



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

www.pntmc.org.nz
P.O. Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter February 2020



On January 9th, 2020, Terry Crippen passed away. This pic is of Terry on one of the many snowcraft courses he instructed. See inside this newsletter for tributes to Terry.

Club Nights

Club nights are held on the second and last Thursday of the 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. All welcome.

13 February

Navigation for Beginners

Warren Wheeler

Where are you going? How do we get there? Are we there yet? These and other questions will be answered with the help of map and compass, GPS and other high tech apps.

27 February

Cape to Cape, WA

Anne and Martin Lawrence

Very different to tramping in the Ruahines or Tararuas! The Cape to Cape walk included walking along beaches, through eucalypt forests, exposed cliff tops, fantastic views, as well as stops for coffee, gelato and beer. Come along to hear more.

Upcoming Trips

1-2 February

Maungamahue Camping **M**
Elly Arnst **022 682 3136**

We will take the less commonly used Mania Track onto the Whanahuia Range and camp by one of the many tarns - either in the saddle or below Maungamahue. Return same way. Depart 07:30.

2 February

Ohau Gorge **E/M**
Warren Wheeler **356 1998**

This is a relatively easy gorge trip suitable for beginners keen for an adventure. It will be interesting to see how deep the pools are now. Expect to swim and/or pack float at times. Depart 8.00am from Milverton Park.

8-9 February

Cattle Ridge **M**
Martin Lawrence **357 1695**

This is the club's first overnight at Cattle Ridge since its renovation. Access is from Putara Road end. One option is to leave Saturday morning and head to Roaring Stag Hut. From there, it is a bit of a clamber up to Cattle Ridge Hut where we plan to spend Saturday night. Another option is to head in on Friday afternoon and stay Friday night at Herepai. This would shorten Saturday's trip to Cattle Ridge and give us the time to explore a couple of high points nearby. Either way, Sunday will be out via Roaring Stag to the road end.

9 February

Sunrise and Armstrong Saddle **E/M**
Jo O'Halloran **0274 171 140**

A popular walk at any time of the year. The excellent zig zag track up through shady forest brings us to Sunrise Lodge at the bush edge and the saddle just 20 minutes further along offers even better views. Return the same way or walk out with cool wet feet via the river.

15-16 February

Totara Flats **E/M**
Kathy Corner **027 6185 722**

Totara Flats Hut is on the banks of the Waiohine River in the eastern Tararuas. It is a magnificent walk in from the Waiohine Gorge

road end alongside the river - 4 to 4½ hour walk, with plenty of opportunities for swimming. If there is a large group of us, we could split into 2 groups, with one starting from the Holdsworth road end and swap keys at the hut. That way we can all do the through trip. Depart from Milverton Park at 7.30am.

16 February

Tunupo Escape and Trap Run **M**
Roy Ralston **027 476 7188**

Join Roy for an easy day trip strolling up the ridge to Tunupo Peak from the Oroua River catchment in the Ruahine Forest Park. On the way we will clear and rebait the box traps as an added interest and, if the weather is good and clear, the aim is to do late lunch on the peak taking in the grand views before returning the same. Meet at Milverton 8am. Call or text Roy your interest prior.

22-23 February

Ngamoko Hut **M/F**
Janet Wilson **329 4722**

A classic trip to one of the huts our club maintains. We will go in via the Mid-Pohangina sidle track and exit via the tops. If anyone is keen on exploring we could go out via Piripiri Biv. I've heard that this received some maintenance recently and think this might be a good chance to check it out. Weather dependant of course so plans might change – let me know in plenty of time if you're keen. A long weekend departing Friday morning would be my first choice but I'm flexible.

23 February

Deerford Loop **E**
Graeme Richards **353 6227**

A very accessible tramp. Contact Graeme to find out what his plans are.

