

Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc.

www.pntmc.org.nz

P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter September 2018



Up in the snow on Jumbo, Tararua Forest Park.

[Kathy Corner]

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.

13 September 2018

NZ Mountain Film Festival

MUAC

Instead of our programmed club night (Get Out and About with Us, which was to be a night for new members) the Committee have decided it would be a shame to miss the NZ Mountain Film Festival hosted by MUAC on the same night. This event is part of the NZ Mountain Film Festival National Tour with short films from various adventure sports as well as even more important environmental and cultural films to inform and entertain. See notices for details.

27 September 2018

Interclub Photo Competition

Martin Lawrence

Your chance to judge for yourself the crème de la crème of MTSC, MUAC and PNTMC club photo competitions. Hosted by PNTMC this year at Quakers Hall. Come and be inspired.

Upcoming Trips

1 September

Arapuke MTB
Tina Bishop 027 480 3342

A chance to explore the Arapuke Mountain Bike Park and it's many exciting tracks and views, the catch is we will bike up from the start of the gravel on Scotts Road so a reasonable level of bike fitness is required. What tracks we ride will depend on your ability. Please phone or Txt 027 480 3342.

2 September

Beginners to Atiwhakatu E
Kathy Corner 027 618 5722

This beginners tramp is a great one for families and those new to tramping. Atiwhakatu Hut is in the eastern Tararuas near Masterton. It takes 2 to 3 hours to tramp to the hut following the Atiwhakatu Stream. It is a beautiful walk through beech forest. We will have lunch at the hut and return the same way. Meet at Milverton Park at 8am.

8-9 September

Coast Ride MTB
Richard Lockett 323 0948

Ride around the coast from Wharekauhau to Orangaranga at Palliser Bay returning to stay at Corner Creek DOC camp site and with a trip across the Rimutaka Incline Rail Trail from Maymorn Station across to Cross Creek via Tunnel Gully and Summit. 7.30 start from Milverton Park.

9 September

Te Atuaoparapara/Waipawa Loop M/F
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

On a clear day you can see forever (almost) from this high point opposite Sunrise Hut. If the weather does not favour a full Fit loop via Waipawa Saddle we will instead go down the north branch of the Waipawa for a Medium loop. Depart 6.30am.

15-16 September

Ballard Hut, Kawekas M/F
Chris Tuffley 359 2530

Ballard is perched in the northern Kawekas, with scope for visiting nine huts and high points getting there and back. We'll head in via Makahu Spur and along the main Kaweka Range to Ballard, then for extra points come out via Camp Spur and Kaweka Flats. Expect great views of the volcanoes on Saturday in good weather. Leaving Friday evening and spending the night at Makahu Saddle.

15 or 16 September (Best Weather Day)

Mt Ruapehu FE/T
Grant Christian 021 117 6921

From Whakapapa ski field we will head on to Pinnacle Ridge, just past the Pinnacles. We travel along the ridge to the top of Te Heu Heu and then to nearby Tukino. From Tukino we may continue to Glacier Knob before heading down via the ski field. A rope may be desirable for short sections of Pinnacle Ridge.

22-23 September

Iron Gate Hut E/M
Michael Allereby 323 8563

A nice walk up the Oroua Valley through red beech forest with lush under growth and good views of the river below. Spend the night at Iron Gate Hut which sits up on a terrace beside the river. We will also check the stoat traps along the way and may be lucky enough to spot a blue duck, If not there is always other bird life to see.

23 September

Tunupo M/F
Graham Peters 329 4722

Have you tried Applied Tramping yet? We will be rebaiting the Oroua Whio Protection Project trap line up to this peak, which has outstanding 360-degree views of the Ruahines, Ruapehu and more on a good day.

29-30 September

Leon Kinvig or Triangle Hut M/F
Janet Wilson 329 4722

Applied tramping anyone? We will check and rebait the stoat traps on the tracks into either hut. Lovely walks in any case, either into the Pohangina or the Oroua respectively.

30 September

Te Mara Peak M
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

This high point in the Blue Range of the eastern Tararua Forest Park is easily reached via an old ridge track branching off the main Blue Range track to Cow Creek. As views are limited by the bush there we will make a side trip to the cute Blue Range Hut to see what we can see...and bag some points. Meet 7.30am at Milverton Park.

6-7 October

TNP Explorer M
Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Tongariro National Park has endless places to explore. Plan A is to head off on Friday night to stay in the cabins at Tongariro Holiday Park. From there we can go up to explore Ketetahi Hot Springs, North Crater and Te Maari Crater.

