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# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

[www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz)

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter May 2017

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*Trying out new bridge over Kahuterawa Stream, links Sledge Track to Arapuke [Warren Wheeler]*

### Club Nights

All are welcome to our club nights. These are held on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. Doors open 7.15 pm. for meeting start at 7.30pm.

**11 May 2017**

**Lightweight Tramping**

**Randall Goldfinch**

Tired of lugging a heavy pack? Find out how to join the lightweight revolution with ex PNTMC club member and keen Hawkes Bay trumper Randall Goldfinch.

**25 May 2017**

**BYO Pics**

**Martin Lawrence**

What have you been doing over the last six months? Share your tales of trips both near and far. Bring your selected images on a Memory Stick or just come and enjoy the show in glorious technicolour (black & white or sepia optional).

## Upcoming Trips

**6-7 May**

**Waterfall Hut** M/F  
**Mary Lund** 06 374 7811

This iconic hut in the middle of the Ruahines offers numerous challenging options to get there and back. Contact Mary for more details.

**7 May**

**Arawaru/Quartz Ridge Loop** M/F  
**Dave Grant** 328 7788

Keep travel time to a minimum getting to this tramp in Hardings Park in the Tararuas, close to PN. Tramp up the Sledge Track to the Otangane Loop, branching off just before Pukenaenae (new name for the Nipple) to head up to Arawaru for lunch. Great views on a fine day. Then it's almost all downhill along Quartz Ridge back to the Kahuterawa – bit steep where we drop back into the creek. Leave Milverton Park at 7.30am. Should be back by 4pm.

**13-14 May**

**Leon Kinvig Hut** M  
**Richard Lockett** 323 0948

Starting from the west heading up and over the Ngamoko Range before dropping down and across the Pohangina River to Leon Kinvig Hut for the night returning via the same route. Possibility of some stoat trap work.

**14 May**

**Herepai Hut** M  
**Woody Lee** 357 2390

A trip into the eastern Tararuas behind Eketahuna. We will walk up from the Putara Road end and climb steadily up the hill after the second swing bridge.

**20-21 May**

**Tutuwai Hut** E/M  
**Michael Allerby** 323 8563

Leave PN at 8.00am and make our way down the Wairarapa until we reach Waiohine Valley Road End. Tramp off up on the Mt Reeves Track to Tutuwai Hut (serviced) nestled beside the Tauhirenikau River and back out the same way Sunday.

**21 May**

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

On the drive to Waiouru I see the sign for Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary and wonder what's there. By all accounts we'll enjoy some beautiful bush on the 12k return trip to Zeke's Hut, with great views of Ruapehu from the summit of Hihitahi if we're lucky with the weather. Leaving town 7:30am.

**27-28 May**

**Waipakahi Hut** M/F  
**Grant Christian** 354 5843

Leave Palmy at 6a.m. and travel to the Kaimanawa Forest Park on the Desert Road. Walk to Waipakahi Hut via Urchin Trig and the Waipakahi River. Stay at the hut overnight and return via the Umukarikari Range the next day. Probably around 6 to 8 hours each day.

**28 May**

**Atene Skyline Walk** M  
**Anne Lawrence** 357 1695

Depart Milverton Park at 7.30am. We leave vehicles at the start of the walkway on the Whanganui River Road, 36 km from Whanganui. The track starts with a steep climb from the River Road to a height of 260 m. It then follows an old, gently graded roadline for approximately 3 km to the Taumata Trig, the highest point of the track at 572 m. The track then winds around the edge of sandstone bluffs to reach Taupiri Trig before descending steeply back to the River Road. Weather permitting, expect spectacular views of the Whanganui River, Mt Ruapehu, Mt Taranaki/Egmont, the Tasman Sea, and the Whanganui River's tributary valleys.

**3-5 June**

**Queens Birthday Coastal Classic** E/M  
**Janet Wilson** 329 4722

This year's Coastal Classic is at Mangaturi Beach on the east coast of Hawkes Bay out from Waipawa. Have rented a large house which comes with firewood and crayfish pots! Large reef nearby, plenty of coast to explore. Bring bikes, kayaks, wet suits etc. This trip traditionally starts on Friday and there will be at least one car leaving that morning. However, as we are fairly close to home this year, anyone wishing to come later Friday or early Sat morning will be welcome provided there is still space in the house. Cost will depend on numbers. To reserve a bed contact Janet asap.

