

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter April 2018



Intro Tramp 3 ready to leave Otaki Forks for Field Hut, Tararua Forest Park. [Martin Lawrence]

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 a cuppa before start at 7.30pm.

12 April 2018

AGM

Janet Wilson

Our Annual General Meeting features a summary of the years activities by our President Janet Wilson. There is also the thrill of voting for Executive and Committee members and hearing how our Financial Performance means that we will need to increase subs by \$5. There is also a planned change to our Constitution to remove the need for two trips before applying for membership.

26 April 2018

Spine of the Fish

Anthony Behrens/Fiona Burleigh

Whin and Whiona will be talking about thru-hiking the spine of Maui's fish, the North Island mountain ranges from Wellington to Whare Kai Atua (Cape Colville, Coromandel), in autumn 2017. What's thru hiking? Why do it?, How do you prepare? What were the highlights and lowlights of their adventure?

Upcoming Trips

1 April (changed from 25 March)

Ohingaiti Boulders E/Family
Doug Strachan 352 6526

Depart 9am from Milverton Park for an 80min drive to the carpark. There is an honesty box where you pay \$5 a head (children under 12 free) to access concretions reminiscent of Moeraki boulders. From the carpark, we walk for half an hour down and across open farmland to a remnant of bush (about 150m x 50m in area), where there is a flush toilet and the scattered boulders. There's also a geocache somewhere amongst the boulders if anyone is into geocaching. We will spend about an hour exploring the boulders and having a snack. Bring togs because we will go home via the Ruahine Dress Circle, which is a pleasant swimming spot. Bring something like sandals or reef shoes to wear when swimming as the stony stream bed is surprisingly hostile to feet. Also camera, drink, snacks, lunch, sunscreen, sunhat, raincoat, towel, petrol & ice cream money.

7-8 April

Waitewaewae Hut M
Michael Allerby 323 8563

Leave PN at 8.00am and head down to Otaki Forks, the starting point of the approx. 6hr tramp in to the 16 bunk Waitewaewae Hut, located on the banks of the Otaki River. Return the same route the following day.

8 April

Puketurua/Burn Hut M/F
Dave Grant 328 7788

Been wanting to do this trip into the western Tararuas for some time as an alternative route to Burn Hut. Had a go a couple of years ago but got beaten by the weather. From the end of the Mangahao Road the idea is to follow the track around the top reservoir (No.1) to Baber Creek. We will then head up the old Puketurua Track to the main ridge and go north along the ridge to reach the Burn Hut Track a kilometre or so south of Burn Hut. This section along the ridge through tussock and scrub is basically untracked so be prepared for a bit of bush bashing. Lunch at Burn Hut then follow back and head down the track to College Creek and out to the top Mangahao Reservoir again.

14-15 April

Kiritaki Hut M
Richard Lockett 323 0948

Situated in the south eastern Ruahines an ex Forest Service well looked after by locals. We

will approach from the western side of the Ruahine Range via No.1 Line with options for a bit of stream travel, returning via same route. Depart 7.30 am from Milverton Park.

14 or 15 April

Farm Walk M
Malcolm Leary 06 327 7825

Hunterville hinterland is rich in farming history with large high-country sheep and cattle stations offering spectacular views and plenty of exercise. You may well be rewarded with some of Edith's rural hospitality back at their homestead. Best weather day.

21-22 April

Kashmir Road Pine Pulling Posse E/M
Anthony Behrens 358 5517

Come to Kashmir Road and help the Palmy Pine Pulling Posse clear a few more pesky wilding pines from the regenerating bush. After a picnic lunch, those that are keen can take the 2 hour return trip to Awatere Hut for a look see. You'll need: Gardening gloves. Lunch. Loppers and/or a saw. Dab-on poison will be supplied. There is tasty creek water for refreshments. Will leave Milverton Park at 7.30 and return home when we've had enough (!). Phone Anthony on either 027 470 9829 or 06 358 5517 for more details. We will need to know numbers so that we can arrange the poison.

21 or 22 April

Te Atuaoparapara F
Chris Tuffley 359 2530

A classic loop. We'll head up the Sunrise Track, swing by Top Maropea to say hi, then head over Te Atuaoparapara to Waipawa Saddle and out down the Waipawa River. Base value four huts and one high point, with possible side trips for more if we're feeling energetic. Leaving early.

25 April (Anzac Day)

Diggers Hut M
Grant Christian 354 5843

To commemorate ANZAC day we will visit Diggers Hut. 4WD trip up Takapari Road and then walk downhill to the hut. Lunch at the hut and walk back uphill to Takapari Road. Meet at Milverton Park 9 a.m.

28-29 April

Hidden Lake E/M
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Depart PN at 8.00am. This tiny secret lake in the eastern Tararuas is upstream from Roaring Stag Hut and is just big enough to show on the topo map. From the roadend it is about 4

hours to the hut and from there we will either go up the Ruamahanga River or cut across the flats through beautiful big rimu forest and crown fern. Well worth a visit.