Day 2 we could go off the beaten track and climb Pukekaikio and/or Ngauruhoe. Alternatively we could go up Ruapehu. Plan B would be to explore the south side of Ruapehu, possibly staying at Sue's place in Rangataua, near Ohakune. Depends on weather and what group members want to do. We could split up and do a variety of different things too. Just call me.

6 or 7 October (Best weather day)

Mt Ruapehu, Taurangi FE/T
Grant Christian 021 117 6921

A climb to Ruapehu's highest peak along the ridge at the south east boundary of the Turoa ski field. A great place to view the Summit Plateau and Crater Lake on a good day. A rope is not required for this trip.

7 October

Beginners to Sunrise E
Anne Lawrence 0274 504 212

This is the second in our series of Beginner Tramps being held each month until December. Where we go and how far will depend on the group. Suitable for all ages from youth to those getting into tramping later in life.

This second tramp is a day trip to Sunrise Hut. This is on the Eastern side of the Ruahines, approximately 1.5 to 2 hours drive from Palmie. The track is relatively easy but does involve a bit of climbing which are rewarded with good views from the hut. Some of us may carry on to Armstrong Saddle for even better views (this depends on needs, fitness, ability, experience of the group as well as the weather). We'll leave from Milverton Park at 7.30am. Expect to get back to Milverton Park sometime in the late afternoon.

13-14 October

Neill Forks M/F
Craig Allerby 323 7913

Depart 7.30am. The idea is to do this trip in a loop. We will head up the track to Cone Saddle (possible side trip to Cone Hut) then travel along Cone Ridge to Neill Forks Hut. Next day's route is down the Cone Ridge Track to Totara Flats Hut, and out along Totara Flats/ Lower Waiohine Track.

14 October

Herepai and Beyond M/F
Graham Peters 329 4722

A chance to head up into the eastern Tararuas and bag Herepai, Ruapae and East Peak, as well as Herepai Hut along the way. This trip gets us above the bush and into the alpine scrub and tussock tops, with great views on a good day.

How far we go will depend on the group and the weather.

Trip Grading

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

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs
Other grades:	
Technical skills (T)	
Instructional (I)	

Trip participants

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

Gear for trips

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

Personal Locator Beacons – Free for trips

The club has 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
Anne and Martin Lawrence	357-1695
Graeme Richards	353-6227

Notices

13 September - NZ Mountain Film Festival

Instead of our programmed club night on 13 Sept (Get Out and About with Us - a night for new

members) the Committee have decided it would be a shame to miss the NZ Mountain Film Festival hosted by MUAC on the same night.

Time: Doors open 6:30pm, show starts at 7pm

Location: Social Sciences Lecture Block, Massey University (a map of where to go is on their Facebook)

Tickets: Pre-sale tickets are \$15 and can be purchased by emailing socialrep@muac.org.nz, door sale tickets are \$20.

Supper will be provided.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

From the President

It's been a busy "Whio" month for me so just a quick report. This month your committee revisited the idea of replacing the open fire in Mid Pohangina Hut with a small wood fire. It is a project I am very keen on and we have agreed to investigate this idea further - to get some plans, permissions and prices. If this goes well we would apply to the Backcountry Trust for funding towards this project. If you have any thoughts about this please get in contact with myself or our committee.

Congratulations to this month's photo competition winners – and good luck as they go through to the FMC competition.

Happy Tramping Everyone
Janet



Mid Pohangina Hut

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.

Points for 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

Bonus points for 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 Rangitoto Hut (Committee Challenge)
- Bring a new tramping gear 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.

Points to Date

Not a lot of change again this month – read all about Elly's Winter Wanderings on page 12-13.

Name	Huts	Highs	Bonus	TOTAL
Elly	100.5	107.5	20	228
Chris T	84.5	87.5	20	192
Grant	26.5	49	15	90.5
Warren	29.5	18	30	77.5
Hannah	27	35.5	5	67.5
Janet	35.5	14	15	64.5
Ash	17.5	41	5	63.5
Graham	25.5	15	15	55.5
Kathy	25.5	4.5	15	45
Martin	17	12	15	44
Mary	20.5	11	5	36.5
Annett	1.5	30	0	31.5
Anne	11	12	5	28
Woody	14	4	5	23
Bruce	6	5	10	21
Dieter	4	2	10	16
Sally	3.5	4	0	7.5
Yvonne	0	4	0	4
Dave	1.5	0	0	1.5

PNTMC Jubilee Book

Old Boots & Packs - The First 50 Years of the Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club (PNTMC) will interest and amuse mountain users, historians, photographers, hut baggers and tree huggers. Read about current and past members' exploits, which include climbing our highest peaks (sometimes with boots on the wrong feet) and powering a car on white spirits cooking fuel.