**10-11 June**

**TBA** M  
**Geoff Phillips** 356 4223

Details to be advised in next newsletter.

**11 June**

**Knights/Shorts Circuit** M  
**Craig Allerby** 323 7913

A good circuit through red beech forest, with some nice tussock grass tops travel. Possibly some early winter snow maybe about. Depart 7.30am.

### 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](mailto: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  
Terry Crippen 356-3588

### Articles for the newsletter

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

## AGM Report

Thanks to all the club members who attended the AGM on 30 March 2017. Bruce van Brunt was in Vienna, so Anne Lawrence (Vice

President) chaired the AGM and read his President's Report 2016-17 (included in this Newsletter).

### Committee Changes

Election of Officers resulted in a number of changes. Janet Wilson was elected President, replacing Bruce van Brunt who stood down and was elected Vice President. Grant Christian was elected Secretary, replacing Terry Crippen who stood down in anticipation of more time in Ukraine. Warren Wheeler continues as Treasurer and Woody Lee, Anne and Martin Lawrence continue as Committee Members. Graeme Richards joins the Committee while Nick Allen decided to stand down – thanks for your service to the club.

### Subs Increased \$5 to cover FMC Increase

Members decided that the subs would increase by \$5 to cover the increase in FMC affiliation fees from \$10 to \$15. A pre-meeting proposal by the Treasurer to increase subs by \$20 raised concerns by members about the size of the increase and after closer scrutiny the Treasurer agreed that expected cost increases in newsletter publication and postage could largely be offset by continued hand delivery and other club income as well as possible cost savings. Changes in the number of eSub members would also have an impact. It was noted that if there was a funding shortfall then it would be quite small and could be met from savings, at least for this year.

Members also supported the pending renewal of the DOC Hut Management Agreement subject to any new conditions being acceptable to the Committee.

## Notices

### Subs are Now Due

Subscription	Individual	Family
Normal Sub	\$40	\$45
E-Sub	\$30	\$35

- Normal Sub: paper copy of Newsletter
- E-Sub: electronic copy of Newsletter
- All subs include \$15 for FMC affiliation.
- You will receive quarterly copies of the FMC Bulletin (now called Backcountry)
- You will receive an FMC membership card that entitles you to various discounts, including 30% off the DOC Annual Hut Pass.
- Each FMC card is valid for only one person



ready to put your feet up with this great read, all for only \$35.

(Also makes a nice gift to friends and family who might otherwise wonder why you enjoy tramping so much!)



## Newsletter Download Fix

### Newsletter Access on the Internet

Last month I mentioned the possibility of a workaround to overcome the problem faced by users of Apple devices to access the newsletter.

The most promising workaround option seemed to be avoid to the conflict with the iOS problem i.e. the Apple operating system problem that results in only the first page being visible. This has now been achieved at a slight cost which some eagle eyed newsletter down-loaders might have noticed already. For existing users, the newsletter is now displayed in a new window and if no further explanation was provided to the user, Apple device users would find that the existing page that they were on would be blank. (The reason for this is unclear and may involve the users' browser settings, but I have not been able to find a setting on my iPad that opens the PDF file.) For iOS – Safari users this would have meant a step backwards. But no, it is a case of less is more! The problem has been subtly transformed from an iOS problem now to a Safari problem.

To extricate ourselves from the woods, so to speak, a message is now added to the otherwise blank page (especially for Safari users) that requests you download Chrome as your alternative browser to view [pntmc.org.nz](http://pntmc.org.nz) newsletters (or actually any PDF file). (Note, if you are not a Safari user, you should not have a problem.) Now essentially all users (Internet Explorer, Edge, Chrome, Firefox etc.) should

be able to get the whole newsletter and be able to read the entire contents of any PDF file, but it is on a separate browser sheet and if an Apple device user, may necessitate a visit to the iTunes app store to get and install a copy of the Chrome browser. Apple users will henceforth use Chrome to access the current newsletter.

Meanwhile, the access to the past series of newsletters remains as usual.

Let me know if there are problems and I would like to know if there are any difficulties with browsers on television sets.

Peter Wiles

## Presidents Report 2016-17

We are now 51 years old, and beginning the second part of our century as a club. There are many similar clubs that do not make this milestone, yet we move from strength to strength, neither sitting on our laurels, nor growing stale. I am honoured to be the president of the club.

