

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter June 2018



Hi from windy Armstrong Saddle, above Sunrise Hut, Ruahine Forest Park.

[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 a cuppa before start at 7.30pm.

14 June 2018

Overland Track Tasmania

Kathy Corner

The Overland Track is in Tasmania's World Heritage Site listed Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair National Park. Come and hear how Kathy Corner and family survived 7 days in this Australian wilderness including adventures with wombats, wallabies and snakes.

28 June 2018

Trekking Nepal

Jo & Lawrence O'Halloran

Jo and Lawrence spent 43 days in Nepal September/October last year completing 2 treks, first to Annapurna Base cCmp (13 days) and second to Kanchenjunga Base Camp (28 days). A life changing trip, come along and hear their stories.

Upcoming Trips

2 June (Sat)

Beach Walk E
Tina Bishop 06 363 5660

We will head around the estuary to the beach and walk along as far as we feel like then head into the dunes and forest back to my place by 1pm. Meet at my place 8.45 or Milverton Park at 8am if you are sharing a ride. Phone or txt 027 480 3342.

9-10 June

Neill Forks Hut M/F
Craig Allerby 323 7913

This trip will be postponed due to injury unless someone else takes over as leader. A good Tararua walk in from Mt Holdsworth via Totara Flats or from Walls Whare via Cone.

10 June (postponed to 29 July)

Mangatote Tramway M
Richard Lockett 323 0948

A visit to the Mangatote Scenic Reserve situated on the western side of the Tongariro National Park alongside State Highway 4. Our aim is to explore the route of the old Mangatote tramway through regenerating bush on the terrace above the Mangatote River. May end up being a bit of a bush bash but no big hills to climb. Depart 7.30am from Milverton Park.

16-17 June

Oroua Valley Applied Tramping E/M
Janet Wilson 329 4722

A chance for our club to do the monthly rebait of the Oroua Valley traps lines – would be great if some of the experienced volunteers could step up and help here. I will also be doing an introductory trapping trip for anyone new to traps who might be interested to help in the future. If there is enough interest we can get through most of it on the Saturday and have a social gathering/BBQ at our Peterson Rd shed. Other options are overnight to Iron Gate Hut and/or a trip around the Ngamoko tops for those keen on a longer trip. Departure time approx 7.30 am Saturday morning TBC.

17 June

Fern Walk E
Woody Lee 357 2390

[Nicola is now unable to lead this trip]. This is a lovely bush walk in Totara Reserve through tall forest with lots of different ferns, just 15 minutes up the Pohangina Valley from Ashhurst. Depart 8.30am from Milverton Park.

23-24 June (Mid Winter)

Mangatainoka Hot Springs All
Janet Wilson 329 4722

I have never been to the Mangatainoka Hot Springs - its sounds to me like an ideal place to be on a mid-winter evening and our annual mid-winter gathering is a great excuse to go there. It is quite a long drive – can either go up Friday or early Saturday morning depending on who wants to come. I plan to camp at the hot springs but there is the option of Te Puia Lodge if the weather is unkind. The walk in is 2-3 hours. Bring food to share and a good torch. Let me know in plenty of time if you want to come.

30-1 July

Penn Creek M
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Depart 7.30am from PN. The old Penn Creek track from Otaki Forks is tempting on the way back out but we will take the scenic route in via Field Hut and Table Top then down to the Penn Creek Hut – a classic old Forest Service hut that is looked after by VUTC. Chop wood, light fire and chill. And the frosts here are legendary.

1 or 2 July (Best Weather Day)

Otangane Loop M
Anne Lawrence 357 1695

Since the Otangane Loop was officially opened in 2016, it has become a popular route, particularly good for bad weather days when the tops are unappealing but you still want to get a decent walk with plenty of variety. We follow the Sledge Track through Harding's Park but diverge at the turn to Toetoe Loop. It's a short climb to Pukenaenae (aka the Nipple) - a good spot for views on a clear day - then back down to complete the loop. We'll leave from Milverton Park at 8am.

7-8 July

Top Maropea M
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

This cosy little Ruahines hut should be interesting to get to, with some snow likely above Sunrise Hut, although I do not expect we will need ice axes and crampons. Depart PN 7.30am.