Order your copies directly from the editor Doug Strachan 353-6526 and get ready to put your feet up with this great read, all for only \$35.

PNTMC Hut Bagging Posters

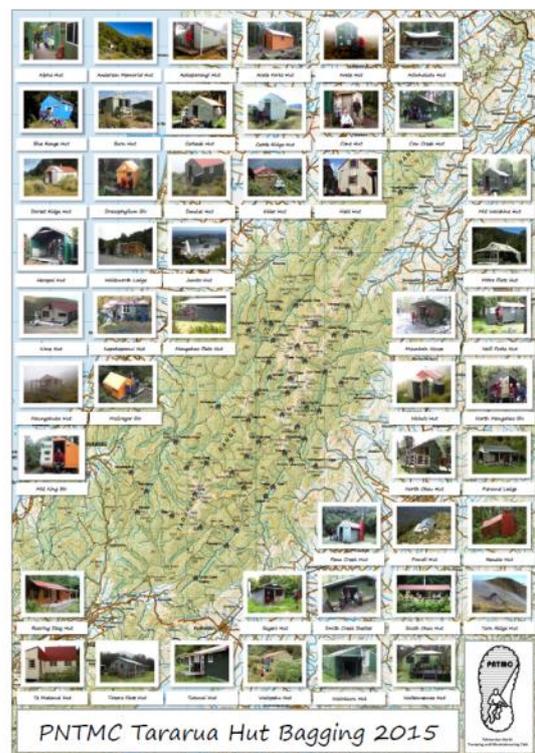
Posters are still available for both the Ruahine Hut Bagging 2012 and Tararua Hut Bagging 2015.

Size	Members	Non Members
A2	\$8	\$12
A1	\$16	\$24

Post and tube is about \$15 extra depending on where it is being sent.

Sale proceeds go towards our maintenance of the Mid-Pohangina Hut and Ngamoko Hut in Ruahine Forest Park.

Contact Warren 356-1998.



Trip Reports

16-17 June 2018 Applied Tramping in the Oroua Valley Janet Wilson

Sorry this trip report is a little overdue. The idea of this trip was to give interested people a go at rebaiting traps while out enjoying a tramp. I was a little underwhelmed at the initial response but it came together well on the day with a lot of last minute volunteers.

Here is an excerpt from the August "Ruahine Whio News" newsletter.

June - 3 stoats and 21 ra's

On the 13th June another huge weather event hit the Oroua River, resulting in flows larger than cyclones Debbie and Cook the previous year. The access track was badly hit with slips and the area around the bridge looked pretty devastated when we walked down there on the 16th. It would have been impressive to see the rivers in full flow - this photo shows a log on top of a large rock at the confluence of Umutoi Stream and the main river. Unfortunately I suspect many more traps along the river have been lost - the lower river area is much changed.



High and dry after June flood in Oroua River.

The June rebait on the 16th was a PN Tramping and Mountaineering Club "Applied Tramping" trip combined with a general training weekend for new volunteers. Unfortunately I don't have any photos but there was a really good turnout. The line to IGH was a combined effort with experienced trappers Ian Rasmussen, Richard Lockett and myself with new trappers Tamara Friedmann (DOC) and Grant Christian. Graham P went with Ernie Cook and William Mundford up to the top of Tunupo. Bryan Charlton did the campsite line while installing a new toilet sign to help people find the campsite loo (yes there is one down there!).

5 August 2018 Waitare Beach and Forest Walk Anja Scholz

As there were 11 (eleven!) of us, and with me struggling to remember some of the names (oh, the joys of getting older) after a long break in tramping with the Club, here for starters are the labels given to the members of our troupe: Cathy, Pam, Sally, Jo, Janet, Robbie, Ewen,

Woody, Graham, Warren and Anja. Oh, and Bruce the dog.

Setting off at the winter friendly time of 8:30am from Palmy, we hit Waitare Beach where grey receding waters met grey skies which however held off the rain for most of trip.

The sand was nice and firm to walk on, and thus the female contingent race-walked ahead. Mainly because Cathy, clad in her summer shorts, reckoned a brisk pace would warm her up. There was only a smattering of other people, the occasional dog, and not a whole lot of wildlife about. A few gulls sailed lazily under the wind, and some oyster catchers caught our eyes but no oysters.

Most intriguing (at least Bruce thought so) was a young seal that had come ashore for a Sunday nap, and was not particularly amused to be Instagrammed (or maybe we just took photos, and the social media fame is yet to materialize). Bruce, while curious, held his distance – obviously being bitten, or even breathed upon, by a seal seemed to curb his sniffing about.