Certainly a major role of our club is to provide a platform whereby people interested in tramping and climbing can meet, discuss, plan and participate in tramping and climbing related activities. Yet another role is to introduce people to new outdoor experiences. Above all, we hope that somehow in all this we have a lot of fun.

The success of our club during a given year can be measured in part by our activities, and it is on these outward signs that I focus. It is my pleasure to present the 51<sup>th</sup> President's report.

### Membership

The membership of our club is generally quite stable from year to year. The membership for 2015-2016 is about 75 (depending on how you count it). At any rate, we had 4 new members this year, including the return of Stuart Hubbard and new family memberships for Anthony Behrens & Fiona Burleigh and Duncan Hill and Alice Kleinsman and Toby plus Esther Pothuis. We lost 2 members so the net increase was 2 or 4 if you count families as two.

### Activities

Last year was a hallmark year for our club that was punctuated by a 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee. In this 51<sup>st</sup>

year of the club we see that the PNTMC has continued the tradition: there is no sign of slowing down. The club has been engaged in many activities this year including a range of evening talks, club trips and instruction focussed activities.

### **Club Evenings**

Each year our club manages somehow to get a wonderful variety of talks about places all over the globe leavened with local trips. This year was no exception. It seems that we travel everywhere. Thinking about this continent by continent, we had a talk on Patagonia (S. America), the Canadian Rockies (N. America), Mt Blanc circuit (Europe), Mastering Mountains (Asia). If I can stretch things a bit, we even had a talk on the Sub-Antarctic islands. I guess we get around as we have missed only Africa and Australia this year. (Last year we did have a talk on Kilimanjaro, and this year at one of us travelled to E. Africa, Mauritius). We had a trip report from Tasmania, so I can loosely claim that PNTMC put its boot on every continent this year! In addition, we heard a talk on Samoa.

An important part of our club talks is to present more local adventures. Here, we have not come up short. We enjoyed talks about Mt Owen (or bust), Nelson Lakes, and "Hellfire and Misery". We also had "Fern the Whio Finder" and "Kime through Time" among other talks.

At the last AGM we mooted the important question of whether the day/time of the meetings should be changed. In the end, the membership preferred keeping the day to a Thursday, but supported the idea that the night should begin earlier. We thus started our club nights at 7:15pm.

Club nights were also used for other social activities. In particular we had two end of year BBQ's, two BYO slide nights, and a night on navigation. The club photo competition was held in August and well subscribed by members. A special thanks goes to Martin Lawrence for helping to organize the images and judges. The winners went on to the interclub competition held in September, where we made a respectable show. Well done PNTMC photographers. We have the "elephant's eye".

Thanks are given to all the speakers and organizers of these nights. It is surely a good sign that we can consistently field such a spectrum of social activities.

### **Club Trips**

A considerable suite of tramps/climbs was offered to cater to the diverse interests of members. Activities included long and short trips in the Ruahine and Tararua ranges, climbing/tramping trips in Tongariro and Egmont National Parks.

Trips were also made to Mt Owen, the Kawekas, and White Island among other places. The trip activities included mountaineering, beach walking, farm walks, mountain biking, and, of course, tramping.

Here are some quick statistics thanks to Warren:

During this year there were some 94 trips on offer of which approximately 39% did not go. Of those that did go 33% went to the Ruahines, 20% to the Tararuas and 47% to TNP and elsewhere.

We had an average of 5.1 people on Day Trips and 4.7 on Overnight Trips.

The largest number on a Day Trip was 15 to Sunrise Hut in the snow in August and the largest for an Overnight Trip was 11 on the Queens Birthday Coastal Classic to Ohope and White Island.

Thanks are due to all the trip leaders, who made these trips possible. Special thanks are due to Janet Wilson, who organized the trip card. It is no small feat to gather trip leaders and craft a trip programme that balances easy, moderate, fit trips along with day and overnight trips.

### **Instruction**

A key rôle of the club is to teach people tramping and climbing skills. This year we held three Snowcraft courses. Over the last few years the trend was to have these courses as long day trips to Ruapehu: this year was no exception. What was exceptional was:

1. The weather was perfect for each course;
2. The age spectrum for students ranged from 12 to 73.

This year we had three long day trips to Ruapehu on the Whakapapa ski fields. Each field trip was supplemented by a prior evening session in Palmerston North. The numbers for these trips are:

1. SC1, 10 students and 4 instructors;
2. SC2, 9 students and 3 instructors;
3. SC3, 7 students and 3 instructors.

We had a very solid enrolment from the Wanganui Tramping Club this year, and it was enjoyable to work with them.

