we saw was lots of tiny frogs near the hut. They appeared to be in every colour ranging from bright green to dark brown.

After 3 hours tramp up the river we got to our destination: Barlow Hut. We had lunch there and were able to have dry feet for about 30 minutes, which was a welcome change. After lunch we made a short side trip up the steep Barlow Track. This was to see the almost dry pond full of frogs like those escaped down by the river.

Colenso Memorial Cairn – Makaroro River





Spot the frog trying to hide under rock in the river

Going back down the river was faster, maybe because we didn't stop at every turn to look at the wild life. But we did have some fun with a dip or two in the cool waters of the Makaroro River. We scared some trout I believe, but I think they survived. All in all we had a great time and this trip has definitely made me want to come on some more trips.

After the 6 hour tramp the mountainbiking group of two was waiting for us and we all stopped off for some delicious Hokey Pokey ice-cream in the metropolis of Ongaonga. On the way out we even did a grand tour of the town and I do believe we drove past most of the Highlights. To make this story complete I must mention that on the way out and on the way to the Ruahine Ranges I had my first Maori Language lessons. So now I know that Wai = Water and nui is Great/big, so Wainui = Great Water, and thus a commonly used name for a big river in New Zealand is Wainui. After a great day my bed was very welcoming and I hope to have more fun or an equal amount of fun the next time round.

We were Scott Esser, Woody Lee, Warren Wheeler and Marjan Kloos.

Poetry Corner

NEVER GOING HOME

Nicola Wallace, January 2013

*He lies scrunched up in the bush
Both legs broken, just like the twigs he snapped
In his 150 foot fall
And he cries out in frustration
As he realises how useless he is in the bush
How immobile
Without legs
Legless
He tries his phone*

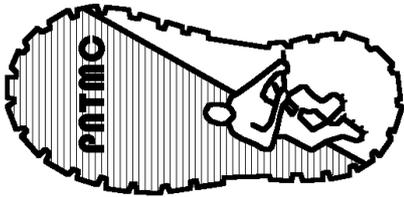
*No reception
Of course
But worst of all is the feeling of impending doom
No, not feeling, knowledge
His head and heart both know
He's never going home.*

*Under a twinkling Christmas tree
Sits an enormous parcel
Wrapped with difficulty
And lots of love
By his wife
It's a pack
And inside it, freeze dried meals, and a book
"Shelter From the Storm"
From the kids
Who don't know that right now
He's soaked through, and frozen to the core
Beyond
On his last legs
As the last hours of his life pass in a hypothermic
haze
A husband and father never to be seen again
Who's not coming home.*

*The little hut sits waiting
Longing for someone to enter it
Light the fire
And warm its heart
Someone to clomp in, in their muddy boots
Hang up sopping clothes
And boil a brew
Empty now for two weeks
It craves a human to turn it into a home
Even just for one night
And he was going to come
Today
He almost made it
Until he slipped and tumbled
Hurrying to get there by lunchtime
A destiny unfulfilled*

*In a shop in the city
Personal Locator Beacons
Sit trapped in a glass cabinet
And yes, they feel trapped
And frustrated
Because every day
People look at them
Through the glass
And think that they should.....
But they're so expensive
And they'd probably never need it
Because they're careful
And they always take their phone.*

*Yes, they feel frustrated
Because they long to be out in the world
Stuffed in pockets and hung on belts
Fulfilling their destinies, saving lives
So everyone gets to go home.*



Palmerston North
Tramping and
Mountaineering Club
Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217,
Palmerston North

PNTMC Newsletter February 2013

What's inside this month?

- Hutbagging Poster - Order Now
- PNTMC Annual Awards
- Ruahine Hut Bagging Awards
- Tatarua exploits to Blue Range, Arawaru, Maungahuka
- Stoat trapping in the Oroua
- Up the Makaroro to Barlow Hut
- Some poignant poetry

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!

**Sender: PNTMC
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