

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter October 2014



Snowcraft 3 - Craig rescuing Dwight from carpark crevasse, Turoa!

[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 October

Spirit of Adventure

Abbie Ionas

Candidates for the Duke of Edinburgh Award have to do a “residential project” as one of their many challenges. Abbie liked the idea of a ship-based residency in the Hauraki Gulf, especially as it offered opportunities to go tramping and be involved in conservation projects along the way.

30 October

Whats Up DOC?

Now that the major DOC restructure is bedding in we will hear about what is envisaged under the new Partnership Model and how we can be more involved.

Upcoming Trips

4-5 October

Mangahao-Te Matawai **F**
Grant Christian **354-5843**

I want to do a one way trip, starting at the upper Mangahao dam and finishing at Gladstone Road. Stay in Mangahao Hut on Saturday night and go out via Te Matawai and South Ohau Hut on Sunday. We will need two cars and will drop one off at Gladstone Road before we start. Leave Palmerston North at 7 a.m. Saturday.

5 October

Zekes Hut **M**
Chris Tuffley **359-2530**

Every time I drive to Waiouru I see the sign for Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary and wonder what's there - so now I'm going to go and find out! By all accounts we'll enjoy some beautiful bush on the 12k return trip to the hut, with great views of Ruapehu from the summit of Hihitahi if we're lucky with the weather. Leaving town 7:30am.

11-12 October

Sunrise Hut **Family**
Doug Strachan **353-6526**

We drive for 2hrs, via Ongaonga, to the start of the 2-3hr climb to Sunrise Hut on an almost-wheelchair-friendly track. We're bringing our son (7yrs) and daughter (9yrs). Options for Sunday include coming out partly down the track and partly along the river, or a sub-group could do something more adventurous. Come for the views and the Scooby Doo bedtime story. Depart 9am from Milverton Park.

12 October

North Ohau Hut **M**
Richard Lockett **323-0948**

A wet feet trip up the Ohau River and up the north branch to the hut. Return the same way.

18-19 October

Arete Forks (combo with MTSC) **F**
Jean Garman **021 176 0209**

This hut is seldom visited but makes for a rewarding trip. In via Blue Range and Cow Creek Hut, then up the Waingawa River to Arete Forks Hut. Return the same way or a variation thereof. A great opportunity for keen hutbaggers.

19 October

Waiotauru Hut **M**
Martin Lawrence **357-1695**

This is a relatively easy trip up the Waiotauru River branch of the Otaki Forks. We follow an old logging track for much of the way.

25-27 October (Labour Weekend)

Holdsworth/Maungahuka Loop **M/F**
Warren Wheeler **356-1998**

Depart 7.30am. This trip in the eastern Tararuas takes us on a nice loop from Holdsworth carpark to Totara Flats and on to Neill Forks Hut, then up to Maungahuka Hut and along the tops and down to Mid-Waiohine Hut, then up over Mt Holdsworth and out via Powell Hut. Lots of variety and hutbagging.

Day Trip (labour Weekend)

TBA

If interested please contact the trip coordinator Janet Wilson on 329-4722 no later than Wednesday 22 October.

1-2 November

Roaring Stag, Dundas **F**
Geoff Phillips **356-4223**

A classic Tararua trip taking in some of the nicest forest and river and tops travel in the park. Day one is from Putara Road to Roaring Stag Hut, then up to Cattle Ridge Hut and down and up to Dundas Hut. Day two loops back along the open tops of the Dundas Range, down to Herepai Hut and back to the roadend.

2 November

Burn Hut Loop **M**
Dave Grant **328-7788**

Join me on a new Burn Hut loop tramp, this time coming in from the south. From the top Mangahao dam we will head in to Baber Creek and then up the old Puketuru track to the ridge. Here, we will head north along a newly cut track to reach Burn Hut for lunch, then back down to top Mangahao via College Creek as usual. Enjoy fantastic lake, bush and tops views in the northern Tararuas without the usual Burn Hut loop road walk at the end. Leave Milverton 7.30am.

Trip Grading

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

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

Other grades:

Technical skills (T)
Instructional (I)

Trip participants

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

Gear for trips

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

Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips

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

Trip leaders

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

Overdue Trips

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

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

Articles for the newsletter

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

Notices

PNTMC 50th Anniversary 2015

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

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

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

Interclub Photo Comp Results

MUAC hosted the annual interclub photo competition this year on Monday 8 September. The event was held at the MUSA Lounge at Massey University with a few members present from both MTSC and PNTMC to take away any chocolate and other prizes coming their way. Stacy did a fine job running through the entries and presenting the prizes to the placegetters chosen by the judge.