28 or 29 April

Manawatu Gorge Walk

E

Nicola Wallace

021 209 0720

This is a one-ended walk of the Manawatu Gorge Track. We'll leave Milverton Park at 9am on the day of best weather, park at the Ashhurst end, head up the Tawa Loop Track, and have lunch at the Windy Lookout. We'll return by the main track, stopping at all lookouts for a nosey.

5-6 May

Upper Makaroro Hut

M/F

Janet Wilson

329 4722

Departing Friday 4 May as soon as those keen to go can get away. Fantastic little hut in a great location beside the Makaroro River. We will do a circuit via Parks Peak Hut and the Upper Makaroro River/Aranga Hut site. Probably some conservation volunteering included – we may deploy acoustic recorders to listen for kiwis on this trip. Your chance to be involved in this exciting project. Please contact me in plenty of time if you are interested.

5 or 6 May

Sunrise Hut

E/M

Kathy Corner

027 618 5722

Sunrise Hut is one of the most popular huts in the Ruahines. It is a 2-3 hour gentle climb to the hut and if people want and the weather is fine we can climb up to the nearby Armstrong Saddle. Leave at 7am from Milverton Park on either Saturday or Sunday depending on weather.

12-13 May

Howletts Hut

M/F

Warren Wheeler

356 1998

Depart 7.30am. A classic Ruahine tops trip via the steep track to Longview Hut. If inclement weather we will go in via Daphne Hut. From Howletts we can also continue along to Tiraha for views of Sawtooth Ridge and beyond.

13 May

Branch Road

E

Sally Hewson

357 0990

This walkway follows the route of an abandoned country road that links the Pohangina Village with Ridge Road. It is about 6km to Ridge Rd. If we have two cars we can do a car drop to avoid walking back down the road, or we can retrace our steps

back down the walkway. Possibility of an afternoon tea stop in the little café in the old Pohangina council rooms (if they are open).

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

Graeme Richards 353-6227

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/>

From the President

Summer is officially over but the great weather in the Manawatu continues - a wonderful time to be tramping. I hope many of you are able to get out and about over the Easter break and maybe score some points in the club Huts and High Places Challenge. Don't forget to update your points on the online system - help is available if you need it.

Your committee has had further discussions about the proposed new club logo and have decided to trial it on our facebook page. You can check it out at

<https://www.facebook.com/Palmerston-North-Tramping-and-Mountaineering-Club-1577289419011545/> - your feedback is welcome. It is 20 years since the logo was last updated. Personally, I like it - and think of it as a modern club "Coat of Arms" - it speaks about what we do in the forests and mountains.

Our club's 52nd AGM will be held this month on the 12th April - I know that an AGM is not the most enticing meeting of the year so, as an added inducement, we are providing an extra yummy supper. There will also be a rule change around club membership to consider. I hope to see many of you on the night.

Happy Tramping Everyone
Janet

Huts and High Places PNTMC Challenge 2018

Huts and High Places Challenge 15 Dec 2017 - 9 Dec 2018

Our PNTMC Challenge 2018 aims to inspire you to visit new places, support our club and have fun in the hills.

There are points to be earned for visits, bonus points for new places and bonus points if you are on a PNTMC trip.

To add more challenges to the fun, committee members have added their own challenges. Points for these can only be earned once.

Huts and High Places Points

Visit to DOC or NZAC hut	1 point
Visit a named high point	1 point
Bonus points for each hut or high point	
If a club trip	1/2 point
If your first visit	1/2 point

Committee Challenges

For a bonus of 5 points (once for each challenge):

- Pack float or swim a pool on a river (Warren's Challenge)
- Go on a club organised beginners trip (Anne's Challenge)
- Photograph a whio (Janet's challenge)
- Summit Tahurangi - Mt Ruapehu (Grant's Challenge)
- Visit Ngamoko or Mid Pohangina Hut (Martin's Challenge)
- Visit 3 or more huts on a trip (Graeme's Challenge)
- Camp above 2000m - not near a hut (Bruce's Challenge)
- Hut warden at Rangī Hut (Committee Challenge)
- Bring a new trumper on a club trip (Woody's Challenge)

Points to be gained fairly while visiting the DOC estate and in the spirit of the Challenge - talk to Janet or committee members if in doubt.

There is no restriction on how you can get to these places i.e. helicopters, boats, bikes etc acceptable.

Send your trip details, places visited etc to Janet or add them to the online spreadsheet which is now up and running for this challenge.

Here are the top 10 results to date. You can read all about Elly's latest epic on pages 9-12.

