

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter April 2015



Summer fun at Beehive Creek, Pohangina Valley

[Minami Strachan]

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 April

USA Did-Not-Do Tour

Warren Wheeler

Last year Warren went to California but did not do Los Angeles or Disneyland. Instead he was interviewed for TV at a Chilli Festival in Albuquerque. This and other did-not-do antics featured in a road trip that started from San Francisco and included some of the iconic National Parks in this area – Yosemite, Death Valley, Zion, Sequoia and more.

Note that this replaces Tasmania Overland Track, which is now swapped to 25 June.

30 April

Cycling in France

Lis and Arthur Todd

Lis and Arthur will tell us all about a wonderful cycling holiday over the French summer last year.

Upcoming Trips

3-6 April

Easter Mid-Tararua Circuit **M**
Warren Wheeler **356-1998**

Depart PN at 7.30am. This 4-day trip will be weather dependent but Plan A is to start from Kiriwhakapapa Carpark to Blue Range > Mitre Flats (1) > Tarn Ridge > Dorset > Carkeek (2) > Arete Forks > Cow Creek (3) > Blue Range > out. A nice mix of bush, goblin forest, tussock, rock and river with lots of hut bagging points for you.

11-12 April

Totara Flats **E/M**
Kathy Corner **356-8186**

This is an easy -medium walk (approximately a 6 hour walk) from the Holdsworth Road end to the popular Totara Flats Hut. This hut sits at the confluence of the Waiohine River and the Totara Creek with a good swimming hole for the adventurous - last swim before winter? Come and enjoy a weekend in the Tararuas. Leave from Milverton Park at 7.30. Phone Kathy on 356-8186 or 027-618 5722.

12 April

Burn Hut **M**
Peter Wiles **358-6894**

Leaving 7.00am from Milverton Park for Mangahau Road and Number 2 dam in the Tararuas. Depending on conditions, a round trip might be possible.

18-19 April

Dundas **M/F**
Warren Wheeler **356-1998**

Depart 7.30am. From the end of Putara Road behind Eketahuna, this trip goes first to Herepai Hut and then higher up to the Tararua tussock tops of the Dundas Range. Overnight at Dundas Hut then down to cross the Ruamahanga River and up again to Cattle Ridge Hut before dropping to Roaring Stag Hut and return to the carpark. If bad wx for tops travel we will go to Cattle Ridge instead.

19 April

Pinnacle/Atiwhakatu **M**
Dave Grant **328-7788**

From Mount Holdsworth carpark the track we follow climbs up to Pinnacle Ridge on the east side of the Atiwhakatu River (opposite side to the normal Atiwhakatu track) to eventually join

up with the track to Mitre Flats. We won't go that far, dropping down to cross the Atiwhakatu River by the hut and returning to Mount Holdsworth carpark on the normal track. You will tramp through a variety of bush and clearings, giving a different perspective of the Atiwhakatu valley. Moderate fitness required. Leave Milverton Park at 7.30am.

NOTE – Dave can not lead this trip but will be taking names to pass on to the new leader. Contact Warren 356-1998 if in doubt.

25-27 April

Ngamoko-Leon Kinvig
Anzac Long Weekend **M**
Richard Lockett **323-0948**

These two huts sit beside the Pohangina River in the Ruahine Forest Park. To get there we start from the end of Table Flat Road, just past Apati, and will climb up Knights Track to the tops then down to Leon Kinvig. Easy river travel and a check of the stoat traps will bring us to Ngamoko Hut. Out over the tops and down Shorts Track. If the river is up then we will go via Shorts to Ngamoko for a couple of nights.

27 April

Awesome Autumn Arawaru Ascent **M/F**
Peter van Essen **355-9076**

Ahoy all autumn adventurers, time to attire yourself in tramping apparel and accompany me on the absolutely awesome autumn ascent of Arawaru (northern Tararua). A round trip alternative access route now exists from the Kahutewara Stream to Arawaru Peak. Prepare for a longish day and some scrub navigation on this back country route. An astounding activity to assuage, appease and alleviate your acute itchy feet affliction.

Depart 7am.

2-3 May

TBA
Graham Peters **329-4722**

A chance to bag any huts still not visited in the Tararua Forest Park.

3 May

Blue Range Hut **E**
Woody Lee **357-2390**

A gateway to the eastern Tararuas, we drive to the Kiriwhakapapa Road between Mt Bruce and Masterton. The track is a fairly steep hill at the beginning but it will be a nice trip. Depart 8am.