From these numbers one can see that our contribution to alpine instruction is valued throughout the region.

I thank Terry Crippen for all his work organizing the Snowcraft courses, and Grant Christian for not only offering his help with instruction, but also taking over the job of gear management (no small task). I would also like to Malcolm Leary and Dwight Swainson for all their help and enthusiasm with instruction.

Aside from Snowcraft instruction, the club also had a navigation instruction night in February. Thanks Warren for organizing and running this course.

These courses are a success because our members take their own time to contribute their knowledge.

### **Newsletter**

The newsletter is the lasting manifestation of our activities. I am happy to see that this publication has grown from strength to strength. We have consistently produced a balanced newsletter with variety, good photographs, and useful news. It is here you can find news on trips, trip reports, recipes, gossip, book reviews, among other items. It is a big job editing this newsletter and we owe Warren Wheeler a big thanks. I would also like to thank the numerous writers and photographers that help make this a success.

Looking back through the newsletters over the last year I note the following:

1. The quality and quantity of photographs has increased dramatically. Doubtless this is because we are now in a digital age where photographs can be appended to stories to really bring them alive. Nonetheless, we have some very good shots in our newsletters, beyond what mere technology could afford.
2. Looking at the trip reports and articles, there is a concentrated effort to tramp in the heart of the Ruahines. I leave it to the audience to recall the number of trips to Ruahine Corner, Upper Makaroro, etc.. The newsletter crescendos with a 7 day Ruahine Main Range traverse. Well done PNTMC!
3. There is very much a "stoat trapping" motif. A number of articles touch (and

some focus) on this activity. The article "Iron Gate Stoat Slayer Trip" speaks for itself. There were certainly a few trips on the card that had in part a stoat slayer dimension.

4. The trip card reflected a commitment to keeping up the Mid Pohangina and Ngamoko huts. Some of these trips did not go or were changed, but it is clear to the outside reader that we viewed our stewardship of these huts seriously.
5. It seems that Otaki Forks Rd (Tararuas) was closed for quite a while. A notice ran from April to July that the road was closed, and finally in August it was announced that it was open. In October, it was announced that Wakarara Road (Ruahines) was closed.
6. We never lose our sense of humour or perspective. We had a nice albeit short essay on St Bernard of Menthon (no whisky in the small barrel carried by the dog), a Russian mountain song, and who can forget a "Real Kiwi Breakfast".

### **Website**

The PNTMC website is now the "public face" of the club. This website has been constructed over several years and has become a valuable resource for members and the public. The website now contains a lot of archival material (useful for presidents who have to write reports from the other side of the world) along with other material.

More and more this site is becoming a one stop place to learn about the club and access material such as newsletters, hut information, contacts. There are other resources such as photos and Tony's Tararuas.

The construction, maintenance and updating of this site is largely the effort of the webmasters Peter Wiles and Martin Lawrence. We owe them a big thanks for all of this hard work putting PNTMC on the cyber map and keeping it there.

### **Our Huts**

Our club is responsible for the upkeep of Ngamoko and Mid Pohangina huts. We have taken this obligation seriously and have had several visits to the huts with a view towards keeping these huts tidy and useable. Some visits have been integrated into club trips, others have been linked with activities such as stoat trapping. One need only turn to the newsletters to get a flavour of what is being done for these huts by club members and their friends.

At the end of this year we are to revisit our agreement with DoC concerning these huts. I believe we have made a positive contribution to preserving these important huts for not only trampers but also hunters, stoat trappers etc. We have lived up to our part of the bargain, and it is my hope that we continue this fruitful relationship. Needless to say (as last year) we are committed to the upkeep of these huts; however, there is certainly a small core group that is actually doing the work.

We will also be revisiting our agreement with DoC concerning Rangiwahia hut. The club has a long historical connexion with this hut and I am loath to sever this link. Our role here, however, is fundamentally different than for the other huts. It is unclear precisely what our part (however nominal) is for this hut. Further discussions later this year will clarify our role here.