Name	Huts	Highs	Bonus	TOTAL
Elly	60.5	80.5	20	161
Chris T	47.5	60.5	20	128
Grant	16	34.5	15	65.5
Warren	15.5	4.5	30	50
Martin	15	9	15	39
Janet	18.5	4.5	15	38
Graham	12	4.5	15	31.5
Kathy	12.5	2.5	15	30
Anne	9	9	5	23
Bruce	6	5	10	21

New Members

We welcome Debra Sayer, Stephen Legg and Kirsten Olsen, Naser and Nazanin Ghardash Fard, Michael Poulsen and Family.

Great to see so many new faces.

We wish you all happy tramping with us.

Trip Reports

Apologies for late publication of the first two reports that were inadvertently omitted from the December Newsletter.

20-23 October 2017

Kahurangi National Park

Report by Anne Lawrence

Photos by Martin Lawrence

Our Labour Weekend trip got off to an early start on Friday morning flying with air2there from Paraparaumu to Nelson via Blenheim. It was a very scenic flight, with Blenheim, Nelson, the hills all looking beautiful, and the flight was a relaxing way to start our weekend.

The weekend's weather forecast had been improving over the week beforehand and we were hopeful of getting some fine weather. In fact the weather ended up being very obliging – most of the time it was lovely and we only needed raincoats on our last two days.

Rory met us at the airport (with gas bottles) and drove us to our starting point - the Baton Valley Road end. It was coming on for midday by the time we donned packs and got underway. We were headed to Flanagan's Hut for the night. The sign at the road end said this should take 3 – 5.5 hours. So we were very hopeful of a pleasant saunter up to the hut... and the first half hour or so reinforces this as it is along an old farm track. But things changed once that ran out – the track hadn't been cleared recently and our route involved multiple river crossings.

We agreed that the route would be really difficult if the river was much higher than we experienced. As it was, even though we chose crossing sites with care, the more vertically challenged amongst us did get wet undies. However, it was an interesting route with plenty of variety – I was puzzled with the placing of wire cables in some places but not in other equally exposed spots.

Just after the junction with Loveridge Track we came across two who who seemed totally unconcerned by our presence, carrying on doing their own thing even as we got quite close. The route gained height steadily and until there were dracophyllym amongst the beech. The plentiful bird song was to be characteristic of the whole trip.

It took us 6 hours to reach Flanagan's. The hut is a nice old-fashioned 8-bunker (wood fire but no running water) sited at the edge of the bush with a view up to Baton Saddle and surrounding hills. Interesting reading the hut book – the many comments about how long people had taken to get there from the road end made our 6 hours look more reasonable. There was also a comment from a group who had got to Flanagan's from the other side saying that they had had to stay 2 nights as one of their group had had a bad reaction to stinging nettle. We were puzzled as we had seen no stinging nettle yet – we were to find plenty the next day!

The next morning was a little cloudy and windy, but still warm. Our route up to the saddle was well marked but not cut. Impressive amounts of speargrass made for quite slow going. It was a bit too windy to hang around at the top, but we did stop long enough to take photos – there were good views down the Leslie-Karamea, and back down the way we had come.

Then the hard work started – the route down from the saddle was steep, poorly marked in places, had lots of tree fall and in places was covered in lawyer and stinging nettle. The stinging nettle was particularly healthy – well established plants growing to head height that we had to negotiate our way past... Now we understood why someone might have needed a recovery day after pushing their way through the nettle jungle!

At one stage we heard a strange cry from back up the way we had come – the cry repeated over and over. It didn't sound like a bird and we were worried it was a person, so we called back and we whistled but no response. Then the cry came again. Finally we realised it was probably a goat – I think we were all relieved as none of us actually wanted to go back up where we had just clambered down!

We had lunch at the Wilkinson junction which is where our route joined the Leslie-Karamea track. I think we all enjoyed the contrast provided by the nicely benched Leslie-Karamea Track. The track meanders along beside the Leslie for some time – and the river was beautiful – wide, clear, some deep pools which were quite inviting, but not inviting enough for us to brave the cold! We reached Splugeons Rock Shelter about 4pm.



Preparing dinner in Splugeons rock shelter

Our intention had been to carry on to Balloon Hut that night, but the rock shelter was too tempting and so that was where we stayed. Splugeons is a fairly basic shelter with a dirt floor, and corrugated iron on the roof and three sides. The best thing about it is the clear plastic blind running the full length of the fourth side of the hut. Reading the hut book we discovered the blind (new in February) had replaced an old one that could no longer be seen through. What a bonus as the view was fantastic! We looked out to bush, hills, hills and more hills. We could see one patch of snow which we thought might be somewhere near Mt Peel. It was fantastic watching the colours on the hills change as the sun set.

The temperature dropped that night and the next morning was a cool one. The track carried on climbing gradually in a very civilised fashion – we got into dracophyllym territory again and then we were out of the bush. The Tablelands were shrouded in mist, which added to their appeal. Many photos were taken as we headed on to Balloon Hut.