29 February – 1 March

Kahui Capers **M**
Warren Wheeler **356 1998**

Explore the west side of Mt Egmont/Taranaki from the unique old style Kahui Hut, a 2 hour easy walk up to the bush line. There are some readily accessible high points and some requiring a bit of a bush bash. Ideally depart

late Friday afternoon, otherwise 7.00am Saturday morning.

1 March

Ridge Road /Oroua Farm Walk E/M

Dave Grant 328 7788

Walk from Ridge Road, Pohangina, over hill country farmland with magnificent views up the Oroua valley to Ruapehu and the Ruahines. Drop down to the picturesque Oroua river for lunch and then head upstream and follow a side gully back through reverting bush to the start. Not a long day, say 4 hours on the trot, and not too difficult but a bit of scrambling here and there. This is a joint trip with the Manawatu Walking Festival, so a chance to see some new faces.

You will need to organize your own transport. Dave's suggestion is to carpool from Milverton Park, leaving at 8.00am, home by 4pm. Contact Dave if you are interested and he will give travel directions.

7 March

Mana Island E

Janet Wilson 329 4722

We will join in a "Friends of Mana Island" day trip to this predator free island located off the coast of Porirua. I have 15 places reserved on the boat and it is first in for these – so let me know early if you are keen as I need to confirm numbers well before the trip. The cost for the boat is \$60pp. There is plenty of information online about the island and its history. Should be a good day out. Prepayment needed. Departing PN 7am. You may like to follow on with the Sunday day trip – for those wanting to do this, I am planning on staying Saturday night somewhere like the Paekakariki motor camp.

8 March

Kapiti Coast Explorer E/M

Janet Wilson 329 4722

This is a trip with a difference. The 2020 Wellington Arts Festival includes an interactive event called the "Urban Huts Club". Five mini huts have been created out of recycled materials and are positioned between Paekakariki and Otaki. We will get the map and use clues and our navigation skills to go and

find these little huts. Should be a fun day out and, if there is time, we will include a beach walk somewhere along the coast - perhaps a visit to Waikawa Beach on the way home. I will already be down the coast but happy to coordinate transport for anyone who wants to just do the Sunday trip. This will depart PN at 7am. Learn more about this by going to <https://www.festival.nz/events/all/urban-hut-club/>

Trip Grading

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

BWD = Best weather day of a weekend

Trip participants

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips usually 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, over-trousers, 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.

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:

Anne & Martin Lawrence	357 1695
Graeme Richards	353 6227

Notices

PLBs Available to Club Members

The club has two personal locator beacons (PLBs) for members' use. If you want to take one of these on a trip, contact Martin or Anne Lawrence on 357 1695. There is no cost to use

these. This applies to any trip you are going on - it doesn't need to be a club trip.

Tramping Gear for Sale

- foam bedroll
- self-inflating sleeping mat
- calf-length gaiters

If interested, contact Simon Loveday smloveday@icloud.com

Heading North?

Recently Martin discovered his compass was pointing in the wrong direction...He was surprised when comparing it with my compass to find that they differed by somewhere around (but not exactly) 180 degrees as shown in this photo.



Which way is north?

A little research revealed this is not an unknown problem, but certainly one you want to know about before you find yourself relying on your compass up in the clag!

When the magnetism in the compass needle becomes permanently reversed such that the red end of the needle points south instead of north, it is called reverse polarity. This is different to the magnetic needle being temporarily deviated a little when near a metal object or weak magnet and correcting itself as soon as it is moved away. It can affect any brand of compass. You can find out more at: <https://rin.org.uk/blogpost/1706945/304954/Reverse-Polarity-in-Compasses>

Apparently, it is possible to fix a reversed compass, and Marty could have sent his back to Silva to be fixed but there seemed no

certainty as to how long the compass would remain true so Martin opted to replace his!

PNTMC Challenge 2019-2020

Huts and High Places Challenge

Update January 2020

The challenge officially closes on 26 March at our AGM, so make the most of the coming weeks.