We have established a hut maintenance fund (for Mid Pohangina and Ngamoko) that is growing through hut fees and poster sales.

### **Community and Outside Activities**

Several of our members engaged in activities related to tramping that helped the community. We have members contributing their time and experience to SAR, FMC, MSC and NZAC activities among other things. Thanks to everybody for these wonderful contributions. Here, I wish to note more specifically the following activities:

1. **Whio Protection:** Our membership is involved significantly in Whio Protection thanks largely to the prodigious efforts of Janet Wilson. The newsletter alone reflects the efforts of members in addition to a lot of work that went unrecorded (by us at least).
2. **Ruahine User Group:** This group deals with matters of great interest to our club. It is important that we have some presence here. Thanks again to Janet Wilson for her participation with this group and keeping PNTMC abreast of developments that impact tramping in the Ruahines.

### **Acknowledgements**

We all know that it is the members of a club that makes it what it is. Our success this year is due the efforts of the members. It is to them that I give thanks first.

Although administration is seldom a glamorous task, this work needs to be done to ensure a smooth running club. The committee has

been instrumental in the operation of the club. This group met monthly to discuss all matters pertaining to the running of the club and helped plan various strategies for the club's direction. It is from this group, for example, that a programme of speakers and the trip cards come into being and decisions on gear purchases are made. This is where, as a club, we respond to various proposals from DoC and suggestions from the FMC.

This last year I have felt even more acutely how much the club really depends on the efforts of the committee. Work and personal circumstances have kept me away from NZ for nearly 5 months. Much of this was unplanned, but I am proud to say that our committee rose to the challenge and kept things ticking along swimmingly. I am particularly grateful to Anne Lawrence who on many occasions (like tonight) filled in for the president. I also note that she filled in for the secretary on many occasions as well. I should also like to acknowledge the contribution of Warren Wheeler, who took on not only the job of treasurer, but also the job of newsletter editor. Either job is a handful, yet Warren's boundless energy seemed to make it all work.

I gratefully acknowledge the enormous help given to me by all the members of the committee: thank you Warren Wheeler, Terry Crippen, Janet Wilson, Martin Lawrence, Anne Lawrence, Woody Lee, Nick Allen and Grant Christian.

### **Finis**

I write these lines on a train from Vienna to Munich just before the AGM. Gazing at the beautiful alps around Salzburg and wondering whether I should get a chance to climb them, I have time to reflect on the club. Simply put, I can see that our club is special because of its people. It is true that we have cemented our relationships among our long term NZ members, but what is more telling is that many of our "international" members look upon us as "the mountaineering club". We all have strong and lasting contacts from Japan to Holland that speak kindly and fondly of their days in NZ on trips with PNTMC. We must be doing something right.

Bruce van Brunt,  
President PNTMC  
27 March 2017

## Trip Reports

**5 March 2017**  
**Atiwhakatu Hut**  
**Woody Lee**

I picked Christian up from his place and met two others at Milverton Park. It was a windy morning in Palmy but it became calm with blue skies when we drove onto SH2.

At Holdsworth Campsite, there were many tents and campervans and people enjoying the outdoors over an autumn weekend.

We set off on our trip after taking a group photo in front of the information board and saw other trampers heading towards Mt Holdsworth who were probably doing the Powell-Jumbo Loop. We were surprised to see a side creek bridge damaged by a falling tree after Donnelly Flat - there was some yellow tape around the bridge and it was not blocked off.

Jo showed me some Easter orchids flowering around the corner from the swing bridge. The beautiful white flowers were producing a strong scent which I had not noticed before.

We saw a few families walking back to the car park and a young couple who had completed the whole loop. We had a pleasant walk back after having our lunch at the hut.

We were Christian, Jo, Fawwaz and Woody.

**18-19 March 2017**  
**Whangaehu Hut**  
**Grant Christian**

Trip Participants: Grant Christian & Woody Lee  
This was planned as an easy trip so I picked up Woody at 10 a.m. for the drive to Tukino on Mt Ruapehu. The forecast was for high winds but it was calm on the drive up. The road end is at 1,695 metres and it was calm and clear on arrival but there was cloud below us. The walk to Whangaehu Hut is not far and the route is poled all the way although it is not always easy to spot the poles in cloudy weather. The route crosses a lot of loose rock, scoria and old lava fields. Woody took the opportunity to take a lot of photographs on the way but we still arrived at the hut in under two hours. The hut is at an altitude of 2,080 metres. It is a well-insulated double-glazed hut with four double bunks owned by NZ Alpine Club.