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.

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.

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

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

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

A list of "missing" past club members is included with this newsletter.

Tararua Hut Bagging

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

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

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

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

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

1 extra point for a first visit.

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

All huts maximum of 3 visits to count for points.

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

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

Progress Update from Janet

The scores as I have them for the hutbagging are WW still with a massive lead on 208, me 2nd on 134, and Graham Peters on 77. Michael has surged into 4th place on 67, with Craig and Grant joining Woody on 63. So far there have been 406 hut visits by individuals (108 different huts), with an overall total of 1158 points, mostly gained on club trips and at Tararua Huts.

There are plenty of opportunities coming up in the next 4 months – remember, the challenge runs until the end of June.

The current Top 10 Hut Baggers are:

Warren W	208
Janet W	134
Graham P	77
Mike A	67
Craig A	63
Grant C	63
Woody L	63
Richard L	59
Graeme R	58
Nick A	44

Congratulations

Newsflash from Bruce van Brunt.



Former PNTMC member Clive Marsh is now a father. Clive's partner, Bronwyn, gave birth to

James Kalahari Marsh on 28 February. James is 2.9 kg and the family is doing well. Best wishes from PNTMC!!!!

Clive worked with Andy Backhouse and I instructing Snowcraft courses in the late 1990's. He has since proved a great host to SI climbers from PNTMC. His house near Lincoln has been the launch pad for many adventures into the Alps. I am sure that Clive is already finding a pair of crampons for James!

Trip Reports

8 February 2015 Beehive Creek Doug Strachan

Great family trip, as you can see by these photos (and the one on the front page).



Masaki on stile near start of trip.



Minami & Leena middle of the trip.

We were: Elena Pan (Chinese international student), Woody Lee and nephew Sunho, MacDonald Family (Lochlan, Tomoko, Leena, Kazuki, Natsume, Masaki), Strachan Family (Doug, Maho, Minami, Conan); Mo mo and Spodge and Choco and Stormy and Cloudy (cows we met that Minami & Leena named).

28 Feb – 1 March 2015

Kime Hut

Nicola Wallace

Four of us left town just after 8am, Kathy driving us down to Otaki Forks in her station wagon. By the time we got to the carpark, it was more than half full, signalling a busy weekend in the hills. In warm but cloudy conditions we set off walking just before 10am. I was conducting something of an experiment on this trip, my first time walking with 2 poles instead of the usual 1.

Thankfully it was cloudy, as the exposed walk up Judd Ridge was hot, but not terribly so, but it was a relief to reach the bush. Further on we stopped for a rest at the wooden log seat about 45mins before Field Hut, and a group of 8 came trooping past. A cry of "Romain!" came from Kathy, as she recognised one of the participants in her Waitangi weekend kayaking trip. Romain was part of the Massey Uni Alpine Club (MUAC) bunch who were also heading for Kime Hut.

By the time we got to Field Hut, the sun had emerged, and the first thing was to find some shade to sit in for lunch. The hut was like Grand Central Station, people everywhere, some just up to the hut for lunch, and others heading for Kime. "Get ready to be cooked" I said to the others as we set off after lunch, but the clouds came over, and it wasn't too hot. I went ahead to secure mattresses for us all before they all got taken. By Denny I was up in light cloud, and so it carried on. I got to the hut at 3.40pm, and there were still a few mattresses free.

Soon after arriving, I saw a dog wandering round outside. A look at its neck tags revealed that its name was Patch, and it was the caretaker's dog. The caretaker was nowhere to be seen, so maybe Patch just comes up here when he feels like it.

It was too cloudy and getting a bit late to go up to Mt Hector by the time we all arrived, so I went up to Field Peak and spent time watching the clouds swirling round. There was a view of

Mt Hector for about 2 seconds. We all wanted to get up there, and were hopeful for clearer weather the next day.

It ended up with about 20 people staying at Kime that night, and there was lots of good conversation, as most were from overseas, but it was early to bed for me.

The next morning was really clagged in, and initially it was decided that we'd just head home, but a lightening of the cloud at about 9am made trip leader Woody change his mind, much to my relief. And miraculously, the clouds parted for us as we headed away from the hut, and from Mt Hector we had amazing views of Lake Wairarapa, and cloud swirling over Winchcombe. It was windy, but not terribly strong, as there was no trouble standing up. To Benita, who comes from New York, it was very windy! There was no view of Wellington or Kapiti, as they were cloud covered.