Unfortunately the MUAC judge was unable to attend on the night but it was easy to see why he had chosen Kim Fraser's image of Mangawai Heads as the Best in Show.

The place getters were:

Above the bushline

1st Stacey Hendriks - MUAC
2nd Jean Garman - MTSC
3rd Ange Minto - PNTMC

Natural History

1st Chris Tuffley - PNTMC
2nd Goldie Walker - MUAC
3rd Luis Felipe - MUAC

NZ Landscapes

1st Kim Fraser - MTSC
2nd Goldie Walker - MUAC
3rd Jean Garman - MTSC

Topical NZ

1st Grace Miller - MUAC
2nd Ivan Rienks - MTSC
3rd Terry Crippen - PNTMC

Below the Bushline

1st Kim Fraser - MTSC
2nd Nic Durkin - MUAC
3rd Ralph Edwards - MUAC

Overseas

1st Jean Garman - MTSC
2nd Kathy Corner - PNTMC
3rd Alexander Bisson - MUAC

The link for the photos that MUAC have posted on their club facebook page is:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=oa.794155373970618&type=1>

Thanks to MUAC for the hospitality and for showcasing the wonderful depth of photographic talent in our three clubs.

New Committee Member

Geoff Phillips has agreed to be seconded onto the Committee. We welcome Geoff's enthusiasm and fresh views as a relatively new club member.

New Phone Number

Mick Leyland has moved house and now has a new phone number 355-1845.

Website News

The Ups and Downs of E-Mountaineering By Peter Wiles (PNTMC Webmaster)

PNTMC has an entirely new Website! But unless you are very observant you probably won't have noticed.

How has this come about? The original website was created more than decade ago. It was built using open source software known as PHP. At that time, the latest (and greatest) version of PHP was version 4. Things have moved on.

About a year ago I had to buy a new PC and with that I had to install a fresh copy of PHP along with the server software (Apache) that runs PHP. I decided it was time to move up a little in the world and install the latest version of Apache (now version 2) and by now PHP5.4. Having got all that under my wings I thought I should be able to sit back and enjoy. The reality was that a clone of your favourite website would only generate heaps of error messages on my new software. There was a huge bunch of problems lurking somewhere in the hidden depths of the engine room. I set about trying to sort the mess out. Progress was slow because some of the errors I was unable to figure out. Well, via persistence and at times some luck I gradually discovered that there are some significant changes between versions PHP 4 and 5 that are quite poorly documented amongst the official documentation for PHP. In fact in version 4, programmers seemed like they could get away with just about murder.

Some of the most intractable problems concerned some of the forms used to get information into the databases for the trips and newsletters. Martin gave me some great help and gradually these were both understood and resolved.

A couple of months ago I thought it was time for the "all new" website to go out into the light of public gaze. So I approached Inspire (our hosting service) and they responded favourably and wanted me to confirm that I was really ready to step up to PHP5. I said yes and they moved a copy of the site across to another of their servers (running version 5). Well this was not a good move or look. The home page was totally blank and I am not sure that anything else was operable either.

This is where Inspire have extraordinarily good service and support for the likes of relatively unskilled operators – they restored the original version, so that kept PNTMC on the Web map, so to speak, while they set up for me a clone of the whole website in a special development area (it was at <http://dev.pntmc.org.nz>) for me to get my act together. (They also gave me a fresh set of passwords to access the cloned files.)

It took a week or so to get just the initial part of the home page to run – the header, footer and sidebar. At least that was progress, because with the sidebar the rest of the pages were potentially accessible. The problems with several of these links were relatively easy to fix, so I left the homepage to last. The challenge here was most frustrating – the homepage, running the same software and server combination runs fine on my home PC without any error messages, but on the commercial site won't run at all i.e. generates a fatal error!

Generation of the homepage is rather more complex than meets the eye. The fresh set of thumbnail photos that appear with each homepage request are selected randomly and created on the fly each time that page is downloaded to your screen. The set of programs to run this were quite cumbersome – and I have to plead guilty for having created them. I simply gave up trying to fix this problem and instead decided to try to streamline the code into a single file rather than use about a dozen files (one for each image).