*Whangaehu Hut (2,080m) before winter snow*

We unpacked our overnight and cooking gear and had a cuppa. We then decided to go for a walk up the ridge north of the hut. The ridge climbs quite steeply and further up there is a very prominent gendarme that I have often looked at but never investigated up close. Where we climbed the ridge was mostly large but loose rock. We sidled around the top of the ridge where it got very steep and after a little over an hour we reached the gendarme. At this stage the cloud had closed in around us. I managed to climb half way up the gendarme before it got very steep. Woody preferred to wait at the bottom and take photos.



*Getting steep on the gendarme [Woody Lee]*

The altitude here was around 2,500 metres so we were only about 100 metres below the plateau. We turned around at this point. I don't

know how much further up the ridge we could have continued. That will be something to find out on another day. Although cloudy our route down was easy to follow. The loose rock was quite treacherous going down and I had a couple of falls as rock moved beneath my feet. Before long we were back at the hut and cooking our dinner before heading to bed quite early.

During the night the wind got up but by morning it was calm again. I had hoped to go for a walk up to the plateau on Sunday but the route I had thought we could use looked very steep and difficult without any snow on it and Woody said he would prefer to head back down so after a leisurely breakfast we packed up and headed for the car. For some variety we didn't follow the poled route on the way down, but because you can't see the bluffs going down until you are directly above them, we had to take a somewhat circuitous route. It was still reasonably straight forward and we were back at the car park in about an hour and a half.

**2 April 2017**  
**Roaring Stag Hut**  
**Christian Offen**

On 02/04/17 five of us made a very nice trip to the Roaring Stag hut in the eastern Tararuas.

Although daylight-saving time ended such that there was an extra hour for everyone, we picked up one of us right out of his bed. As a complete group, we drove to a carpark at Puatara Road and started the Roaring Stag Track from there.

The track first sidled along the river and crossed two swing bridges. Then we climbed up steeply to a junction where a track to the Herepai Hut joins the Roaring Stag Track. After a well-deserved break, we continued a long way through rimu forest down to the Roaring Stag Hut passing very old and magnificent trees. Some of them had fallen onto the track but were easy to climb over.

At the hut, we enjoyed our lunch and amused ourselves reading in the funny book "A Series of Unfortunate Events" by Lemony Snicket that had been left in the hut. *However, a series of unfortunate events is not a good summary of our trip.* We were lucky with the cloudy weather which was just right for the steep parts of the hike.

We managed to get back to the carpark before the rain started. Thanks to Martin Lawrence for the great organisation.

The five of us were Duncan, Warren, Christian, Martin and Anne.



*After-trip-photo (better than Before-trip-photo)*

**8-9 April 2017**  
**Casey Saddle - Binser Saddle**  
**(Arthur's Pass National Park)**  
**Annett Pätzold**

This tramp's route and description can be found in Sven Brabyn's and Elise Bryant's Book 'Tramping in the South Island: Arthur's Pass to Mt Cook'.

Casey Hut, mentioned in the book, burnt down in 2015. Our sheltered camp site was amongst trees half way along the route between Rabbit Flat and Aeroplane Flat, just after crossing a side stream of the Poulter River (water supply) was a very good alternative to the hut.



*Campsite at Aeroplane Flats [WW]*

The track offers easy walking with the walk up Binser Saddle being the hardest part. The route on the first day from Andrew's Shelter to our camp site took about 7 hours including breaks and at moderate pace and a further 6 hours from camp to the end of the Binser

Track on the second day. The remaining 2 km along the road back to Andrew's Shelter could be avoided by leaving a car at either end of the track.

Despite expectations, the scenery was very diverse. The route is very well marked and the track itself is easily recognisable probably even under unfavourable weather conditions



*Poulter Valley 4WD track [Warren Wheeler]*

All of the above make this route a very relaxing tramp and/or a tramp for bringing kids along.

The four of us were Janet Wilson, Graham Peters, Warren Wheeler and Annett Pätzold.