Back at the hut, Woody kindly brewed up for us, and after a leisurely morning tea, we left Kime Hut at 11.30am. It was cloudy again now, making our Mt Hector trip seem even more miraculous. We had several rest stops on the way down to Field Hut, and one was particularly entertaining, as Woody brought out his "Selfie Stick", a telescopic pole that you mount your phone on to take selfies.

Lunch was taken at Field Hut, still in cloud, and a look in the book revealed that only 2 people had stayed there the night before. I was feeling surprisingly good, and put it down to using 2 poles, which had made the rocky descent between Kime and Field much easier than usual. The real test would be the last big downhill, as this is usually a bit torturous for me. Before leaving Field Hut, Woody helped Benita repack her big sleeping bag so it was inside her pack, as by now the trip was catching up with her, and she was feeling it.

Sometime during the descent from Field, the sun emerged. Kathy & I waited for the others in hot sun at the grassy clearing at the top of the last hill. The descent to the swingbridge was for me much faster and easier than ever before – and no sore knees – all thanks to using 2 poles. The difference was amazing. I absolutely recommend using 2 poles!

Benita was suffering with a very sore knee and hip, and had to summon all her determination to get down that last hill, but get down she did. She descended at her own pace, while

Woody, Kathy and I bagged Parawai Lodge. We ended up leaving Otaki Forks in beautiful evening sunshine at about 6.30pm after quite a long day, but actually I enjoyed the relaxed pace of the trip, and "took in" far more than I would have if we had rushed.

Kathy and I took turns driving on the way home, and we were back in Palmy by 8pm. Many thanks to everyone for their good humour and company.

We were Woody Lee (trip leader), Benita Gross, Kathy Corner, Nicola Wallace.

1 March 2015 Maharahara-Matanginui Peter van Essen

For this March meander we headed off at 7am for the Opawe Road end. Morning cloud was sitting down on the flanks of Maharahara as we climbed steadily up, firstly through the tawa, rimu and occasional northern rata (the last of this once common canopy emergent, most northern rata having been killed by possum browse). Then up through the mid altitude zone where scattered rimu and miro are all that remains of the tall trees from the original rata-kamahi forest that collapsed under the high browse pressure of deer, goats and possums during the 1950s-1970s. Now less palatable species like horopito, and Smiths tree fern dominate. Then further up we were into the mighty leatherwood belt and onto the summit of Maharahara soon after 11am.

This is the heart of the leatherwood capital of NZ, the single largest intact and unbroken expanse of leatherwood stretching from Wharite Peak to Takapari Peak. This large sub-alpine leatherwood belt is brought about by the unique combination of the absence of beech forest, climatic conditions of high cloud cover, high wind run and high rainfall, and the absence of high peaks so the area is too low for alpine vegetation, instead the subalpine belt is 2-3 km wide in places.

We carried on to Matanginui Peak for lunch by which time the cloud had lifted off the tops and we had good views to the east and west. After lunch we headed back down the same way and were out at the car before 4pm.

A pleasant day, not too hot, not too cold. We did some botanising on the way, always a good way to get a break on the steep bits. Up in the horopito zone we came across a three-

tent camp with copious gear, which turned out to be contractors employed by DOC to clear the track through to Kumeti and Kiritaki Hut. They will be finished this work by the time you read this so now is a good time to go up while the track is freshly cleared.

We were Peter van Essen (leader/scribe) and Raj Palanisamy.

21-22 February 2015 Te Matawai (Sex & Tramping) Grant Christian

Having no takers for my planned trip to Ruahine Corner Hut I wondered what else I could do. I had not looked at the calendar for that weekend because I thought I had the only trip covering the weekend. Maybe someone would be interested in going to Te Matawai Hut with me I thought. I sent out an email to a few club members to see if anyone wanted to join me. Fortunately Warren emailed me back to say Anne was already taking a trip to Te Matawai so I rang her and arranged to go along.

The trip started out in very humid and warm weather and as we climbed the ridge to Waiopehu Hut we had some light rain. The sweat was dripping off me as we steadily made our way to the hut. I regretted not wearing my contact lenses because my glasses kept fogging up. We had lunch at the hut and then moved on towards Waiopehu Peak. I spotted what I think was a falcon (my glasses had cleared now because we were mostly out of the bush) but none of the others saw it as it quickly disappeared into a patch of bush.