Ange checking out the sign to Balloon Hut

We had been surprised by the lack of people around given it was Labour Weekend. However once on the track to Balloon we did start seeing other people. We met a chatty fellow who was a volunteer for Friends of Flora. It was his monthly routine to drive into

Gridiron Shelter and walk from there to do his trapline which runs from near Balloon and then heads cross country over the Tablelands for 17 km. Balloon is a lovely hut – roomy, well sited just out of the bush line, with a wood burner and plenty of firewood. Interesting feature is the map on the ceiling. It works but studying it does involve some head craning! While having an early lunch at Balloon, we met a family of four who were doing some exploring from Salisbury Hut, and hoped to get to Lake Peel and/or Mt Peel. By now, the weather had deteriorated - mist was alternating with cold rain.

After lunch we headed off to explore, having first donned wet weather gear. The track from Balloon to Lake Peel is well marked – it climbs along a gentle ridge and on a clear day there are good views in all directions. Not today though. The mist only allowed an occasional glimpse of Mt Peel but we recognised the same snow patch we had seen from Splugeons the previous night. And then we got into the wind – it was bracing to say the least. We met three of the family returning, the dad having decided to carry on, the mum was returning with 2 wind-blasted girls. We found a sheltered spot by Lake Peel from where we decided to venture up the side above us and see if we could find the route to Mt Peel. An easy clamber and we were there –but the wind was ferocious, and the rain/mist/cloud was closing in even more. Although keen to knock Mt Peel off (Ange had not done it before) we decided there was little point, and headed back down to Balloon.

We got the fire going and were able to offer hot drinks to the few parties that stopped in en route in either direction. Later that evening we were joined by a couple of Aucklanders who had done a fair bit in Kahurangi in previous trips. They had given up on driving out of Auckland for tramping and instead were in the habit of flying to wherever they wanted to tramp. I was impressed to hear they had even flown to Palmerston North a few times specifically for the purpose of doing a weekend tramp!

The next day was an early start as we were being picked up at Flora midday in order to get back to Nelson for our flight. The track from Balloon out to Flora is easy going – the weather improved so that by mid-morning it was dry and by midday it was warm. We had time for an early lunch at Flora carpark before Rory arrived. We got to the airport with plenty of time to spare – enough time for a shower so

we were all feeling spruce by the time we got on the plane.

I thoroughly enjoyed the whole weekend. Thanks to Martin and Ange for their company.

We were: Martin Lawrence (trip leader), Ange Minto and Anne Lawrence (keen followers).

5 November 2017
Intro Tramping 3 – Field Hut, Otaki Forks
Stephen Legg

The new young ones clearly wanted to whizz back down for the bonfire night fireworks as they descended from Field Hut like hares. The older tortoises actually tramped down from a transient visit to the windy drizzly summit of Table Top, just above Field Hut in the Tararuas.



At Tabletop

One intrepid soul zoomed further onwards to the cloudy 'Tops' in horizontal wind and was shepherded back to the fold by our trusty 'el presidente' Janet Wilson. The trip was ably led by our leader Anne Lawrence, backed up as tail end safety charlie by Marty Lawrence. The usual Milverton departure at 0730 meant our 'Intro tramping' group of fourteen set off from Otaki Forks at 0915. Onwards and upwards through a steady incline and plenty of friendly chatter showed we were a diverse group, yet all joined by an enjoyment of 'beginning tramping'. Half of the group had boots. Half slithered and slipped in trainers. We all puffed uphill at a good speed, reaching Field Hut in 2.5 hrs, nearly twice as fast as the DOC sign informed us it would take. And what a fascinating old hut we found. Field Hut is one of the oldest in the country. Its character screams 'history' as soon as you cross the lintel. Sandwiches consumed, we all slogged up to Tabletop, just above the hut.



Slogging to Tabletop

The taster of the 'Tops' was soon followed by our equally chatty descent. For some it was a 'first experience' of NZ tramping so the views of the bush clad hillsides and glimpses through mist and scudding clouds of the 'forks' lent a touch of mystery to the views. At the end, after all, there were no fireworks. It was far too windy. Even the trainers survived, all keen to join the next 'Intro Tramping' experience – staying in a hut overnight. I wonder who will remember to bring the fireworks – er candles?

We were (in order left to right in pic on front page) June Wirihana, Casey Dason, Ewen Cameron, Grace Choy, Sue Chok, Mark le Bas, Janet Wilson, Anne Lawrence, Stephen Legg, Kirsten Olsen, Anne Cant, Debra Sayer, Nazi Yazdi and Martin Lawrence (not in pic).