Member	Huts	Highs	Bonus	TOTAL
Janet	63.5	26.5	25	115
Warren	62.5	14	30	106.5
Grant	35.5	41	20	96.5
Bruce	57	29.5	10	96.5
Chris T	44.5	26	15	85.5
Ernie	39	15	25	79
Elly	34	29.5	15	78.5
Michelle	37.5	8.5	20	66
Graham	29.5	15	15	59.5
Anne	23.5	17	5	45.5
Martin	23	17	5	45
Penny	24.5	8.5	5	38
Mary	14.5	9	5	28.5
Hannah	10	14	0	24
Woody	12.5	1	5	18.5
Ash	5	12	0	17
Richard	5	3.5	0	8.5
Vicki	5.5	3	0	8.5
Annett	1.5	1.5	0	3
Jo	3	0	0	3

Details of the rules and how to earn points are in the June newsletter (see our website). You can update your points by entering trip details, places visited etc in the online spreadsheet. Contact Martin if you have problems with this.

Tributes to Terry Crippen

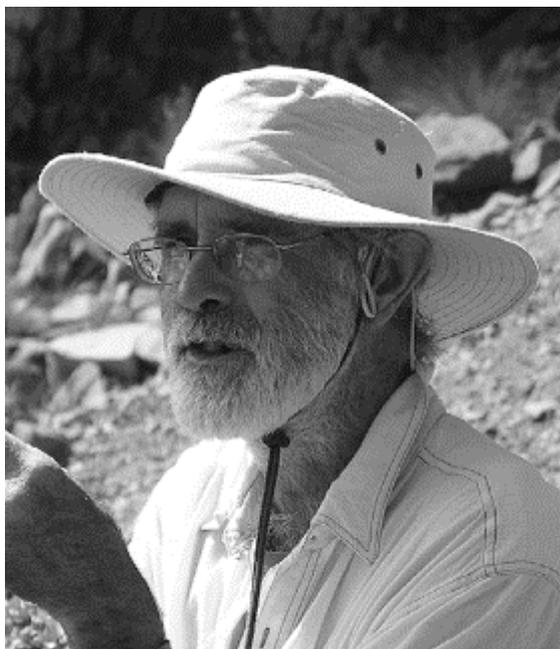
Doing justice to Terry

by Anne Lawrence (newsletter editor)

Terry joined PNTMC in 1978 or 1979 (depending on who you ask). Terry put in a huge amount of effort and energy to the club, serving in various roles, including president, vice president, treasurer and secretary, multiple times. In recognition of his contributions, Terry was made a life member of the club in 2005.

The club was well represented at Terry's funeral held in Palmerston North on 14th January. Peter Darragh gave the obituary and Bruce van Brunt, our club president, spoke about Terry's contributions to the club, and to the tramping and mountaineering community.

In this tribute to Terry I have included a selection of photos and written pieces contributed by a few club members who I invited to share their memories of Terry. In doing this I have tried to do justice to Terry but acknowledge that that is an impossible task – Terry meant so much to so many. However, I hope what is here helps to convey some of that. Any errors or omissions are mine.



Farewell Terry

We've lost our Terry, one of the mainstays of PNTMC. An old timer rich with a lifetime of elaborate outdoor experience and adventures. A committed member, he gave a lot of himself to the club and treated the club somewhat like family.

He was a superb organiser, leader, instructor in the club's snowcraft courses – always meticulously planned and organised. He was always busy dreaming up, organising and leading trips. He generously shared his extensive knowledge, skills and general knowhow, guiding and mentoring the uninitiated into the wilder parts of NZ's awesome wilderness.



Terry upped the stakes with a deep love of those high snowy peaks, always acutely aware of everyone's safety and his responsibilities. You were in for an adventurous, full and safety-conscious trip with Terry in charge. The club is all the richer to have called him their own.

Quite the character, tall and lanky, with a wide grin and twinkle in his eye, he will be sadly missed. He leaves a big hole, those boots very hard if not impossible to fill.