8 July

Branch Road Walkway E
Janet Wilson 329 4722

A nice walk up an old benched track just north of Pohangina township to enjoy a bit of

exercise and wintry views of the Ruahine Ranges. Leave from Milverton Park to meet up at my place and finish back there with hot homemade soup.

11 July (Wednesday)

Snowcraft 1 Intro and Briefing

Dieter Stalman 027 450 9460

For participants and instructors. See Notices.

14-15 July

Snowcraft 1

Dieter Stalman 027 450 9460

See Notices below for details. Please book early.

15 July

Rangiwahia

E/Family

Doug Strachan

353 6526

“You can hardly call yourself a proper Club member until you have been to Rangī, and who wants to be improper?” (May 1975 PNTMC newsletter). This is a terrific, easy tramp suitable for families. Any kids coming should get some snow boots from The Warehouse (They’ve probably out-grown any they had last winter). The carpark, bridge and even the toilet all have interesting stories to tell. I can 100% guarantee that if you come on this trip you will get a stunning view of Mt Ruapehu and/or a snowball in the back of the head.

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/>

Trip Grading

Trip grades depend on many factors, especially weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient trapper 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.

From the President

No news is good news [Ed.]



*Janet has flown away this month.
[photo Woody Lee]*

Notices



Snowcraft 2018 Programme

Learn safe mountaincraft skills with us this winter.

Why put aside your tramping boots just because it's winter and there is snow on the top of the local ranges?

Have you been wanting to do some South Island tramping that involves crossing snow covered passes?

Do you want to learn the skills of basic snow and ice climbing using the correct equipment?

Learn new skills or upgrade your current ones by enrolling in PNTMC's Snowcraft Instruction programme.

14-15 July

The Basics - Snowcraft 1 (SC1)

Enjoy the alpine snow slopes? Are you confident that you understand the special requirements of travelling safely on snow?

Learn to confidently walk on snow, use an ice axe, cut steps and use crampons. What if I fall? Master self arresting and more ...

28-29 July

Building on the Basics - Snowcraft 2 (SC2)

Learn the important skills of rope work, anchors, belays and the basics of snow and ice climbing. Begin the rudiments of alpine climbing and avalanche awareness.

11-12 August

Alpine Climbing - extend your skills - Snowcraft 3 (SC3)

Get a more complete set of skills for alpine climbing. Practice makes perfect. Tackle the

snow slopes, glaciers and peaks. Prepare yourself for the magic of the Southern Alps.

Interested?

Each level is a prerequisite for the next. However, some participants may find completing SC1, or the first two levels, adequate for their intended outdoor activities. Others may want to advance through SC3 and beyond. Some may wish to do SC1 this winter and SC2 next winter, or refresh their skills. Some people with previous snow or alpine experience may enter at SC2.

Note that on the Wednesday preceding each weekend there will be an Intro and Briefing / Ropework Evening held at the Quakers Hall, 227 College St, PN.

Costs for each weekend

The fee covers weeknight venue, transport (if required), gear hire, accommodation for Friday and Saturday nights and instruction. Meals will be your own responsibility.

Members \$90

Non-members \$100

(Deduct \$25 if using your own transport).

For more information on costs etc please visit our website [Snowcraft](#) page or contact the course organisers Dieter Stalman 027 450 9460, or Grant Christian (06) 354-5843.

Huts and High Places PNTMC Challenge 2018

Huts and High Places Challenge

15 Dec 2017 to 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

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 trampler 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. Please enter your details by the end of the month they are collected so scores are kept up to date.

Points to Date

Elly Arnst continues to stretch her lead in the points table – to find out what she has been doing check out her Autumn Report on pages 12-13 of this newsletter.

Name	Huts	Highs	Bonus	TOTAL
Elly	91	101	20	210.5
Chris T	76.5	79	20	174
Grant	22.5	42.5	15	80
Hannah	27	35.5	5	67.5
Ash	17.5	41	5	63.5
Janet	30.5	13	15	58.5
Warren	20	8	30	58
Graham	22	13.5	15	50.5
Martin	16	11	15	42
Mary	20.5	11	5	36.5
Annett	1.5	30	0	31.5
Kathy	12.5	2.5	15	30
Anne	10	11	5	26

Bruce	6	5	10	21
Dieter	4	2	10	16
Woody	7.5	2	5	14.5
Sally	2	4	0	6
Yvonne	0	4	0	4
Dave	1.5	0	0	1.5

New Members

Welcome to two new members.