### **23 April 2017 Atiwhakatu Hut Terry and Nina**

Picked all up at Milverton Park, in Big Red: Terry Nina, Peter from Levin, Nicola. And picked Anja up at Mt Bruce. Lots of cars at the Holdsworth road end. Headed on up the track, a bit cold at first. One of the bridges was smashed a bit but still useable, instead of slipping and sliding down to the stream up and onto the track again. Terry's Ankle was getting a bit sore so he decided to wait at the swing bridge over the Holdsworth Creek. Lots of people to talk to coming and going. Being lazy sitting in the sun. The others headed off to Atiwhakatu Hut.

(НИНА) Мы перешли через подвесной мост. Небольшой перекус и дорога зовет вперед в удивительный сказочный лес. Где каждый куст хранит свою тайну и каждое дерево знает свою историю. Слышится пение неизвестной птицы и шум реки. Тропинка ведет вниз. И вот перед нами к река, пробивающая себе дорогу сквозь каменные глыбы. Анжа говорит что во время дождей река становится полноводной и широкой. Идем вдоль каменистого берега затем опять вверх и вверх. Маршрут обозначен

указательными флажками. Это придает уверенности. Спасибо организаторам кто устроил эти дорожки и построил домик на холме где люди могут спрятаться от дождя и отдохнуть. К счастью в этот раз погода была хорошей и мы не очень уставшие. Мы немного передохнули и пустились в обратный путь, туда где ждал нас.

(Translation) We crossed the suspension bridge. A small snack and the path is calling forward in an amazing fairy forest. Where every bush has its mystery and every tree knows your story. Sound of the singing of unknown birds and the sound of the river. A footpath leads down. And here before us to the river, piercing their way through the boulders. Anja said that during the rains the river becomes full-flowing and wide. Walk along the rocky shore and then again up and up. The route is marked by the index flags. It gives us confidence.

Thanks to the organizers who made these tracks and built a house in the hills where people can hide from the rain and relax. Fortunately this time the weather was good and we were not very tired. We rested for a while and went back to where Terry was waiting for us.



*Resting at Atiwhakatu Hut*

Then back down the track, using the broken bridge again, stopping at Donnelly's Flat for some sunshine. And off to Anja's place for a coffee, water and snacks.

We were: Terry Crippen, Nina Nazarenko, Nicola Wallace, Anja Scholz, Peter Finn (from Levin).

**7-8 February 2017**  
**Mount Pollux**  
**Grant Christian**

In February, Ange Minto and I attended the NZAC climbing camp at the head of the Wilkin Valley. The camp was based at the Top Forks Huts from the 4th to the 11th, with participants staying in the huts or camping nearby. On arrival at the camp I realised how steep the mountain approaches here are, and I wondered what, if anything, I could climb.

The highest peak was Mt Pollux (2536m), which had glaciers overhanging and crashing down some of the rock faces, and a steep rock band. It looked well beyond my capabilities, but I was keen to give it a try if others thought it was doable. Fortunately, there was someone at the camp who had been up through the rock band before, and said there was a climbable route. Several people were eager to attempt the climb and I agreed, somewhat nervously, to team up with Sean Prockter, a guide from the Rockies in Canada.

With a favourable forecast, we decided to camp on the lower slopes of Pollux on the evening of the 7th. Getting to our camp was the hardest part of the climb. The lower slopes of the mountain were surrounded by a band of dense scrub on very steep slopes. It took a huge effort to push our way through the scrub while hauling ourselves up vertically at times. A lot of sweat and cursing saw us finally break through to tussock covered slopes. We were frustrated to see one of the other climbing teams, who were behind us, had found a much easier route and were now well ahead.

We reached a suitable altitude and looked around for a level campsite. We found a good site and set up the tent fly. One team of three was camping nearby, and four others had set up camp a bit higher.

Next morning we were ready to depart as the sun rose. We went directly up to the rock band and searched for a route up through the rock. We had to traverse around the mountain a little to where others were heading. The route looked good, but care was required as we steadily gained altitude. We passed the first patch of snow on a steep scree slope before getting into steeper rock. The rock was mostly crumbly, and there were some scary steep slopes. We used small plants with a tenuous grip on the earth to support ourselves as we went up. I thought it best not to look back down. After about 50 metres of this

terrain, the slope eased and we were soon at the bottom of the snow field. The others were stopping here to put on crampons and we did the same. I tried not to think about climbing back down where we had just come up. Going down is always more difficult.