18 February 2018
Coal Creek Explorer
Graham Peters

With no-one other than a temporarily carless Debra contacting me before Friday and Janet, for something different, off trap checking, I thought I might have a lazy day up at our 'northern estate.' However, as I was leaving work on the Friday, Warren came by expressing his interest in the trip. Excellent. As it was, Warren turned up not only with Debra, but also his mate John for a leisurely start at 9.00am. The plan was to follow the track from Limestone Road to the 2nd crossing of Coal Creek then head upstream. I've been up there part way recently so expected that the travel would be generally benign and there is also a proto track in parts. As a graduate of the recent series of beginner tramps organised by Anne, I was interested to see how Debra coped off track. I was favourably impressed.

A leisurely trip saw us stopping at the 1st decent stream junction for morning tea. After this it was easy travel to below a couple of large slips above a grassy terrace. The nature of the stream changed after this with the stream bed deeply incised in gravel terraces, rather like glacial moraine. We were eventually halted by a double waterfall with a deep pool at the bottom and no direct route up. It looked like there might be a sidle on the true right so Bruce the dog and I headed up for a look. There was some cut vegetation but it wasn't very pleasant and was obviously going quite high so we scuttled/slid back down. Not so far back was the grassy terrace and we decided to head back to that for lunch. As we wandered back, we looked at the map to see where we were, having trouble locating ourselves. The place that fitted best was further up the stream than we thought we were. However, most unusually, it transpired as we went back looking at the map we were further up than we thought.



A pleasant lunch in the sun [Warren Wheeler]

After a very pleasant lunch in the sun, the trip back to where we entered the river seemed quite quick. There, Warren and John decided to carry on downstream while Debra and I went back down the track. The stream was obviously good going as Warren and John arrived at the 1st stream crossing shortly before Debra and myself. From there back to Janet's and my place for tea and chocolate biscuits.

23-25 Feb 2018
Not Maropea Forks
Janet Wilson

Graham and I were the only two keen and able to make the planned early Friday departure for the Maropea Forks trip but there were two others keen to leave for a trip later in the day. Never one to miss an opportunity to get some more who protection work done, I quickly

suggested a change of destination to Triangle Hut, where a box of new traps was waiting to be deployed along the river. Graham, Fiona and myself (and Bruce the dog) walked up to Rangi Hut late on Friday afternoon and were later joined by Ian. The hut is looking good after some recent work by DOC which included installing a new stainless-steel bench and painting much of the hut inside and out. There are also beautiful new murals on the smaller sheds - well recommended viewing. The Airforce helped out and dropped in a good supply of firewood. The hut was quite full for a Friday evening with 3 or 4 parties there having booked.

We headed over to Triangle Hut the next morning and arrived in time for an early lunch. Then it was off to work. The first interesting place on the journey up the river is the slot gorge - initially it looked impassable with a large log jam at the upstream end but this was able to be climbed. Bruce had other ideas and found a detour - which turned out to be a better option on our way back. Our task was easy - to install new A24 self-resetting stoat and rat traps every 100m up the river. The river was hugely affected by the cyclones nearly a year ago and there is a lot of gravel moving so we were careful to install the traps well above the flood line. It was a wonderful warm afternoon; the job went well and we were back at the hut by 5pm. A male who flew in just on dusk.



Log jam in slot gorge above Triangle Hut



Lots of fresh gravel in Upper Oroua valley.

Next morning, we headed downstream, adding new traps to the existing line of DOC 200 traps. This line suffered badly in the floods and quite a few traps were lost or damaged. Once we reached the bypass track we had lunch. A pair of whio flew by as we were sitting there. We then carried on downstream with 3 more traps to the confluence with Howletts Creek. This is a nice section of river with all the usual deep bits well filled in with gravels.

Back at the bypass track we headed for home via the route to the top of Mangahuaia. The wind was a bit of a nuisance on the higher section and to avoid more of this we returned via Rangī Hut rather than the Deadmans Track. The day turned out to be a rather long 10 hours and we were glad to get back to the cars. Great effort from everyone - thanks again to club members and fellow Ruahine Whio Protector Ian for a lovely trip and some more "Applied Tramping".

We were Graham Peters (leader), Fiona Burleigh, Ian Rasmussen and Janet Wilson.

**25 Feb 2018
Beehive Creek
Doug Strachan and Others**

What did participants think were a highlight and lowlight of this Easy/Family trip? Read on to find out.

Minami Strachan (12yrs)
High: jumping off a big branch into the creek.
Low: the boys singing annoying songs in the car.

Holly Mason (11yrs)
High: relaxing in the cold water.
Low: having to walk to the start.

Kazuki McDonald (10)
High: relaxing with Conan in the water.

Low: getting stuck in mud.

Conan Strachan (10yrs)
High: singing "Maggots and Worms".
Low: getting stuck in da mud.

June Wirihana
High: having the kids along with endless energy; Buzz Bars; learning a little about maps.
Low: unfortunate the track is closed for others to enjoy. (The track is officially "closed" but easily navigable).