One of my pieces of code that made me nervous was this:

```
echo sprintf("<tr>
    <td align=center><a
href=\"%s\"><img src=\"%s\"
alt=\"%s\"></a></td>
    <td align=center><a
href=\"%s\"><img src=\"%s\"
alt=\"%s\"></a></td>
```

```

        <td align=center><a
href=\"%s\"><img src=\"%s\"
alt=\"%s\"></a></td>
        <td align=center><a
href=\"%s\"><img src=\"%s\"
alt=\"%s\"></a></td>
        <td align=center><a
href=\"%s\"><img src=\"%s\"
alt=\"%s\"></a></td>
</tr>",$image_set[0][0],
'Thumb_0.php',
$image_set[0][1],$image_set[1][0],
'Thumb_1.php',
$image_set[1][1],$image_set[2][0],
'Thumb_2.php',
$image_set[2][1],$image_set[3][0],
'Thumb_3.php',
$image_set[3][1],$image_set[4][0],
'Thumb_4.php', $image_set[4][1] );

```

Whether this had anything directly to do with the problem, I have no idea, but I converted it into this instead:

```

<tr>
        <td align="center"><a
href=<?PHP echo
$photo_array[0][0];?> >
></a></td>
        <td align="center"><a
href=<?PHP echo
$photo_array[1][0];?> >
></a></td>
        <td align="center"><a
href=<?PHP echo
$photo_array[2][0];?> >
></a></td>
        <td align="center"><a
href=<?PHP echo
$photo_array[3][0];?> >
></a></td>
        <td align="center"><a
href=<?PHP echo
$photo_array[4][0];?> >
></a></td>
</tr>

```

Slightly more meaningful, perhaps? And for the eagle eyed, the images are now .png format files (whereas they were previously the more familiar .jpg format). I understand .png gives better quality output.

Anyway I ended up eventually with something that worked, but the new homepage file is now almost 300 lines of code. Back to Inspire again: "Can we go live now please?" Yes, and this time after about a year, we now have a brand new site! Hopefully, this will run for quite a few years before another major service call is required. **So check it out, play around or watch a slide show (there are two available).** Let me know of any problems or additions. (In the weekend I happened to find a picture on the homepage that did not display. The problem is caused when the file name is not a contiguous string of characters. This can be fiendishly difficult to spot at times, until by chance that image happens to be called up and a minor error occurs. So hint, for the slide competition, please try to name your images with no spaces between the characters!)

Thanks to the guys at Inspire, they gave us tremendous (free) service and have considerable patience with folks who don't seem to know too much about what they are doing. Their service is second to none. PS. I have just identified and fixed another bug in the sidebar menu. (Another PHP 4 → 5 problem.)

PPS. I am aware of still another bug in the sidebar menu, but I don't think it relates to the upgrading to PHP5. Can anyone spot it? Cheers Peter.

[A chocolate fish for the first correct reply– Ed]

Trip Reports

17 August 2014
Snowcraft 3
Nicholas Allen

With an 8am, Sunday morning arrival at Turoa ski-field, we were greeted with yet another perfect day, weather that more than compensated for the hordes snaking their way up and down the mountain's wind-slabbed slopes. It seems that the snowcraft courses have had an exceptional run of good weather this year!

Eager to escape the masses, our group practiced multi-pitch climbing techniques, ascending a large slope above the carpark, onto a small plateau that would later become our makeshift glacier. After a small break, Bruce and Terry instructed the group in glacier

travel and crevasse rescue. With so many pieces of rope and hardware, crevasse rescue proved to be a bit of a challenge, albeit a pleasant one on a day with such magnificent views.

The rest of the afternoon featured instruction in avalanche rescue with Terry, mixed rock/ice climbing with Malcolm, snow anchors with Bruce, and spectacular self-arresting acrobatics with Dwight. After a relaxed few hours in the sun, we headed back down to Waiouru for food and coffee.

A big thank you goes to Bruce Van Brunt, Terry Crippen, Malcolm Leary, and Dwight Swanson for their patient instruction and help. The students on the snowcraft course were: Geoff Phillips, Craig Bedford, Nicholas Allen, Ivan Cortes, and Stella Rojas.

22-24 August 2014 Penn Creek Hut Warren Wheeler

Penn Creek is a seldom visited spot these days due to dire warnings of slips on the old Penn Creek Track, which used to offer a nice loop back to Otaki Forks and rumours of a boggy track near the tops. Turns out that is a very nice spot to visit without any real bother even if it is a bit steep as one enters the bush off the tops. The recent dry weather meant that the track was in good condition except for maybe one boggy spot, easily got around.