Seal posing on the beach.

A bit later on, a dead cow among the driftwood again held heightened attraction for the canine nostrils, but on Janet's insistence he gave in and did not roll in it.

In about one and a half hours we arrived at the Manawatu River Mouth, and some of us went a bit further to 'check out Foxton' on the other side. The other (lazy) half waited at the spot where 'dunes meet forest' (i.e. the two big white triangle markers) and shortly after we all ducked into the pine forest. Nice soft spongy pine needle ground was good to walk on, and the keen mountain bikers among us envisioned coming back some day with their two wheeled appendages for a spin.



Lunch stop in Waitare Forest

We hit the main drag, i.e. 'Route 13', and the clock struck lunch time a short while later. Fortified by sandwiches, muesli bars, chocolate etcetera, Janet challenged us to a game of 'hit the target with a pine cone', and given our combined inability to precisely under- or overarm aim a cone in the right direction, this challenge occupied us for some time. Finally, Warren nailed the target stick, we left an embarrassing mountain of pine cones scattered around the site, and carried on.

Soon after, however, Route 13, once a proud main trading route through the Waitare Forest, from North to the very South, degenerated into an abandoned, windfall ridden bog. Lo and behold, we are a tramping club, not a walk in the woods club, and dodged trees, side winded (wound?) our way through the undergrowth, stepped gingerly across rotten logs and swampy bogs (to no avail: many had donned sneakers for this walk, and now had to contend with wet feet), and occasionally found overgrown remains of Route 13 – somewhat less imposing than finding remains of ancient civilizations, but so what. The more South we ventured the more bogs and ponds we discovered, so in the end one half of the troupe mutinied and bush and dune bashed back to the beach for a return to the cars, while the other half stoically ventured on and ended their walk with a sightseeing trip through a new subdivision.

All made it back to the start, but only some got to sample the "two for the price of one" pies at the Beach Café afterwards, and do a quick drive through a maze of new subdivisions adjacent to the forest. We could not find the starting point of the "Great Forest Run" but had visions of getting lost there, forever cruising the sights of lifestyle blocks. Graham eventually managed to escape, though, and we headed back home. Thanks to Janet for a good winter outing with a bog.

12-14 July and 11-12 August 2018 Snowcraft 1, 2 & 3 Elly Arnst

Malcolm told me on good authority that mountaineering is awesome: after attending his Thursday night talk on the Southern Alps I'd be inspired, and upon completing the PNTMC snowcraft (SC) courses I'd be hooked. I eyed him sceptically, being a self-confessed cold wimp, not completely comfortable with heights, and terrified of falling.

Snowcraft 1

SC1 attracted a collection of people from all over the North Island from Auckland to Wellington, Palmerston North and Whanganui. The more local of us met for the Wednesday night instruction session, where we were greeted by Grant with a large collection of sharp implements, and Dwight with a handful of screwdrivers. Crampons sized, ice axes and helmets issued, we were armed, dangerous, and hoping the weather would play nice for the weekend.

It half did. Saturday was a mostly warm, sunny day in the sheltered valleys off the side of the Whakapapa ski field. Sunday however, was a different story altogether!

We flocked to the Central Plateau on Friday night, the large number of us (4 instructors plus 14 students) combined with school holidays meant an accommodation shortage, and we were housed in several places. Converging outside the Tussock Tavern early on Saturday morning, we snaked our way up the Bruce Road, obtaining parking spaces not too far from the top.



Grant Instructing on SC1, Day 1 [Emma O'Loughlin]

Walking into the MTSC hut, we slipped and slid around – grateful for the ice axes doubling as walking poles. Snow conditions were somewhat soft, which made for a gentle introduction to self-arresting, but was less than ideal for cramponing, and even worse for climbing up steeper slopes without crampons (there was a fair bit of slipping and sliding involved)!

We really were a diverse bunch of enthusiasts, ranging from some with little outdoor experience, through to trampers, snowboarders, and those who were keen to climb up and slide down anything. I must give full credit to our instructors – Grant, Dieter, Dwight, and Graeme – who were patient with all of us no matter what our abilities and apprehensions. Practising self-arresting was definitely the most challenging aspect. It was a completely unnatural feeling for me to be pushed head first, down a slope – too much like falling for my liking. Most of us came away fairly unscathed, and I have since been informed that the subsequent bruises on my collarbone meant I was doing it correctly!