Julia Norton is ex-MUAC and looking forward to Snowcraft.

Ernie Cook is a keen trampler from down south who has semi-retired close to family in Pahiatua.

We wish you happy times with us.

Trip Reports

17-18 March 2018

McGregor Biv

Elly Arnst

“Do something that challenges me” was the answer I gave when asked what I like to do every day. I’m wondering why I would say that as I stand halfway down a sheer face on the Broken Axe Pinnacles. This ‘challenge myself’ business isn’t feeling like much fun right now! Well maybe Type 3 fun or 2, definitely not Type 1. The previous section had been a good honest Type 1, waltzing along the knife edge, climbing up, taking in the views. We’d mildly scoffed at the idea of needing to use the bypass, although Chris had offered we could turn back if the final steep descent was too tricky. But here I was. Half-way up, half-way down, half-way is nowhere.

It had been cold and dark and starting to rain when Chris and I arrived at the Holdsworth Road End very late on Friday night. Trying our best not to disturb the other campers, we’d quickly set up a tent in the glow of the car headlights. It was still cold and drizzly when we woke early Saturday morning and sat under the shelter of the boot to eat our breakfast. The Camp Warden came by for a chat and informed us of a couple who were also heading to the 2-bunk biv. Luckily, we had brought another (dry) tent. We caught up with them at the Lodge, wrote our intentions, and headed off to Atiwhakatu.

The air was slightly humid in the valley; the trees protected us from the worst of the drizzle

as we walked the easy track. At Atiwhakatu we parted ways – the other couple off to the Baldy Track, Chris and I up to Jumbo. We powered up Raingauge feeling much fitter and energetic than we had on the Peaks trip! Reaching Jumbo Hut, the cloud was thick, the air cool, and a stiff breeze blowing. I tugged on layers of dry clothes, but rapidly chilled. The hut was empty, but groups began to arrive in dribs and drabs from Atiwhakatu and Powell, and soon the hut was a hive of activity – lunches made, laundry hanging, the fire lit. It took quite some resolve to leave the warmed hut and head out into the cold clag. It was blissfully peaceful though!



Clagged in above Jumbo

Sheltering below the sign to Angle Knob, we'd layered up - the cold biting wind blew straight through us. We were afforded with no breaks in the cloud, so pulled out map and GPS to ensure we were on the right route. Beeping soon let us know we had arrived at Angle Knob – a great feature for highpoint bagging! Quickly convening, we both agreed that it was far too cold and miserable to visit the plane wreck today. We'd head to the biv and try our luck tomorrow. Before long we spied a splotch of colour peeking through the swirling clouds. Six and a half hours – what a leisurely day!

The biv was empty, the other two not yet arrived over Broken Axe, and at this point we weren't sure if they had turned back. However, they showed up about an hour after us, and we spent the rest of the day in the cramped confines of the little orange box, chatting and cooking, until Chris and I relocated to the tent in the howling darkness.

At some point during the night the wind abated and the clag lifted. We crawled out of the tent on Sunday morning to relatively clear skies and sunshine, although the air temperature was still pretty low. The trip to the wreck was

on! Because this was a "Fit" trip, we decided we'd have time to visit the wreck and still go over the Pinnacles. However, having left most of our gear inside the biv overnight, and with the slightly cramped cooking arrangements it was 10am before we departed.



McGregor Biv in the clear on Sunday morning

Soon we regained Angle Knob and turned SW following a light footpad which led us to the top of a slip on the southern side. Taking a look, we decided we could get a good way down the scree, before cutting a line to the right which would place us in the saddle just east of pt1412. It worked a treat. The descent was relatively easy and meant we avoided much of the exposed scrambling and ups and downs of the main spur.



Angle Knob – we descended most of the way down the scree, then cut a line West to re-join the ridge.

Waist high tussock wading (my favourite) proceeded until we began to ascend Shingle Slip Knob. Checking his GPS, Chris located the general direction of the wreck and we began searching. It's not visible from the top, but soon we were on the edge of a steepish bit, twisted metal glinting directly below on the southern slope. Picking our way down, we carefully investigated – spending some time poking around and taking photos, all the while wary of the sharp exposed metal edges.