We crossed over Twin Peak and about an hour after leaving Waiopehu Hut we were at Richard's Knob which is the turn off to Te Matawai Hut. We had not walked particularly fast so were surprised that the DOC sign said 3 hours to Waiopehu Hut. We carried on through Butcher's Saddle and eventually reached Te Matawai Hut.

I had not been to Te Matawai before. It is an unusual L design with a cooking/dining area and separate sleeping area. The two young hunters in residence had a fire going which was surprising to me, given the warm conditions. They had also brought along their little fox terrier.

I headed to bed fairly early and spent an hour or two listening to music when sleep eluded me. The next morning we headed back along the track we had come in on the previous day until reaching Yeates Track. We followed Yeates Track down to South Ohau Hut, another first visit for me. There were a couple in the hut that had been the only two there the previous night. We talked to them briefly and had a few snacks. Most of us were preparing to leave, with only Anne still inside filling in the hut book. There was suddenly uproarious and prolonged laughter from within the hut.

Anne came out and when we had moved away from the hut let us in on the joke. Anne had commented to the couple on their hut book entry under Main Activity, 'Sex & Tramping' it read. Everyone had a good laugh at this. Presumably they had thought they would be gone before anyone came along and read the hut book.

From the hut we had a pleasant walk down the South Ohau and Ohau rivers until we reached the track that follows the Ohau River back out. We stopped by the river for a pleasant lunch (and a cup of tea, thanks Geoff) before heading out along the track. A stop at Shannon for ice creams topped off a pleasant weekend.

Trip Participants: Grant Christian, Anne Lawrence, Craig & Michael Allerby, Geoff Phillips

**Trip to the Olivine Ice Plateau
10-19 December 2014
Mary and Hannah Lund**

It was a dull morning that we boarded a jet boat at Glenorchy. An exhilarating ride took us to the start of the Beans Burn track. The cloud hugged the tops of mountains. Due to opting the better situated seats for our packs, and instead ourselves sitting at the back of the boat, we were almost soaked right through. However, with an exciting trip ahead of us, and good weather in store, we set off in good spirit at 10.30am for split rock biv.

It was a bit of a slog up the Beans Burn. We had yet to break in our big packs, which last weighed in at 23.5 kg. This was however prior to adding mountain radio, batteries, camera, thermarest and such and we dared not weigh them again. There was a well marked track through the bush along the valley floor and once on the flats stoat traps lead us to our rock. Split Rock Biv has a few habitable

compartments and the best room looked pretty cosy, however, due to a very healthy sandfly population we decided to sleep in our tent on the south side of the rock.

The next morning we woke to steady drizzle, low cloud, and a mob of hungry sandflies. It was 10am by the time we decided we could procrastinate no longer and it was move now or not at all. The low cloud meant we could not see Fohn Saddle, but that's why the GPS is handy. It was a soggy scramble up the tussock slope. Just as we plodded up the lip of snow onto the saddle the cloud lifted and the sun came out giving stunning views down the Beans Burn out to Lake Wakatipu. A great reward and a stunning lunch spot. From here all we needed to do was totter down to the Olivine Ledge Rock Biv, which due to our late departure, was our decided destination for the night. We arrived mid-afternoon and spent a lovely evening basking in the sunlight and drying everything out.



Fohn Saddle, looking down the Beans Burn towards Lake Wakatipu.

Just as we were about to depart from the Olivine Ledge the following morning a cheeky kea flew over and paraded up and down the roof of the biv sqwarking. In no time there were three. The two younger keas were a great source of entertainment. They appeared fascinated by us and as I studied the route off the ledge the young birds were leaning over my shoulder, nearly falling on me with curiosity. They admittedly delayed our departure a little. They were a lot of fun and a great start to the day. We decided to leave 2 days worth of food at the biv to lighten the load a little as we would be back here after visiting the plateau. However, after the kea encounter we thought it wise to hide the food well under rocks. Along with a friendly note just in case some other hungry trampers thought they'd got lucky!

The next section was through bush to the Olivine sunset confluence. Moir's Guide had a relatively precise set of instructions and we tried to follow these as closely as possible, however, we hit a number of obstacles and this section took us over twice as long as we anticipated. The bush was thick and unrelenting. Drop too quick – you get bluffed, stay high too long – you get bluffed. "Pass at about below the 800m contour" Moir's Guide advised after crossing the large creek. We did so, and found ourselves in a hideous boulder field where the earth opened up into big dark holes, making progress near impossible. After a bit of trial and error we found sidling at about the 700m contour was best travel. When good deer trails could be found, the going was great. We reached the Olivine-Sunset confluence relieved, but drained by the thought we had as far again before we reached the Olivine River flats, which would be our stop for the night.