Once the crampons went on, I found my feet and I was off. Grant ran us through the composition of snow layers, snow caves, and avalanche risks, before leading us on a guided tour across the ski field and back to the carpark. We descended once again upon the now open Tussock Tavern to be warmed by drinks and spicy wedges.

The Sunday forecast was less than ideal, but everyone was keen to hit the slopes again, so with plans made for the following morning, we dispersed to our accommodations.

The meteorologists were accurate in their forecasting. It didn't seem so bad when we all met in Ohakune, but the predicted winds were blowing strongly when we reached the Turoa carpark. Watching numerous 'incidents' on the icy asphalt, it was with some reluctance that I finally exited the vehicle (yep, this cold wimp left it 'til the last possible moment). I couldn't understand why anyone would be keen to venture out in such weather, but it was a great first-time experience for some and after a brief stint on the slopes all returned to the warmth of the café, bemoaning its excessively overpriced coffees.

The weekend was enjoyed by all, and we departed with new friends and enthusiasm for the upcoming snowcraft weekends.



Braving the wind on Turoa SC1, Day 2 [Dieter Stalmann]

Snowcraft 2 and 3 Combined

Two weeks later, the weather was even less kind, resulting in postponement of SC2 to the following fortnight, where weather permitting, it could be combined with SC3. By this point I'd suffered a decent bout of a cold virus and was feeling very uninspired and even considered not attending. Numbers were much lower for this weekend and I knew Chris R (also a Malcolm recruit) needed a climbing partner, so I psyched myself into it, learnt how to tie the necessary knots and hitches courtesy of YouTube, and turned up at the agreed location on Friday evening. And was I glad I did – it turned out to be a fantastic weekend!

With reduced numbers, we all squeezed into Sue's house at Rangataua on beds, mattresses, the couch, and in tents. Before long Bruce had us all wearing harnesses and perfecting our rope skills - although none of us could quite master Dwight's single-handed hitch.

Forecast for a bluesky weekend, we were up before the sun, yet still got caught in a long line of cars crawling up to Whakapapa, obtaining spots not long before the carpark closed.

Six students and five instructors (Bruce, Grant, Dieter, Dwight and Malcolm) dodged skis, poles, and snowboards, heading off to the quiet of the southern valleys. Snow had retreated from the previous month, but conditions were much icier, making for perfect cramponing conditions.

Bruce soon had us practising our traversing, front pointing, turning, and descending. We spent most of the morning walking up and

down slopes of increasingly steeper gradient, making sure we were comfortable with our crampons before the ropes came out.



It's easy to climb up steeper slopes once the crampons and ice axe come out, SC2 [Dieter Stalmann]

"Never stand on the rope!", was the reinforced golden rule, and a good one at that. Harnesses on and our practised knots deployed, we were soon in our pairs, perfecting our climbing and belay techniques on gentle slopes, which rapidly progressed onto installation of pickets and snow stakes. We moved onto multiple pitches on easy, then moderate slopes, where I got my first taste of abseiling. I confess it was a bit nerve wracking at first, but under the encouragement of Dieter and Dwight, and the patience of my climbing partner Chris R, I climbed back up for several more goes.

Four of the six of us (Julia, Mike, Chris R and I) were keen to progress onto SC3 on Sunday, so after another 6am wake-up, we found ourselves in a valley to the side of Turoa with one instructor each! Bruce, Grant, Dwight, and Dieter rotated between us throughout the day and it was great to get different experience, perspectives, and senses of humour from all of them. We conducted a couple of pitches on a short but steeper section, compounding our knowledge of belaying and putting in snow stakes from the day before, as well as the use of rock slings.

Moving higher up the mountain, we crossed the ski lane before finding a relatively quiet valley where only a few good skiers, one near-miss skier, and one obnoxious snowboarder ventured.

Here we once again set up for a multi-pitch climb, which started off relatively gentle, but got steeper and a bit tricky (for me) just under the top. Snow conditions were soft and slippery and I found myself sliding a bit as I led the final pitch. My fear of falling willed me to bail, but Dwight reminded me to stop, breathe, and be calm. I scrambled over the ledge. It wasn't long before we all congregated on the top and Bruce had us lined up to abseil back down. I wasn't too keen after my climb up, but Bruce astutely called me out. "You're next Elly...otherwise you'll just stand there stewing" (or words to that effect). And soon enough I found myself at the bottom of the valley – the whole experience actually quite fun and not scary at all!



Preparing to abseil back down the slope at Turoa, SC3 [Dieter Stalmann]

Lunching in the sun, as several brave skiers flew past, we chatted outdoor topics from tramping to climbing, trips undertaken, and trips planned. Then it was onto our final lesson for the day - building snow bollards. These horseshoe-shaped grooves proved to create a strong anchor point despite the soft snow conditions and the weight of several people tugging the rope as hard as possible.