Shingle Slip Plane Wreck

Back up on Shingle Slip Knob we spied the crosses for the two pilots and stopped to pay our respects before retracing our steps up the hill to our packs. The detour to the wreck had taken us three and a half hours.

Devouring a late lunch, we roughly calculated we'd be walking out in the dark, something we were not averse to, given the ease of the Atiwhakatu Track. Packs on, we headed across the bump of McGregor and on to the Broken Axe Pinnacles.

"We can go back if you like and take the bypass", Chris calls from below me. His long legs had stretched down to the one tiny foothold on the slippery rock face allowing him to reach the narrow dirt strip before the next drop off. I decide I've come too far to go back now - unless the cliff offers no alternate options. Plus, the first descent, the ominous iron ring screwed into the face, the sheer drop,

the ledge shimmy - I wasn't keen to reverse those.



Chris traversing the Broken Axe Pinnacles

Sitting on my bottom, I tried Chris' route, stretching my leg as far as I could, the sole of my boot sliding on the surface.

No grip, no go.

A muddy, tussocky spot to my right is my only feasible option for a descent, so I'm determined to try. I'm hoping the clumps hold. The slippery rock aids the descent of my pack as I lower it down to Chris and head right. The clumps do hold and soon I've joined Chris on the narrow ledge.

The third section involves dropping down a muddy tussock chute. Slippery underfoot, but at least there is vegetation to hang onto. The final drop seems impossible. Left looks muddy and steep, right looks rocky and has more holds, but potentially slippery and troublesome too. Chris goes left. I mull it over, then go left too, but not before shedding my pack again.

Two feet on flat(ish) ground, I look at what we have descended. It's bloody steep! Yep, today I have challenged myself. "We probably should have taken the bypass track", says Chris. *"I don't reckon I'll do that again"*. But I'm sure we will – or worse!



When you ignore sidle tracks you get to descend sections like this!

The rest of the walk along the tops is an easy doddle. The distant clouds lift; we can see the northern summits – the Kings, Adkin, Girdlestone and Dorset Ridge. In the true spirit of high point bagging, we make a quick detour up South King. Middle King is tempting, but we still have a few hours of walking ahead of us yet. By the time we reach the flat, indistinct highpoint of Baldy, the weather has closed in again, the southerly resumed. Spying orange triangles, we embark on the Baldy Track, making good time down to the junction. Turning south, we walk and walk until we are finally forced to switch our head torches. Atiwhakatu Hut sits dark and quiet.

We walk and walk and walk some more, taking turns in front, yet again grateful for the ease of the track.

It's 10pm and 12 hours from the Biv when we finally reach the carpark and pull boots off aching feet feeling weary, challenged, and a great sense of achievement!

**25 April 2018 (Anzac Day)
Diggers Hut
Janet Wilson**

Anzac Day fell on a Wednesday this year so it was a nice treat to go on a mid-week tramp. For a number of years the visit to Diggers Huts on Anzac Day was a regular club trip but due to access issues this dropped off the programme.

This time we accessed the hut via the track off Takapari Rd, taking advantage of 4WD's to make the access to the start easy.

The drive up was fun - the road in quite good condition. The cedar trees and giant cabbage trees up high are always a lovely sight to see.



4WD gives easy access up Takapari Rd.

The first section of the track is relatively flat but excessively boggy - thankfully this improved as we descended to the hut. The last section is a walk down the river for around 15 minutes.

The river showed signs of recent high flooding - near to the hut the river bank was piled with driftwood. It was about a 2 hour tramp and we enjoyed lunch at the hut before retracing our steps - a little slower on the uphill return journey. An enjoyable social walk.



Enjoying the peace at Diggers Hut.

Thanks to Grant and Mark for driving us up there - we were Grant Christian, Mark Le Bas, Graham Peters, Janet Wilson, Richard Lockett, Hedley and Bruce dog.

**4-6 May 2018
Upper Makaroro
Graham Peters**

Unusually for one of Janet's trips, this one coincided with checking and re-baiting some predator traps. We also had some acoustic recorders to put out, mainly on the new biodiversity line that follows an abandoned track from near Aranga Hut to a fork in the river above Upper Makaroro Hut. The intention with these is to determine the range of kiwi in the northern Ruahines.