To make a mission of it we started on Friday night and stayed in Parawai Hut, less than five minutes across the bridge at Otaki Forks. The short track is signposted but is not very well marked and not well trodden at this time of year, so it was good that we knew the way. We had the whole place to ourselves (it sleeps a dozen or more comfortably) except for a rat who investigated a billy in a plastic bag left on a shelf above the bench.

Janet woke with a chesty cough "where did that come from?" but felt she would carry on so long as we blokes didn't mind going a bit slower. Well, given Janet's usual pace that sounded good to me as we headed off up the steady climb to Field Hut for an early lunch. A large group from VUWTC soon arrived with one pair carrying skis and a snowboard strapped to their day-packs for a play in the snow at Kime Hut. Like us they had heard of show down to 400m a couple of days before and we had armed ourselves with ice axes

expecting some snow at least. Wishful thinking. The snow was only on the very tops and as we found out later from people who had stayed the night at Kime Hut, there wasn't much there and it was quite icy.

We followed the group up past Tabletop and along to the signposted turnoff to Penn Creek Hut. There was patchy cloud on the tops to the east so we enjoyed the sunshine as the day improved. The track down off the tops obviously gets little use as it was not very worn or muddy but had been cleared nicely so we made good progress down the long ridge to Penn Creek. We were impressed by the number of birds that seemed to be enjoying the sunshine for a change. The track then climbs briefly to sidle above the stream before dropping again to the standard Forest Service six-bunk hut nestling in a clearing beside the river.

The hut is well looked after by VUWTC who at the end of June had a dozen in for some maintenance and clearing vegetation from encroaching. Most of them blasted off downriver to Otaki Forks so despite some "hard work" stories in the Log Book the old Penn Creek Track (or river route, or a bit of each) is quite doable if you are suitably experienced and fit (and crazy?).



Penn Creek Hut

The woodstove took a bit of getting going with the wet wood but eventually we made ourselves comfy for what turned out to be a cool clear starry night. Next morning there was a frost outside and three degrees inside – perfect porridge weather. Janet had survived reasonably well overnight but was feeling rather unwell and not relishing the trip back up the hill. Still, it was a beautiful day and the three hours to the top seemed to go quickly.

We heard paradise ducks nesting in the trees by the river below and came across an old billy goat near the bush edge. It was such a nice sunny day we settled down in the tussock for an extended lunch break, offering our greetings to people happily heading up and down. Far in the distance we could see Mt Egmont, Ruapehu and across to the South Island to Marlborough Sounds and the ranges beyond. Eventually we packed up and got going again. Back to civilisation all too soon, but even the mighty Avenger didn't want to leave the carpark without packing a sad, but after some fuss it soon settled down and we were on our way.

We were Janet Wilson, Graham Peters and Warren Wheeler.

Postscript: Both Janet and Graham ended up off work for two or three days with the flu but Warren managed to miss it.

30-31 August 2014

Waiopehu Hut

Report by Michael Allerby

Photos by Warren Wheeler

Arriving at the car park we were welcomed by a pleasant sunny spring day, a pleasing start for the tramp.

From the car park there is a short stroll across farmland before entering the forest park where upon Warren noticed a PLB (personal locator beacon) lying on the ground. We left it for whoever may have dropped it to discover on their return. Once in the forest you climb up through tawa trees mixed with hinau, rewarewa and come across some magnificent rimu giants. There was also quite a large miro along the way. A nice sunny spot was found for morning tea and an opening in the forest with views of the plains below and coast beyond for lunch.

It is a gentle climb along the ridge and higher up you move out of the tawa forest and enter a canopy of kamahi forest with the odd beech tree amongst it. You come across some interesting shaped kamahi trees of which one we found Craig standing up in.

Along the way here we came across Davy Hughes (Swazi Man) and his mate. It was Davy who had dropped the PLB and also a first aid kit off his new pack (which he was cursing). Warren told him where to find the PLB, so hopefully he retrieved it on the way out.