Wandering back to the carpark, we all agreed we'd had a fantastic weekend out, learnt heaps, and were keen to experience more. I'm not sure any of us were feeling brave enough to try out Grant's Pinnacle trip, but Chris R and I have definitely taken up Bruce's advice to get out and practise, practise, practise as the best way to learn.

I confess I'm still a cold wimp, still not great with heights, and still terrified of falling. Yes Malcolm was right – I am inspired, but am I hooked? Let's just say: I've bought an ice axe, 'New "crampons" listings matching your saved search' are delivered to my inbox daily from Trade Me, and I've spent the last three weekends on the slopes.

If you've ever thought about doing a Snowcraft course (or even if it's never crossed your mind), give it a go – you won't be disappointed and you may even find yourself...hooked!

18-19 August 2018
Powell Hut (No Go) - Plan B (Jumbo)
Kathy Corner

The forecast for Saturday was rain and minus 9 at Powell Hut due to the wind chill, however the forecast for Sunday was fine, but still cold.

Lucy and I met up with my friend Mary who lives 8 kms from the Mt Holdsworth Rd end. We sat by her warm fire chatting, drinking coffee, and looking at the rain. I could see Mary was wavering. She had not been tramping with an overnight pack for a while as she had been teaching in Oman for a few years. Also, she was concerned about her knees. And of course, the weather! So, I made up a Plan B - stay at Atiwhakatu Hut, and then take a day pack up to Jumbo Hut. Mary finally was persuaded.

We didn't start walking until midday, and Mary's partner joined us for an hour with his two beautiful Labradors. We stopped for lunch by the river and then walked across the bottom of the slip where DOC have formed a new track. Last time I did this walk DOC had formed a track across the slip at the top. The new track was a much better option.

We arrived at the hut to find a Latvian lady and her partner trying to light the fire with wet wood. I tried closing the door of the stove and the fire took off – yeh! Later a family arrived with their 3 year old and 6 year old, both walked all the way. The father was definitely

the donkey carrying a HUGE pack including pillows!

We played speed scrabble and cards, then ate a chicken, satay and mushroom dish (my creation!) followed by steamed pudding and custard, accompanied by a few glasses of wine. I cooked way too much rice so when 3 young people arrived after dark I offered them the rice and they were happy to add it to their rice risotto.

It's a steep climb up to Jumbo Hut and it took us just over the scheduled 2 hours. Lucy was very excited to see snow as we approached the bush line, taking numerous photos. Jumbo Hut had wonderful views and was amazingly busy with through traffic - trail runners doing the Powell-Jumbo loop, a group who had stayed at McGregor, a group of 7 from Wellington who had met up for the tramp through the website Meetup, and the 3 from Atiwhakatu who arrived late the night before.

Lucy and I decided to climb Jumbo Peak as others said it wasn't too icy, so we donned all our layers and headed up with some other trampers. What a fantastic view from the top – I felt on top of the world. One knowledgeable chap pointed out all the peaks to us. However we did not linger as it was windy and pretty cold.



Icicles on Jumbo

It was an uneventful climb down, we picked up the remainder of our gear from the hut and walked out at a fast pace. The track appeared incredibly easy after the Jumbo track, it's a walk in the park! No wonder it's a good introductory tramp. Lucy was able to tick off her first tramp and peak in the Tararuas and be in snow and ice. Mary discovered she could manage the steep ascents and descents with the help of a bit of Voltaren Gel!

Thanks for your company and a great weekend. We were Lucy Hong, Mary Conlley and Kathy Corner.



Lunch stop by the river

19 August 2018 Paekakariki Escarpment Walkway Warren Wheeler

Just me and Sue enjoyed perfect weather
At Paekakariki a new route starts at the cafes
Across the rail tracks and through bush
Beside the highway then footpath to bridge.

Sign warning Track Closed due to slip
Yes well, let's have a look.
Volunteer planting seedlings allayed any fears
Old sign, best ignored, needs removing.

Popular walk on such a nice day.
Walkers and runners met along the way.
Southwards seems best, sun on back,
Fewer steps up, Kaikouras view from track.

A sunny lunch spot above the coast relaxing
A pleasant three hour walk, a train trip back
Makes a delightful excursion and time to spare
Hello there's a Vegan Expo.

Get Out and About with Us a must !



Pukerua Bay coming up around the bend.