Warren Wheeler
High: seeing that the awesome November flash flood had left debris up to one metre high amongst trees on the terraces.
Low: forgetting that I had half a watermelon in my backpack to share with everyone.

Doug Strachan
High: proving you can get to Beehive Creek and back on less than a quarter tank of petrol.
Low: kids bickering in the back seat about who gets to sit together in the back seat.



Criss-cross down Beehive Creek. [W Wheeler]

We were: Deborah Sayer, June Wirihana, Natalie Slade, Mark Lebas, Warren Wheeler, Doug Strachan, and 4 kids: Holly Mason, Kazuki McDonald, Minami Strachan, Conan Strachan.

**2 - 4 March 2018
Tatarua Peaks/YTTY
Elly Arnst**

10:00pm: four bright lights emerge from the bush and bob across the tussock. Packs discarded, three lights shine on Table Top...the fourth wondering what kind of crazy people scale high points in the dark? Answer: the PNTMC kind! Grant's three-day medium/fit trip, condensed to a two-day-and-a-bit fit trip, then reclassified as an 'ex-fit' trip;

interpretation dependant on who you ask - "I used to be fit" (Elly) or "extreme fitness required" (Grant).

The full moon tries to break through the clouds, as stars twinkle and the night air brushes across sweaty skin. Dennon appears an impenetrable mound of leatherwood, but soon four lights make short work of the eastern ascent. In the distance Wellington, Masterton, and Otaki glow bright orange.

Chris and I discuss whether the shiny red invertebrate is a worm or a slug, and settle on "slurm" - later to be correctly identified as a carnivorous flatworm. We peer, fascinated at creatures of the night rarely seen - large spiders, snails, and worms.

12:05am: four bright lights creep quietly into Kime, the dog lays quiet, someone yawns (oh dear).

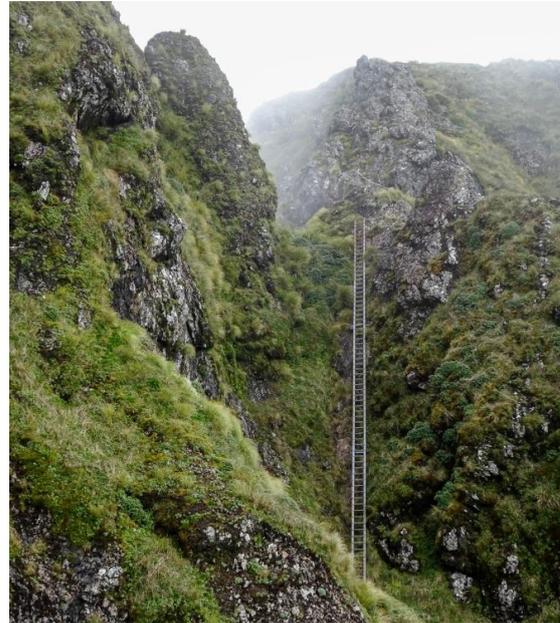
5:58am: one alarm goes, people stir. "It's not 6 o'clock yet", says Chris; followed a few minutes later by Milo's, "Shhhh". "Who's shushing us?" a voice retorts, accompanied by a swinging headlamp. It seems this is payback for our late entrance, and all the hut inhabitants are woken.

We're all a bit tired, bleary eyed, and not ecstatic to discover the "Dead rat in the tank! Do not drink the water!" sign posted on the hut wall, as far away from the tap as possible - what do you think we drank and brushed our teeth with last night? Chris thoughtfully relocates the sign to a more appropriate spot right above the tap. With some degree of early morning enthusiasm, we decide that Field Peak has points too easy to pass up on, so off we traipse, pack-less, through the clag.

8:30am: four packs on, we walk inside the clouds, taking an indirect route from Hut Mound (more points) to Bridge Peak (yet more points) and intersect back with the Maungahuka Track. Boyd-Wilson, Vosseler, Yeates, and McIntosh...by now I've lost track of the ridiculous number of named high points we've crossed!

We pause on Tuiti for a snack and from this vantage point Tunui seems nigh on impossible to summit (unless you're a bit of a monkey). We reach the top of the ladder with relative ease, carefully climbing down backwards while using the chains. Milo descends first, then Grant. I peer down to see what I'm in for. The ladder is long, but angled and strong, and

double runged! Easy! I was anticipating a vertical wobbly aluminium affair - think Waiau Gorge tripled!



The ladder off Tuiti

More chains, more climbing and we assemble below Tunui. The route to the top looks steep, but achievable from this side. Grant and Milo opt for Maungahuka, Chris for points, and I scramble up too. Soon we're standing on the top - the world falls away sharply beneath our feet - how cool does this feel! Grant and Milo are relaxing in the hut by the time Chris and I catch up for a 2pm lunch and perusal of the hut's "literature" aka trashy mag stash.