It was a beautiful day and there was much debate whether we again braved the bush or took the river route. In the end, bush won. We found a cairn a few metres up the sunset, followed a good track up onto the bank, went past some campsites, and then it totally disappeared altogether. Mad at already having lost the trail we went back to the start and decided the river after all. This proved a good decision for a little while but the Olivine has what I like to call Pelorous Bridge water – that is water that is so pristine that it is deceptively deep! It proved a little big for the two of us to comfortably cross, so when the river got too hard going, we would retreat to the bush, and when we got sick of that drop back down into the river. We did this all the way to the Olivine River flats and it worked well, this section taking just as Moir's Guide had said – 2.5 hours. Our early arrival meant we had plenty time to set up camp, check out blue pool and recheck the route ahead.

Next morning an old harness slung in a tree about 30m back from Blue Pool marked where the trail headed up over the bluffs. This section was surprisingly pleasant and much more enjoyable than the previous day's ventures. The trail was blazed and relatively easy to follow. We reached Forgotten River flats in no time and from here it was easy travel up to the head of the Forgotten River, again in faultless weather. As we turned the final bend in the Forgotten River valley we got our first glimpse of the route up to Forgotten Col and the associated ice fall leading onto the Olivine Ice Plateau. I couldn't keep my eyes off it. It was so magnificent – and daunting. That night we

stayed in the Hilton of rock bivies. This biv is spacious with great sheltered cooking space and a small trickle of water running right past the door. Not to mention a stunning view down the valley.

On day five we once again woke to perfect weather and set off in good time for the Olivine Ice Plateau. We sidled upwards straight from the biv until we were directly below the bluffs. We then followed beneath these closely. First challenging obstacle was an exposed slab waterfall about 20m wide. Once on the other side the tussock slopes steepened slightly but it was relatively straight forward picking our way through the boulders. The tussock slopes gradually became frozen scree-like slopes with lots of loose rock. Then we met a steep gut filled by a frozen snow slab with a massive crevasse. Crampons on. Ice axes out. After tentatively crossing this there was just a small section of frozen scree-like stuff before we reached the snow slopes leading on to Forgotten River Col. I was glad to reach the snow.



Approaching Forgotten River Col leading onto the Olivine ice plateau

From here it looked like we were nearly there but it was further than it looked. We plodded on carefully, very aware of the massive bluffs that lurked beneath us. Next obstacle was a crevasse splitting the snow slope originating from a large rock, which appeared to be aiding the snow melting around it. Not surprising after now three scorching days. We felt so close and like we had already put so much effort in and decided we would rope up and belay across the crevasse. Didn't carry that 30m 8mm rope for nothing! Once over the crevasse we carried on belaying which many people may not have felt necessary but it definitely made me feel a lot more comfortable. Being a party of just two we were being super safety conscious.

Once on top, the col is a nice flat expanse between the Blockade and Intervention Ridge. We plodded up the Blockade side of this before finally seeing what we came for – and was it breath-taking. Feeling hungry and exhausted we flopped onto some rocks to bathe in the warm sun, eat some food and take a selfie. Once feeling a little more fuelled we searched for a campsite. We ended up camping above the plateau on the slope of Blockade sheltered by a big rock and a gentle snow slope, which had no chance of avalanching. We did not find the snow-shovels we have heard about but could not see any other potential camping spots. Right around the plateau was evidence of small bits of rock and snow falling and the snow slopes were cracking, looking like they would peel away any minute.

Just as we set up the mountain radio to receive the latest weather forecast cloud crept up from the Forgotten valley and began to clag in. However, with two more days forecast to be just as good as the last, we were confident tomorrow would be good. 30 minutes later almost instantaneously the cloud disappeared and it was a perfect evening. Staying on the plateau was an awesome experience. You felt so immersed in this pristine environment and completely alone. The silence was broken only by the occasional thundering of one of the ice falls and snow slopes cracking away. It was beautiful watching the changing light on the plateau as the sun disappeared and the moon began to light up.