25 August 2018 Not Hector and Kime Catherine Jackson

Both MetService and Norwegian 'Year-nah' colluded in gross deception predicting a delightfully fine weekend, and spirits were high. Ernie had arrived with winter-morning rosy cheeks and a smile, and everything had been quickly bundled into the car to be away for a pleasant drive down to Otaki Forks car park.

We were off to the bridge at 5 to 9, with two enormous pairs of boot prints preceding us across the dewy grass. Ernie set a youthful pace up the clay track, and initially the sun tinkled down, but through the steep rootlety bush it turned dour and gloomy. A lone grey warbler was heard near the 1½ hour slimy seat. The rain that had fallen all week had been liberally applied to the usual muddy areas, and it was a relief to reach colourful Field Hut, half glowing under a watery sun. Water bottles were refilled and there was a coffee for one of the crew just above the bushline at the first view. Beyond the lightly waving tussock, the silvery light on the river far below drew the eye down the valley and out to the shining sea with its clean, curved shoreline. Snow-breath twisted over the big tops to the northeast.

Moving on, a soft cap of mist could be seen just tipping Dennan, the little knobby hill that is sidled round, while Bridge Peak itself was found to be shrouded in deep, thick glub. There was some murmuring amongst the troops. It looked very settled. Tabletop was covered in speckled snow, and toiling on up the slope of Dennan the snow deepened. When the wolf started knocking at the door a snowy corner out of the wind was chosen to eat lunch on the hoof, pondering one of life's mysteries of how cheese definitely put into the pack in town can then no longer be in the pack (hum hum).

Setting out again the snow gradually worsened, with "gifts" slithering down on us off the scrub. At the little view-scoops between the small hillocks, where one can normally catch a glimpse of the Kaikouras, veiled layers of rain or even snow were falling to the south and rapidly advancing, with the sky beyond being a deep artistic indigo colour. Eventually the snow became knee deep. The two giants ahead had provided marvellous foot-holes thus far, but now they had resorted to the 'lighter option' of shattering the snow on the large

track-side *Astelia nervosa*. It started snitting (snow-spitting). An unfriendly wind whipped across the misted out slope.



Bridge Peak shrouded in glubb.

Two hours from Field, with no view to look at, the watch was inspected for a bit of variety, and progress was found to be half normal speed due to conditions. A decision was needed - hours of misty slog lay ahead. We would turn around. Crunching, squelching and slithering back down along the track, anti-disappointment tablets were swallowed with mouthfuls of proverbs and maxims. 'Discretion is the better part of valour...' 'Better to live to do it another day than box on...' The tablets were proving large and hard going...

Down at Tabletop again however, a bright burst of sunshine brought out the sweetness in the scenery and a stop was made for afternoon tea. Sun gleamed in the Demerara coloured tussocks poking out of the snow, glinted in the leatherwood leaves and poured unexpected glowballs of light into the picturesque twirls of mist rising up out of the valley to the north, and the dark layers of mountains beyond. There was even a little rainbow, looking towards Winchester. Optimistic thoughts began to unfurl in the sun - we could stay at Field Hut and begin again tomorrow... On reaching the hut there were sufficiently large numbers of small colourful shoes by the door and tattooed adults smoking unusual-smelling roll-your-owns for a fairly easy decision which saw us rattling back to the car ending an 8 hour workout. A fabulous deep orange sunset ball rewarded us on the drive out.

Next day, on a consolation nippy nip along the beach (1°C!) the Tararuas were glubbed out to the waist until lunch time. Hah!

We were Ernie Cook and Catherine Jackson.

Poet's Corner

Kime to Go

*Kime Hut in the snow,
Mount Hector 'neath full moon glow,
Should be great, Warren said,
Sorry I can't go!
Up the track we slowly crawled
Somewhere near Dennan we finally stalled
Two hours further at this pace
We turn around our steps retrace
A night at Field briefly pondered
Thru the windows children peer
Smell of cannabis in the air
Off down the track we wandered.*

Anon (aka Ernie Cook – Ed.)

Winter Wanderings

Winter Wanderings (In Snow, By Headlamp) Elly Arnst

Second day of June, second day of winter and Chris and I had already hit the hills (thanks to the Queen). We were under the impression that the Kawekas were easy travel, but after three and a half days, 58km and 4751m of elevation gain - I can tell you those hills are not to be scoffed at! Descending on wet clay is a different challenge altogether - as my bruised hip can attest. Inclement weather kept the hoids away, and once again huts were empty.

I must say that the huts were predominantly in good nick, and we were fortunate enough to spend every night overheating in front of a wood burner. While the huts might be well maintained, the tracks were often sporadically marked - not an issue unless it's dark, windy, wet, and freezing cold, and you're on featureless tops struggling to locate the next pole or cairn. Do not underestimate the value of a powerful torch! We were pretty happy to reach Manson Hut.