Friday morning saw Janet and myself with fellow Pohanganian and keen predator trapper

Ian Rasmussen and Bruce the dog head to Woodville to pick up new PNTMC member Ernie Cook before driving to the Sentry Box roadend. Despite the brutal start to the track and the extra weight in our packs with eggs, dried rabbit bait and the acoustic recorders (ARs) we were at the top in 2½ hours. At the track junction Ian and Janet went north towards Aranga doing traps and putting out ARs while Ernie and I went south doing the same past Park's Peak Hut and down the track towards Upper Makaroro Hut.

On the Saturday, after a night with just us in the hut, we all headed north and around past the somewhat derelict Aranga Hut to pick up the bio-diversity line down to the Makaroro River. Fortunately this line is well marked and for the most part good going with just a steep final descent into the river. When this line was put in, solid evidence of kiwi was found so it was hoped the ARs would back this up. The plan was to leave them there and retrieve them a week later on a trip based at No-Mans. Some cutting had been done when the bio-diversity line had been put in and the route was well flagged. For the most part it was good going before the final 200m steep and in some parts loose descent to the river.

The travel to Upper Makaroro was straight forward albeit quite cold for the feet. We were the sole occupants of the hut and we soon had the fire going making life quite cosy. There had been some discussion about some forecast rain overnight and being stuck on the wrong side of the river. If it was essential we could have carried on back to Parks Peak, however common-sense prevailed and we stayed put.



Rest stop in Upper Makaroro.

Light rain in the morning as we headed off meant parkas on but only briefly as we headed back up to Parks Peak Hut re-baiting traps and

picking up the ARs that Ernie and I put out. There were signs of recent occupation at the hut and reading the logbook there had been 7 people staying there. A quick morning tea and we were back at the car by lunchtime.

As a postscript, a kiwi was heard on one of the ARs on the ridge to the Makaroro.

26 May - 2 June 2018 Queens Birthday Coastal Classic Stewart Island Trip Lawrence O'Halloran

We were: Janet Wilson, Graham Peters, Richard Lockett, Warren Wheeler, Grant Christian, Woody Lee, Yvonne van der Does, Sally Hewson, Jo and Lawrence O'Halloran.

Saturday 26 May, Day 1. Some of us (Janet, Graham, Richard and Warren) had left Palmerston North the previous day flying to Queenstown to pick up a rental car and going on to Bluff where we were to be based until our crossing on Monday. The rest of us, aside from Grant, flew out from Palmerston North airport at approx 6.35am to Christchurch. There we had a couple of hours wait in Christchurch airport to refuel on coffee and for some of us to try our first South Island cheese rolls of the trip, before going on to Invercargill arriving at approx 10.30 am. How nice it was to be met at the airport by Warren and Richard with the rental car. On we drove into Invercargill. Given the width of the roads as we approached the CBD, Invercargill appeared quite large and a debate ensued as to its population. Some of us thought it was the equivalent to Palmerston North but others were correct in estimating it to be somewhat smaller around the mid-fifty thousands. We lunched at Meccaspresso – a motorcycle themed cafe including a Vespa in the ladies toilet. *This cafe provided the best cheese rolls of the trip so far.* There was a good classic bike museum which whiled away an hour or so for some of us. We had a good walk around the city centre and the legacy of legendary kiwi motorcyclist and speedster Burt Munroe who lived in Invercargill, soon became obvious. Vintage motorcycles and memorabilia, vintage cars, and Burt Munroe merchandise were much in evidence. We visited the legendary Hayes hardware shop and then it was time for a beer. The Asylum brewery provided this and we were offered a complimentary oyster in the shell with every pint of beer plus free peanuts

and chippies and live music, a couple of us tried the six beer tasting platter. Meanwhile Janet and Graham were freezing but enjoying the Oyster and Seafood Festival in Bluff.

After the Brewery it was off to the Turkish Takeaway for kebabs for tea. Then back to Bluff to our accommodation at a disused oyster factory where beds dormitory-style were arranged on the mezzanine floor. This billet which included power and a hot shower was entirely satisfactory and had at the very reasonable price of \$10 per person per night. Dylan the actual ongoing tenant at our digs was hospitable and gracious considering that he had not been expecting 10 strangers visiting for the weekend!