View from our campsite just above the Olivine Ice Plateau looking towards Memorial Ice Fall

Next morning, despite us thinking we were below freeze level our steps through the snow were frozen, making for great travel. We plodded around the edge of the plateau a bit for a look see before heading back down Forgotten Col. The lower we got the softer the snow was. Descending from the col proper on

to the snow slopes below was much softer than the day before and we were glad we were not making this descent in the afternoon. In some spots the snow was particularly soft where it overlay rock that was not visible at the surface and at one point I went straight through into a small hole. I found this slightly unnerving as we again were sidling above the bluffs of Forgotten Col Icefall. On descent we were counting down the challenges; 1= nasty steep ice filled gut, 2= horrible frozen scree-like slopes, 3=exposed slab waterfall.

Once back down in the valley it was a quick trip to the Hilton of rock bivs to collect gear we had left behind and have a quick snack before continuing down valley. That night we camped at the confluence of the Forgotten River and Blockade Stream – an alternative route to reach the plateau.

The following day we were again simply retracing our steps but not looking forward to the dreaded section from the Olivine flats to the Olivine ledge. Arriving at Blue Pool late morning we had a big lunch stop. We had an icy 'swim', washed our gear, and dried everything out in the scorching sun, putting us in the best mood possible for the following section. We wound our way up the Olivine taking the odd moment to admire the blue ducks playing in the rapids. Here we bumped into another party of 3 heading over three brothers pass and out to Big Bay. They too had had troubles of their own descending from the ledge and commented also that this section took them twice as long as they anticipated. They seemed to think we were mad returning that way.

We however felt we now had a better idea of how to attack it after all the trial and error of the descent, and saw no better alternative. We scrambled up the small rocky spur at the confluence of Sunset Creek and the Olivine River, knowing that a good deer trail would get us some good ground from this point. We stumbled upon the elusive rock biv in this area this time around. Not a place I would want to be looking for. We got to the dry creek bed with relative ease and no major hold ups. From here we began to side upwards. We did our best to stay on deer trails but it was very difficult. It went from bush bashing to bush smashing. The bush grabbed at our packs and tugged us backwards with each step and the undergrowth licked our thighs. Somewhere in this last section mum lost her glasses. It wasn't until we had almost reached the bush line she realized (which gives you an idea of how

distracting and discomfoting the bush was being) and there was no way we could have found them. Retracing our steps would have been impossible. Never the less, we were glad to be out of the bush and soon back at the rock biv on the ledge. On ascent it took us a much more respectable 3 ¾ hours. So it seemed we had learnt something from last time – however the experience was by no means any more enjoyable.

That night the cheeky kea were back. This time they decided to roost right on top of our biv and to my disgust made snoring-like noises all evening. It was about 3am in the morning when one decided to ambush us. We got up and moved our gear closer to us and shouted and threw small rocks near the bird to try and deter it. But it wasn't fussed. It made for a slightly sleepless night. As I admired the kea's big sharp beak silhouetted against the night sky I couldn't help but think how I'd learned in school how they dig in to sheep's backs, eating them alive. And wonder then wouldn't it be quite capable of digging in to my back as I sleep. I am glad to say no humans were harmed by kea that night.

Day 8 was overcast and we headed along the Olivine Ledge and up to Fiery Col. This was very relaxing travel compared to the previous day's struggles. As we climbed up to Fiery Col we spotted a thar running across the scree slopes of Fiery Peak. The view from Fiery Col was beautiful both looking back where we had been and looking forward to Cow Saddle. We trudged down a soft snow slope off Fiery Col before picking our way through the red rocky bluffs down to Cow Saddle. From Cow Saddle we picked up a very clear trail of cairns leading along the true right of Hidden Falls Creek. The scree slopes in this area were quite spectacular made up of mauve and green rocks. In the valley we spotted a young stag grazing, totally unaware of our presence. We snuck up a bit before it finally spotted us. It stared for a while before taking a few steps towards us. It was unsure whether to think we were friend or foe. Not being too keen on it advancing towards us we became louder. Eventually it ran away, stopping and looking at us every few metres before running to the bush and barking at us. Quite an unusual experience. A short section of bush, again well marked by cairns and blazes, lead us to our beautiful campsite for the night beneath big beech trees on the Hidden Falls Creek flats. By now it was starting to rain lightly and the beech trees were great shelter.