Old Manson Hut – musty, fungi, rats!

The theme of snowy darkness continued with a Friday night trip into Triangle Hut. Albeit much more pleasant this time under a nearly full moon (no headlamps required) and barely a breath of wind. Snow conditions were perfect, crispy powder, just deep enough to fill up the muddy ruts on track down to the hut - making the descent much nicer than usual.

The weather was blustery again the following weekend and we were grateful for the protection of the leatherwood corridor from Opawe Road to Kiritaki Hut. Darkness fell as we were clambering around in the stream bed, contemplating if we'd travelled far enough downstream to re-join the track. Thankfully the sign emerged and a lamp-lit traipse up the hill ensued.

I used to be a bit of a cold-wimp, actually I probably still am, but I must concede that there is nothing better than an energetic mid-winter tramp to a cosy hut with a good firebox.

Mid-July saw the beginning of the Snowcraft courses. More walking in the snow, but this time during daylight hours only – no headtorch required. The weekend weather (and my cough) took a turn for the worst at this point, resulting in another mid-season tramping drought. However, a month later we were afforded with a stunning bluesky weekend, providing the perfect opportunity to complete Snowcraft 2 and 3 consecutively.

The following two sunny calm Sundays in August were spent traipsing up the Mangatepopo Valley. Our first attempt to Tongariro via the south ridge was abandoned due to hard icy conditions, but a week later we were back and this time successful. We even managed to break the darkness tradition by arriving at Mangatepopo Hut before sunset, departing after sunrise, and returning to the car at a very respectable hour – it must nearly be Spring!

The Highlights

- Back Ridge Hut: my 100th hut;
- Crossing the Ngaruroro River via cableway;
- Moonlight meander into Triangle through perfect powder;
- Summitting Tongariro on a clear day in crisp cramponing conditions.

The Lowlights

- Dark freezing cold on Manson Tops;
- Super slippery clay in and out of Kiwi Mouth;
- Fingers freezing inside gloves while trying to relocate the Triangle track in snowy darkness.

Favourite Hut: Rocks Ahead Hut: a stunning setting on the Ngaruroro River complete with both three-wire, cableway and biv across the river (not that you'd want to stay there!).

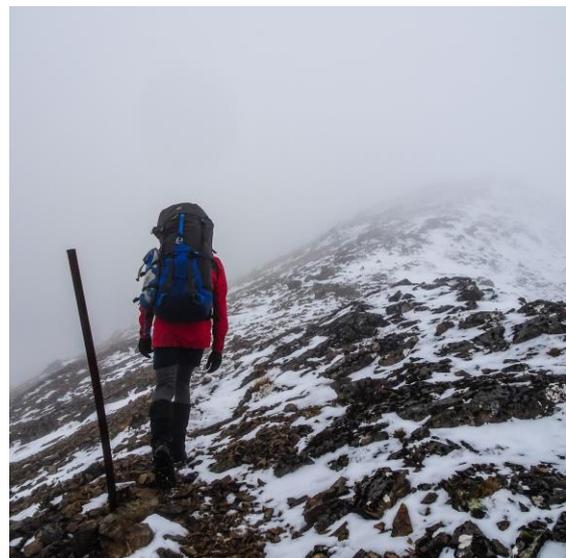
Favourite High Point: Tongariro – 360° views of mountains and lakes, picturesque ice formations and corniced edges, and relatively devoid of people.

Worst Hut: Rocks Ahead Biv had serious mould issues, or possibly Old Manson - a very interesting hut but it leaks, has a dirt floor with a fungi carpet, and quite the rat population.

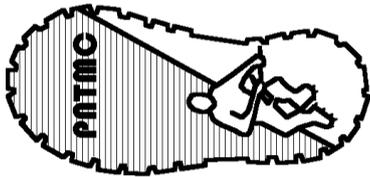
Worst High Point: they were all easy to get to, but Matanginui was by far the windiest, and had several non-nocturnal, possums hissing at us from the middle of the track.



Cableway across the Ngaruroro River



Cold on Kaweka tops.



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PNTMC Newsletter September 2018

What's inside this month?

- From the President – upgrade Mid Poh
- Applied Tramping in Oroua Valley
- Waitare Beach and Forest Walk
- Snowcraft 1, 2 and 3 - enjoyed by all
- Powell no go - Jumbo in snow
- Paekakariki Escarpment – perfect day
- Not Kime and Hector – report and poem
- Winter Wanderings by Elly Arnst
- 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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