With crampons on we plodded slowly up the snow, which was still firm and could be walked up comfortably. Higher up, we reached crevassed glaciers and we roped up for safety. At this point three of the others decided to turn back, with one not feeling great, and the other two decided to join him. Toby Holyhead from Australia joined on to the rope with Sean & I.

The weather was perfect and we were all enjoying the climb and the surrounding views.



The other three (Dave Bamford, John Cocks and Geoff Collie, all with many years of mountaineering experience) were just ahead of us and we followed in their footsteps as they negotiated the crevasses and snow bridges to continue our ascent. We headed west to a rocky ridge on the skyline that led up the southeast side to a notch in the ridge, and clambered through here. There was a bergschrund on the other side but we negotiated this safely, and we could continue around the other side of the mountain while steadily ascending.



*Crossing a schrund*

Eventually we reached the final ridge to the peak. This was a steep snow and rock ridge and we did a couple of pitches on this section. I looked down the steep snow slope to the west. A fall here could have taken you down 1,000 metres or more towards Lucidus Lake. Soon we were on top and enjoying the magnificent views of numerous peaks including Aspiring and Earnslaw to the South West and Mt Cook to the North. I was delighted at making the summit, but a little apprehensive about the return journey.



While enjoying lunch near the summit a helicopter was flying in the area and when they spotted us they came and circled while taking photos. Once lunch was over we started on the descent. I felt uneasy walking down a short gentle but narrow slope on the ridge which I had felt comfortable going up. Facing downhill is so different. A short way along the summit ridge we set up an abseil off the ridge to the slopes below. Two ropes were joined together to give us a 50 metre abseil. Once we regrouped below the abseil we roped up again to walk down the glacier. The journey down the glacier was uneventful. The snow in places had softened a lot but at least it was downhill.

A while later we were back at the rock where crampons were removed. We climbed down a bit further until we reached the steep rock band. Much to my relief everybody agreed it would be best to abseil this section as well, so

the two ropes were joined again for another long abseil. I was last down and had to ensure the knot was pulled clear of the rock once I had got down a couple of metres. It was still steep where the abseil ended, but at least it was scree and dirt which gave reasonable traction. I pulled the ropes through the sling anchor and we packed them up and headed back down to our campsites.

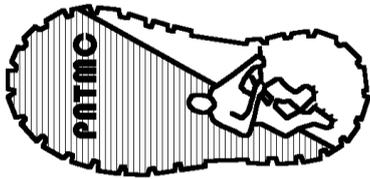
We got back to our overnight gear, packed up and headed down to the scrubby slopes that had been such a challenge to get up through. We tried to follow the route that the others had come up but got off track a little and had to battle through some thick scrub and a deep channel to get back on track. Once back on the flats, we had a few kilometres to go to get back to Top Forks Hut. I was feeling pretty tired by now, we had already been going about 14 hours. Toby and Sean got ahead of me, and I struggled on at my own pace. The light was starting to fade so I walked faster and caught up with the others at the river crossing where we had left our shoes (so we had dry boots for the climb). I was first to change my boots and get my shoes on so I headed off quickly to beat the dark. It was dark before I got back to the hut, arriving about nine fifteen. It had been a fifteen hour day. I was in bed before long, and slept badly with a very sore and tired body, but was very pleased to have knocked the bxxxxxx off.

**16 April 2017**  
**Easter Sunday Impromptu Trip**  
**Platinum Mines, Hardings Park**  
**Warren Wheeler**

Seven of us enjoyed lovely weather and a somewhat muddy uphill track to explore the old mine shafts and enjoy the birdsong on the Toe Toe Loop in Hardings Park. Nice to have such a day out so close to Palmy.



*Lunch at Platinum Mines lookout*



**Palmerston North  
Tramping and  
Mountaineering  
Club Inc.**

[www.pntmc.org.nz](http://www.pntmc.org.nz)

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## PNTMC Newsletter

### May 2017

#### *What's inside this month?*

- AGM Report - Committee Changes
- Presidents Report 2016-17
- Tararua Trips - Atiwhakatu Hut, Roaring Stag Hut
- Mt Ruapehu - Whangaehu Hut
- Arthurs Pass – Casey-Binser Saddle
- Mt Pollux – NZAC Climbing Camp
- Recipe – Herrings in a Fur Coat
- Coming trips and more

#### **Articles for the newsletter**

Send by the 20<sup>th</sup> 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!**

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