Sunday 27 May, Day 2. Today was spent exploring Bluff. We walked up to the summit of Bluff Hill from where we wondered if the cloudy white top of Mount Anglem/Hananui on Stewart Island was snow or sun glinting off granite. We then dropped down the Millennium Track and viewed the plane crash memorial and on to Look-out Point and the coastal Foveaux Walkway, finishing up at Stirling Point. We had a delicious lunch at Gallery Cafe and later enjoyed pints of Monteiths Black and supper at the Anchorage wine bar and cafe. Here the extremely generous staff gave us discounted meals because they had to move us off the table and on to the couch for dessert.

Monday 28 May, Day 3. Departure day for our crossing to Rakiura/Stewart Island. For some of us (Janet, Richard, Woody, Sally and Yvonne) this meant an early morning start and flight over. The rest of us decided to chance the ferry which was cheaper and meant we did not have to worry about the 13 kg weight restriction. Happily we were not the ones to require sick bags on the one hour crossing. At the DOC Visitor's Centre in Oban, Richard bought a chocolate kiwi and announced that this would be the prize for the best bird photograph from Ulva Island the following day. On the waterfront the IGA Four Square Store provided all our grocery needs and South Sea Hotel had a nice sunny café with yummy mushroom and cheese scones, honey and pistachio muffins.

Observation Rock offered expansive views and was a short detour on the walk back to our rented house overlooking Thule Bay on Paterson Inlet.

First shared meal: Roast lamb and roasted veggies courtesy of Janet and Graham and home-made daikon kimchee from Woody.

Dessert – eskimo pies, guavas and chocolate ice cream.

After 9pm a number of us set off to go kiwi spotting, a couple of us had red-light head lights to attempt to illuminate but not disturb our nocturnal friends, and off we wandered in the darkness trying to keep as quiet as possible, down to the local playing field which was renowned as a place where one might spot kiwi. It wasn't long before Warren spotted a disturbance in the undergrowth and sure enough it was a kiwi! A relatively large specimen, it poked around in the bushes whilst we gazed on entranced and then it walked across the road in front of us, stopping momentarily to relieve itself! We were rapt how lucky we were to see a kiwi on our first night on Stewart Island, Grant took a photograph of the kiwi scat as evidence of our sighting and we returned jubilant to regale the others back at the house with what they had missed out on.

Tuesday 29 May, Day 4. Today's activity was a day trip to Ulva Island, located about 10 minutes by boat offshore in Paterson Inlet. This island has always been free of browsing possums and deer and is also now rat, stoat, ferret and cat free and is one of New Zealand's few open island sanctuaries. It is how New Zealand used to be and as DOC says it causes many visitors to reset their expectations of NZ bush flora and fauna. Our \$20 return ferry tickets were handwritten leaves from the puheretaiko plant (*Brachyglottis rotundifolia* or muttonbird scrub) which have a soft papery underside and used to be used as Ulva Island postcards.

The ferry master informed us that though it could might only take an hour and a half to traverse all the island tracks it would be very unlikely that we would see many birds if we went at that pace. For the birds we are a mobile food source i.e. the food being the insects we disturb as we walk and if we walk slowly enough or stop they will come to us. So we split up and slowly set out along the various tracks. It was lovely to hear the birdsong and view the intact bush. We saw Weka, Robins, Kakariki, Riflemen, Woodpigeons, Tui, Tomtit, Grey Warbler, Saddleback, Oystercatcher, Blackbirds, and Kaka, Brown Creeper, seagulls, Mallards, little blue penguins, Yellowhead(?), Bellbirds, Silvereye and Fantails.

On our ferry ride back to Stewart Island we were lucky enough to experience a pod of

dolphins swimming around our boat. The ferry master said this happened quite often with different pods. The older bulls of the pod swam around the front of the boat criss-crossing underneath the prow and surfacing intermittently. They appeared to be playing and we certainly appreciated their antics!