3:00pm: four pairs of tired legs set out for Anderson. The cloud has lifted - fortunately the views are amazing, unfortunately we can see the long steep ascent up Aokaparangi. We tackle each climb, one at a time, trying not to focus on the kilometres which still lie ahead. Grant walks straight past the turnoff for A-ok Hut...guess he doesn't want those points! Chris and I confer and quickly decide we don't either.



Late afternoon on the Main Range

Negotiating Kahiwiroa involves some clambering, and Grant and Milo have burnt off ahead again - where has all their energy come from? However, we soon find them resting in a clearing partway through the "endless forest" (as aptly named by Chris).

8:00pm: the light in the forest is growing dim as we emerge from the trees. Anderson Memorial Hut: two trampers, two dogs, four hunters, four of us, six bunks. Grant wisely brought his fly and sets up in the trees, the two trampers plus dogs have also bivvied outside. Milo goes for a bunk, but as the night progresses Chris and I decide that the porch will be quieter than inside - just ask Milo for his account!

6:00am-ish: one sloppy tongue of Max the lab drags me from a sleepy doze.

8:20am: Three trampers blaze up the hill; my tired legs struggle to keep up. I pause for a quiet moment and 360 degree views of clear, calm, Tararua tops. Two hours to Waitewaewae the sign on Junction Knob optimistically states. Three hours later we stand on the swing bridge, peering into the crystal-clear, green water - so inviting that Chris and I decide to get in. One frigid dunking is enough to satisfy my urge to swim!

2:00pm: four tiring bodies set off with the possibility of a very long walk ahead (if hut book entries are to be believed). The air is warm, sweat drips, dehydration becomes a looming problem. We refill bottles and splash our faces in a stream, then climb the bank and reach a junction.

The tree is covered in orange triangles - I lose count there are so many. All but one point left. The lone straight-ahead triangle tells us we'll need "good luck" if we choose to go that way. The YTTY hut book told of a horrendous 8-9 hour trip to OF via the new track, DoC signs said expect 5-7 hours - whichever version, it was all sounding rather grim. ***Surely the old track couldn't be that bad?*** After all it was still marked on my topo map alongside the new track. A quick discussion ensues. Grant, Chris and I are all keen to try the old track - climbing up does not sound appealing, neither is the sight of windfall immediately past the junction.

We crash down the stream bed and over the first slip, following a mixture of intermittently placed triangles and orange tape. As it

transpires, it isn't so much as good luck we need, but some good route finding skills, proficiently delivered by Chris. Exiting the stream on the true left, we traverse our way up and down until we reach the old boiler site. Pausing for a rest Grant says hopefully, "I'll wait here while you run back and get the truck!" Packs on, plod on.

4:30 pm: four halt as the track ends abruptly into open air. The slip is big! Now we need luck! Route-finding Chris spies a way through the tangled vegetation and up we go, climbing along the edge of the slip, clambering through supple jack and over exposed roots - a view of the distant grass flats at Otaki Forks taunting us.



Otaki Forks on the far side of the slip

Above the slip we lose what little route we were following. I spy another cut branch, but a fallen rimu and crushed undergrowth make the way look impossible. I wade through deep vegetation to peer down a steep drop; "I don't think it's this way, it looks too steep" I call to the others. That sends poor Chris on a futile circular mission to try and discover another way out. He finally crashes, squeezes, and swears his way back through the tangled mass to where the rest of us are waiting.

5:00 pm: four slightly concerned trampers weigh up their options. "I wonder if they'll winch us out if I activate my PLB?" I quip. "Not very happily", Grant replies. Chris decides to reinvestigate my 'too steep' option and finally we hear the call to proceed. I lower myself down the seemingly impossible face, clinging to vines, curling my fingers around the few tree roots I find partially obscured in the dirt. "Three points of contact" I constantly remind myself. The hand holds are ok, the foot holds are rubbish. This is far more challenging than traversing the Peaks! Finally I have two feet wedged on an almost flat section, but there is not enough space for us all to assemble, so

Chris and I inch our way along as Milo, and then Grant climb down. The rest of the descent is steep, but at least we can go down facing forwards; I aim myself at the pungas. Thankfully we seem to have lost the mass of supplejack. An excited whoop and an "I can see a triangle!", and we are back on the old track.

Walking out is easy underfoot and uneventful, although I have trouble convincing my legs to carry me up the final incline - who put that hill there? Grant and Milo are out of sight again, so packs off Chris and I nip down to bag Parawai Lodge and raid the blackberry patch.

7:30 pm: four trampers back at the car, weary but contented – big days, big hills, big fun - what an awesome adventure! "Could have been a medium trip if we'd walked faster", says Grant, albeit jokingly (I think)!

We were: Grant Christian, Milo Viviani, Chris Tuffley, Elly Arnst.