The following morning we woke to rain and low cloud. The following section up to Parks Pass was a little less well marked than I expected considering the previous days ease. There were sections that were well marked with cairns, and other sections where they were very scarce making you doubt yourself. Moir's Guide had advised us there would be permolat and orange tape marking the way to the foot of the spur up to Parks Pass. We were determined to stick to the trail as being day 9 of our trip we were getting tired and our patience had been tested enough with unrelenting thick bush. The first marker was straight forward, but it took a bit of circling around to find the second. From here we finally found a third permolat attached to a dead fallen tree in a big heap of bush rubbish. On closer examination, with no obvious trail in any direction, the permolat read 'last marker'. Funny. Fortunately, we stumbled upon the right spur and the trail was direct and obvious right to the pass. Unfortunately, we had no view from Parks Pass. I am sure it would have been beautiful. We could hear thundering waterfalls and saw glimpses of a big tarn but that's it. From Parks Pass we dropped into the Rock Burn below the cloud. In no time we were on a DOC marked track, starting to feel like we were getting closer and closer to civilization. That night we camped on Theatre Flat. Thankfully the rain stopped just in time for us to set up camp.

Day 10 we headed out over Sugarloaf Pass. It was a straight-forward day spent dreaming about steak and a hot shower. In the very short time (10min) we spent on the Routeburn track we saw about 15 people which was crazy considering in 10 days we had only encountered one party of three. Just as we reached the carpark a bus pulled up, and we took off. We were very lucky to score a ride back to Glenorchy no waiting required!

All and all, an AMAZING trip thanks mum, and a great introduction for me to the Southern Alps. I will be back!

Book Review

Murders at Franz Josef Glacier

Now that I have got your attention:

Glacier Murder, A Philippa Barnes Mystery.

By Trish McCormack Glacier Press 2013
(glacierpress@gmail.com). A novel.

Reviewed by Terry Crippen.

For those of you who like a good Murder mystery and who have hung round Franz Josef and/or Fox you should find this quite enjoyable to read.

It starts off with Philippa, who is a glacier guide at Franz, finding the remains of a woman down a crevasse on the glacier. She recognises who it is, from quite a few years ago, by the ring on a finger. Once the police have been told and the word get out a women who lived in Franz at the time of the disappearance of this particular person, contacts Philippa and tells her that the body was a murder not an accident! From here the plot gets filled in with all sorts of Franz Josef characters! Various people come under Philippa's suspicions, including the local DOC person in charge who has a very interesting background – relating to what happened at Mt Cook village a long time ago.

There is of course the usual conflict between DOC and the guiding companies, warning signs relating to icefall and rockfall going missing and being placed outside various buildings including the local church! And all the locals meeting up in the local café to discuss everyone else's business! People are threatened and another murder takes place – using an ice axe naturally! This gets the police onto things. Very near the end of the book there is a good twist to the story and the murderer, who wasn't a suspect at the start, is eventually caught!

One can imagine what it is like to live in one of these small communities – everyone knows everyone else's business. Trish McCormack lived in Franz and on the West Coast so the story has plenty of authenticity about it. A great read!

“Who Has Done What List” 2014-2015

Here is the “Who Has Done What” list for April 2014 to end of February 2015. It is an attempt to keep a record of what club members get up to (the cumulative list now goes back to April 2000); and to enthruse people to do different trips. It is also a list of who to contact for info about different places.

It follows the same format as previous years: i.e. it excludes the usual shorter Tararua, Ruahine, TNP, ENP, etc trips; and concentrates on further afield trips, overseas, and multi-day trips. The listings are both

private trips done by club members and longer club trips.

Note: usually only members and past members names are listed, this time I have included a couple of extras!

A single name doesn't necessary imply a solo trip.

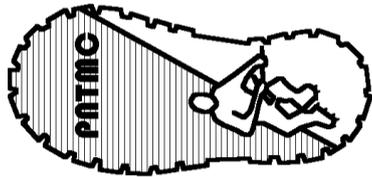
As usual it is biased towards what club members have told me they have done. So no doubt they are many brilliant trips omitted. My apologies; if places and names are spelled wrong!!

* denotes an ascent.