Golden Bay at low tide

In the evening we held the photo competition and decided that Graham would be the judge as he did not submit any photographs. Intense lobbying followed but eventually the supreme winner was declared to be Woody with a Stewart Island Robin, he was duly awarded the chocolate kiwi and subsequently the winners in other categories were announced as follows:

Category: Best photo of	Winner
A Weka	Janet
A Weka pecking a boot	Jo
A Weka stealing a sandwich	Grant
A Weka "doing piss all"	Richard
A Robin on a boot	Sally
A Kaka	Warren
Ulva Island Sand	Graham
The group standing on Ulva Island beach ignoring each other.	Janet

The theme of our Ulva Island experience was "New Zealand as it used to be" and the meal that night reflected that with corned silverside (old-style extra salty) with cloves, leeks and cheese sauce, accompanied by lashings of boiled cabbage and created by Jo and Sally. Dessert was apple crumble and hand whipped cream.

A few of us went kiwi spotting again after tea but were unsuccessful.

Wednesday 30 May, Day 5

This morning breakfast from our dining room window we had a lovely view of a full moon setting and even thought we spotted some penguins in the bay. Our day's activity was a walk from Port William Hut back to Half Moon

Bay. A very civilised departure time of 10.30am meant that a number of us had time to have a coffee at the hotel before departing. Our fare to Port William was \$40 per person, very reasonable and discounted due to Janet's negotiating skills. After a pleasant boat trip of approximately 20 minutes we started our walk at 11am finishing at Half Moon Bay at approximately 5pm. Having said that however a few pikers accepted the offer of a lift from a friendly local motorist from Lee Bay, saving a 5km walk along the road. Along the track we viewed historic vestiges of the logging that took place from the 1860's to the 1930's namely a couple of old steam powered log haulers and the remains of a sawmill where workers and their families lived and experienced "great material hardship". We had lunch by the sawmill relics at Maori Beach and had a lovely view of the bay. We continued to be very lucky with the weather, it was cold but clear and sunny and dry. Despite the taxi driver telling us to expect rain after disembarking on Monday we were now having our third dry day. The bush was in good condition but unlike on Ulva Island punui (*Stilbocarpa*) was much less evident most probably because it had been browsed upon by possum. The other contrast with our previous day at Ulva Island was the lack of birdsong - after the cacophonies we experienced at times on Ulva the bush was very quiet. No robins darted around our feet although we did see some wood pigeons and kakariki and heard tui.

After our walk some of us continued on to the hotel whilst others went home to freshen up. We rendezvoused in the hotel bar over beer, cider or mulled wine and whiled away a couple of hours before tea. The food was good and fairly plentiful, the mussels in particular are to be recommended as we looked in wonder at Janet's plate and just how many had been heaped up there. Then after our meal it was time to wander home, have a cuppa and off to bed - a lovely day

Thursday 31 May, Day 6

As today was a free day some of us took the opportunity to start it with a lie in. Then after breakfast we split into individuals or small groups and went our separate ways. The different walks, wanderings, sojourns and routes were too numerous and idiosyncratic to itemise here but included coffees at the hotel, visits to the local Presbyterian church and nearby cemetery and also to Ackers Point and the historic stone cottage, the first European

building to be built on the Island. It was another lovely dry cool but sunny day.

In the evening we enjoyed a delicious Korean meal courtesy of Woody ably assisted by Warren and Richard. We had two options either a vegetable curry or curried sausages both available with two types of home-made kimchi, one fresh and one aged approximately three months. Dessert was pears and custard supreme prepared according to Richard's secret recipe!

After supper we had some fun exchanging "embarrassing stories" i.e. stories of embarrassing incidents that had occurred to us or others tramping or at work.

Friday 1 June, Day 7

Today was another free day so after a leisurely lie in we again split into individuals or small groups and set off to on various different walks except for Richard and Warren who hired mountain bikes (\$31 for four hours) and biked out to Kaipipi Bay. As the "Kai Kart" was open today a number of us had cod and chips from there for lunch and/or coffees and scones from the hotel. In the early evening we had the pleasure of a visit from a friendly kaka, clearly not unused to being fed scraps, who was happy to allow us to gaze admiringly on his plumage and take numerous close-ups.



Kaka on the deck...lovely plumage

Supper was an open affair with Janet and Jo roasting vegetable which some had sans meat/fish and others with blue cod. Dessert was Frozen Danish Blueberry slices and ice cream sandwiches. The red wine flowed freely and we duly toasted Janet for her great organisational skills and generosity in applying them to our benefit in arranging the trip and everything involved in it.