A handy kamahi

Further on we came out of the forest and into leatherwood and could view the hut ahead, perched at 970 m. It was not long from here to the hut and upon arriving discovered an empty large hut to ourselves. For 3 of us it was the first time to Waiopehu Hut and we were amazed by the views from here - some of the South Island, Lake Horowhenua, Levin, the coastline right round to Taranaki. Ruapehu and Mt Taranaki could be faintly seen as there was some cloud about. Out to the east the peaks were engulfed with cloud from the front that had come in from the north/east, but every now and then it would clear slightly to reveal a snow capped peak.

Unanimously a decision was reached to head to the top of Waiopehu (1094m), but not until Kathy had her cup of tea, so I put the billy on and we all had a hot drink before heading off. It didn't take long to get to the top where we were able to enjoy views of the surrounding area.



Waiopehu Hut offers great views

Once back at the hut we enjoyed some pre-dinner snacks followed by dinner. This was finished off with a hot drink, chocolate biscuits and a cake of chocolate, while taking in views of all the town lights at night, from down below

right up to Palmerston North, Feilding and all the other Manawatu towns in the distance, some of which we were trying to figure out.

A cold chilly wind was blowing outside that we had struck in certain exposed sites along the way up. It was coming from the east so felt like it was coming off the snow capped peaks and gave a reading of 2 degrees outside on my watch with 8 degrees inside. It was time to tuck into our sleeping bags for the night.

In the morning the visibility had improved and we enjoyed good views of the volcanoes whilst eating our breakfast. We decided to head out the same route as the day before to the car park. Thankfully it wasn't too long after we had left that Kathy realised she had left her walking poles behind and headed back to fetch them. We waited in an open grassy area and on her return got in a discussion about some subject, which seemed to drag on until someone suggested it was time to get moving again. After heading down for a while we stopped for lunch where morning tea was had Saturday before continuing out to the car park.

Thanks all for a pleasant enjoyable trip.

We were: Warren Wheeler, Kathy Corner, Craig Allerby and Michael Allerby.

7 September 2014
Kaiparoro Clearing
Peter Wiles

It was rather grey as we headed through Eketahuna. Once at the carpark at the end of Kaiparoro Road, we inspected the stream. Gumboots proved handy for the crossing and then we were away up the track. The track / firebreak / road climbs steadily upwards with a pine forest on one side and native stuff on the other. The temperature was right for a good climb and a bit of sweating, even.

About 11 a.m. we stopped for morning tea and then resumed the climb. It seemed a bit misty and we wondered whether we would see very much once on the clearing. Then we left the firebreak and turned onto a track through the bush. Partway along the track, blue sky emerged and we reached the clearing and the trig in excellent conditions. There was little wind, good sun and a rewarding view. We crashed onto handy tussocks and had our lunch.



Kaiparoro Trig

Once we had finished our lunch, the sun seemed to disappear so we headed back down. A bit of care with the footing was required on the wetter and steeper sections, but we were back at the bottom in almost no time.

Back at the stream there were mixed fortunes with one slippage and a wet outcome. Oops! We had tea/coffee/hot chocolate back at Eketahuna and also made a brief visit to the museum.

Karen Tutt, Duncan Hedderley, Peter Wiles.

From the Archives

Some things don't seem to change much?
From the November 1993 newsletter:

What is National's campaign theme? Yes, we have no bananas.

What is the difference between the Labour Party's manifesto and a packet of crisps? You can eat the crisps.

Where can the average person find the obvious signs of trickle down? Through the door on the left, along the corridor and second on your right.

[Thanks to Peter Wiles for this post-election contribution – Ed]

Tony Gates Rangī Memorial

Here are a few photos taken by Dave Grant at the dedication of Tony's memorial on Sunday 21 September at the Rangī Carpark. We were lucky with the weather and had a great attendance - about 30 folks, including Tony's father, brother, and sister.



Collecting plants from the leatherwood belt.



Initial planting out



Final planting by Gates family members



Completed planting



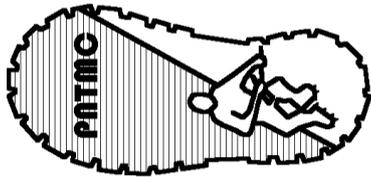
About half of those attending



Lunch and drinks followed



Stainless steel plaque thanks to Mike Leyland.



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What's inside this month?

- Interclub Photo Competition Results
- Ups and Downs of E-Mountaineering
- Snowcraft 3 Report
- Tararua Trip Reports
- Tony Gates Rangji Memorial
- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

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Get out and about with us!

**Sender: PNTMC
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	Warren Wheeler	356 1998
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