4 March 2018 Ohau Gorge Naser Ghardash Fard

We were six, led by Warren, that left the carpark at the end of Poads Road at 9:00am. This tramp was a loop with the first part along the sidle track above the Ohau River Gorge to the intersection at Blackwater Stream. The second part was back by way of the river, which we crossed many times and even had to swim a few pools that hadn't been there the last time Warren was (about 2 years ago).



A few deep pools to wade and swim. [WW]

Fortunately, the weather was sunny and the water seemed to get warmer the further we went. Two of us even had a swim at lunch time. Soon after lunch we passed by the old water intake structure and then left the river via an old bulldozed track back up to the farm

land, where we rejoined the marked track for the short walk back to the carpark, arriving at 2:15 pm. This was a great introduction to river travel and we were keen to find out more at the river safety course next Saturday.

We were Warren, Mark, Eddie, Debra, Fawwaz and Naser.

10 March 2018 River Safety Training Anne Lawrence

10 PNTMC members were part of a group of around 30 keen-to-learn participants in the River Safety Training course run by OTNZ on 10th March. It was great to have 3 new club members there and to have Graeme Richards as part of the teaching team. The course proved an enjoyable way to get to know each other while gaining some important skills.

We spent the morning at the rural fire station in Te Horo. We started with some good videos showing the why's and how's of river safety. We were split into groups and got into for some dry land practice. We first reviewed decision making – to cross or not? (when in doubt, don't) where to cross? (look at run outs, dangers downriver, as well as read clues from the surface of the water). With a bit of imagination, the gravel drive became a river, and we teamed up to cross it using a range of techniques, from one person with a pole through to varying sizes of groups using mutual support (holding tight to each other's packs preferably on the hip belt). We also practiced escaping from a snarled pack and rope throwing and catching.

Then we moved to the Otaki River and spent the afternoon getting wet. We discussed best crossing points – there seemed to be none as the river was high enough that we mostly judged we wouldn't attempt crossing it. However, around the bend above the rapid was not too bad and cross it we did – back and forth practising our crossing techniques. The depth and flow were quite challenging and highlighted the strength of numbers. On my own, with a pole, I crossed but it was not easy. In a group of 5, mutually supporting, the crossing was much easier. We found the best place to cross in this case was actually where the water was deeper but the bottom was smooth and the river not so fast – having fewer obstacles to get around made a huge difference.



Mutual support crossing (instructor with stick)

We also practised pack floating and escaping from our packs when lying in the river. Floating down as a group proved to be a surprisingly comfortable way of getting out of deep water.

We were fortunate to have a fine, warm day – in other conditions, the afternoon would have been much less pleasant! Even on this lovely day, people were chilling out and we were all pleased to get into dry clothes and head home. We stopped at a café north of Otaki and were home around 4.30pm.

PNTMC paid for club members to attend the training day. This contribution to members' outdoor safety education was made possible by funding from Eastern and Central Trust. I'd like to thank Eastern and Central Trust for their support.

We were: Michael Poulsen, Naser Ghardash Fard, Debra Sayer, Grant Christian, Woody Lee, Warren Wheeler, Geoff Phillips, Fiona

Burleigh, Malcolm Leary and myself (Anne Lawrence).

Helping out on Te Araroa Trail

25 February 2018
By Terry Crippen

Jesse Hyde has already done the North Island part of the Trail. I offered to help out with transport on the South Island part (which he was doing SOBO i.e. South Bound).

I caught up with Jesse along with the rest of his family (Barney, Rose and their daughter) in Hanmer Springs. Jesse did the Queen Charlotte by himself in two days. He joined the rest of his family on the St Arnaud to Lewis Pass part of the trail.

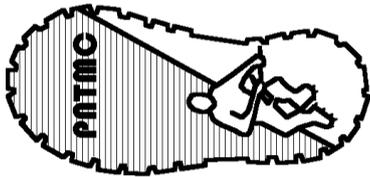
Dropped off Jesse up the Rakaia River at Glenfalloch Station. Picked him up at the Emily Road end. Wandered up the hill about 5 times. Back to Methven.

Dropped Jesse up the Rangitata River at Mesopotamia. Spent some time at Mt Peel Church - "Church of the Holy Innocents" now open after shaken about in the Christchurch earthquakes.

Jesse will be well on his way to Bluff by now. I headed back to PN - lots of flooding on the St Arnaud to Blenheim road.



Rest break on Beehive Creek Walkway (note flood debris behind marker pole) [Warren Wheeler]



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PNTMC Newsletter

April 2018

What's inside this month?

- From the President – new logo
- Kahurangi Labour Weekend
- Intro Tramp 3 - Field Hut
- Coal Creek Explorer
- Not Maroepa Forks (Oroua Option)
- Beehive Creek splash
- Tararua Peaks – YTYT tops trip
- Ohau Gorge pool swims
- River Safety Course action
- Helping out Te Araroa SOBOs
- 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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