Saturday 2 June, Day 8

Rather sad today as it was our last day on Stewart Island. The weather was fittingly dull

for our final day. Woody, Sally and Yvonne were up and out early for their morning flight back to Invercargill whilst the rest of us who were travelling by ferry had a leisurely breakfast. Then it was off out for final last walks and coffees and potterings and back for lunch, eating whatever was left including the last of the kimchi! Then a clean up and off to the ferry terminal for our 3pm sailing. A lovely smooth crossing and then after disembarking and picking up our packs Jo, Grant and I hopped on a bus back to Invercargill and Janet, Graham, Warren and Richard jumped into the hire car to head back to Queenstown.

What a wonderful trip!

Some pics by Warren Wheeler



Group selfie up on Bluff Hill



Nice day at Port William



Anchor chain at Lee Bay end of Rakiura Track

Huts and High Places Report

The Autumn that Fizzled Out... Elly Arnst

Autumn started off with hiss and a roar, but gradually fizzled into a tramping drought - aided by an early April snowfall and followed by weekends of cold, wet weather in May.

March was a month of traipsing the endless ups and downs of the Tararuas and hence lots of named high points! A headlamp trek into Kime set the tone for much of the season - I'm getting quite an expert at walking in the dark!

After The Peaks came McGregor, Shingle Slip Wreck, and the Broken Axe Pinnacles, which sure were a challenge and yup - that trip finished in the dark!

Easter presented an opportunity to explore up the Matakaitaki and down the D'Urville via David's Saddle. We covered over 100km in relative solitude - just goes to show it's still possible to find quiet routes in busy parks. There was a small amount of smug satisfaction when we were informed of the hoards hiking up the Sabine.

April was back into the Tararuas again with some bog-waddling round the Waiopahu loop on a cold, wet day which delivered no views, but plenty of sludge and finished just on darkness.

Pureora Forest provided an easy post-T42 walk (finishing in the dark). It's not an area I've visited before, but the forest is totally different to what we usually see - ancient and full of birdlife. The walk up to Waihaha Hut follows the river which has carved out amazing canyons and rock formations.

I still saw a lot more huts and high points than people, and quite possibly more hut rodents too!

The Highlights

- Crossing the Tararua Peaks - definitely on the "to do again" list;
- Challenging myself on the Broken Axe Pinnacles;
- Negotiating the walk wire over the Matakaitaki;
- Standing on David's Saddle and being able to see down both the East Matakaitaki and D'Urville Valleys.

The Lowlights

- Bashing though supple jack above the

Waitewaewae slip;

- Freezing boots and a heavy frost in the East Matakaitaki - took 4 hours to thaw my toes out;
- Bog waddling on the Waiopahu loop;
- Yet more tussock wading (off Angle Knob)!

Favourite Hut: Downie - great setting with amazing views and full of character. Not sure Chris was so fond of the hut mouse with its marshmallow poo!

Favourite High Point: Tunui and Tuiti (the Tararua Peaks). So close, yet so far - a somewhat serious climb between.

Worst Hut: D'Urville Hut felt very front country, was not very clean and had an extremely full toilet. The hut mouse was so active that it got relocated outside in the middle of the night!

Worst High Point: Mayo Knob - an indistinctive blimp in the forest with no view. Unsure why it was deemed name-worthy.



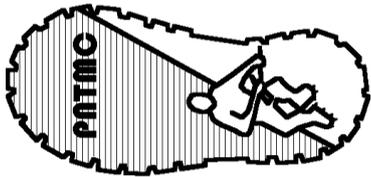
D'Urville Valley from David's Saddle

Poetry Corner

The Mouse in Downie Hut

*The mouse - it ate marshies that turned its poo white,
Crept out to see us in the dead of the night.
The mouse - it grew bolder the longer we stayed,
Until soon it really wasn't afraid.
The mouse - it could climb, what a sight to behold,
It could even "chimney" (or so I was told).
When later I climb the rocky cut,
I think of the mouse in Downie Hut.*

Elly Arnst



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PNTMC Newsletter

June 2018

What's inside this month?

- Snowcraft Course – enrol now !
- McGregor Biv-Shingle Slip Plane Wreck
- Diggers Hut – Honouring Anzacs
- Upper Makaroro – Applied Tramping
- Stewart Island – a Queens Birthday treat
- The Autumn that Fizzled Out
- Poetry – The Mouse in Downie Hut
- 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!

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