NP = National Park, FP = Forest Park, CP/CA = Conservation Park/Area

April			
Nepal	Honka Valley, Amphulapsa Pass, Imja Valley (World Expeditions trip)	Island*, Mera*	Malcolm Leary, Janet Wilson, Mary Lund, Grant Christian, Jean Garman
June			
Germany	Harz Mts	Brocken*	Dwight Swainson
July			
Rarotonga	Across Island tramp		Peter & Janet Darragh
Wanaka	Waterfall Creek, Mt Iron Loop, Roys Peak	Iron*, Roys*	Angela Minto, Terry Crippen
Pisa Conservation Area	Rocky Peak track	Hocken*	Angela Minto, Terry Crippen
USA	Grand Tetons, Wind River Ra.		Alistair Millward
USA	Bob Marshall Wilderness, Montana		Alistair Millward
USA	Weminuche Wilderness, Colorado		Alistair Millward
Australia	Cape York Peninsula, Cairns to Tip		Fiona Donald
South Africa	Table Mt day tramp		Chris Tuffley
August			
Ireland	Connemara NP	Benbaun*	Jo & Lawrence O'Halloran
Aoraki/Mt Cook NP	Ball Pass	Kaitiaki*	Nicholas Allen
Peru	Inca trail and Peruvian Amazon		Thomas Robertson
September			
Queen Charlotte Sound	MTB, Queen Charlotte track		Chris Tuffley
Scotland	Shetland Is; rock climbing and abseiling		Thomas Robertson
Italy	Sardinia; Budoni area		Anne & Martin Lawrence
USA.	Road trip; San Francisco, Yosemite NP, Death Valley, Las Vegas, Zion NP, Sequoia NP, Kings Canyon NP		Warren Wheeler
October			
Bridge to Nowhere	Mangapurura MTB		Angela Minto
November			
Peru	Inca Trail		Woody Lee

December			
Olivine Wilderness	Beans Burn, Rock Burn, Olivine Ice Plateau		Hannah and Mary Lund
Aoraki/Mt Cook NP	Grand Plateau	Cook*	Jonathan Astin
Lake Sumner FP, Arthurs Pass NP	Harper Pass, Taramakau Valley		Geoff Phillips
Australia	Arapiles, Victoria: rock climbing		Chris Tuffley
January			
Australia	Overland track, Cradle Mt- Lake Clair NP, Tasmania	Cradle*, Oakleigh*	Chris Tuffley
Fiordland NP	Gertrude Saddle		Kelly Holland
Paparoa NP	CrosesusTrack, Barrytown to Blackball		Kelly Holland
Mt Aspiring NP	Five Pass Trip: Fohn Saddle, Fiery Col, Cow Saddle, Sugarloaf Pass, Parks Pass.		Anne & Martin Lawrence
Tararua FP	Jumbo- Powell Mountain Run		Angela Minto, Kelly Holland
Kaweka FP	Main Range		Bruce van Brunt
Kaimaniwa FP	Umukarikari Range		Bruce van Brunt
Kahurangi NP	Arthur Range	Arthur*	Anja Scholz
Mt Richmond FP	Richmond Range	Richmond*, Starveall*	Anja Scholz
Mt Aspiring NP	Dart Glacier, West Matukituki, Cascade Saddle	Plunket Dome*, Islington Dome*, Liverpool*, Tyndall*	Bruce van Brunt, Clive Marsh
Peel Forest		Little Mt Peel*	Bruce van Brunt, Clive Marsh
Arthurs Pass NP	Arthurs Pass, Black Range	Bruce*, Cassidy*	Bruce van Brunt
February			
Arthurs Pass NP	Otira Valley	Rolleston*	Annett Patzold
Kahurangi NP	Boulder Lake, Adelaide Tarn		Chris Tuffley
Mt Richmond FP	Richmond Range	Starveall*	Chris Tuffley
Wanganui NP	Canoe trip		Kathy Corner, Warren Wheeler, Richard Lockett, Tina Bishop, Karen Tutt
Ruataniwha CP	Temple, Hopkins, Huxley	MacKenzie*	Terry Crippen, Angela Minto
Mt Aspiring NP	West & East Matukituki, Cascade & Kitchener Valleys	Tyndall*	Terry Crippen, Angela Minto
Westland NP	Fox Glacier	Chancellor Dome*	Terry Crippen, Angela Minto
Mt Aspiring NP	High Five-0 Challenge	Dragonfly*	Angela Minto
South Island	Cycling; Picton, West Coast, Wanaka, Lake Ohau, Twizel		Alisdair Millward
Westland NP	Balfour Glacier	Drake*	Don French, Peter Cammell (NZAC)
Mt Cook NP, Godley Valley	McKinnon Valley	Sibbald*, Forbes*	Don French, Dan Donaldson (MTC)



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PNTMC Newsletter April 2015

What's inside this month?

- Hut Bagging Update
- It's a Boy!
- Maharahara-Matanginui
- Ruahine trips – Kime Hut, Te Matawai
- Beehive Creek Family Trip
- Olivine Ice Plateau
- Who Has Done what List 2014-15
- Coming trips and more

Articles for the newsletter

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

Get out and about with us!

**Sender: PNTMC
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