Rest in peace our dear friend.
Your PNTMC Family X



Terry Crippen – Some thoughts and reminiscences

Contributed by Peter Wiles

Firstly, I want to pass on the condolences expressed by Yuko Watanabe and Meguru's mother (Inoue-san). And here would be a good place to start to talk about Terry's ability to connect with people and provide help and support and leadership. When Meguru was killed on Mt Cook, Terry took the family under his wing and helped them enormously when they travelled out here to retrieve their daughter. He helped them in every way. That was his way.

Terry joined PNTMC in June 1979 and was co-opted to the executive as Secretary only four months later (surely a case of accelerated development) in September 1979. And his impact on the Club from that point on grew to become HUGE.

I got to know him in early 1980 and the last time I saw him was on Christmas Day (2019). We did a great many trips together, especially in the South Island. The adventures were all amazing - D'Archiac, Cloudy Peak, Arrowsmith, Ashburton Peak, Amazon, Outlaw, Renegade (all in the Erewhon /Rangitata Region; Rolleston, Murchison, Harper, Greenlaw, Speight, Carrington, Lancelot (Arthurs Pass); Hooker, Brewster, McCullaugh (Haast region) and Mt Sefton. (Some of these were in the days of slide film and are not so easy to illustrate nowadays.)

Terry was an incredibly calm person who never really got angry (although if he got really pissed off, "Dickhead" was his favourite term). It was

on the descent off Mt Brewster where this was sorely put to the test. We were on a steepish mixed slope of rather loose rock and snow. I dislodged a rock that tumbled down and hit Terry giving him a rather nasty graze on his leg. But, to add insult to injury, broke his ice-axe! After putting a substantial wound dressing on his leg (he always carried a very good first-aid kit) and getting going again, he seemed to have forgotten about the whole incident in less than half an hour!

It was in February 2007 on the Sefton climb that Terry's skills came to the fore. Big Red took us to Fox Glacier and he organised the helicopter to drop us off near our campsite at 2,400 m. We had a short traverse in misty conditions to set up camp near Welcome Pass.



And what a spot for a high camp!



And the sunset was magic.



We left the camp at about 5 am the next morning in perfect conditions, but with a rope of two and a rope of three, progress was quite slow once we got onto the icecap.



A view of Terry belaying on the icecap and looking down towards our camp – almost invisible by the vast scale.

We did not reach the summit until 6 pm.



Reaching the summit is one thing, but getting down safely is another, and the obvious problem was; what was going to be our predicament when it got dark?

I remember we got off the icecap by completing an abseil in almost darkness around 10 pm. There was no moon. Here Terry's route-finding and leadership skills came to the fore as there was little sign of our route in the well-frozen surface of more than 12 hr earlier. Attached to a single rope, Terry took us on a journey for more than 4 hr without hesitation or mistake through this vast minefield of crevasses save for the puny light of his headlamp.

We safely reached our camp at 3 am. Thank you, Terry.



Memories from Barry Scott

Barry was not able to attend Terry's funeral. He was on Great Barrier Island and could not get a flight off the island in time. He wanted to pass on his condolences and share some of his memories of trips with Terry.

I have some wonderful memories from trips with Terry: most memorable was our 10 day trip into the Olivines in 2001 to celebrate my 50th.

The trip through the Lambeth icefall, Garden of Allah, Garden of Eden then down the Perth was another cracker of a trip. Took us 11 hours to travel 5 km down the Perth. Terry still had lots of energy at the end of this trip taking on Conway Powell on a mad dash to the road end at Whataroa.

Other trips that come to mind include the 3 pass trip with Terry, Chris and Roderick Sawyers. Crossing crisp frozen snow over Katy's col into the Julia is imprinted in my

memory. It was a long day but the Julia unfolded below us. Great navigation by Terry as always. Then up a scree slide to the Hunt and out at Otira. Followed by a wonderful climb of Rolleston.

Another great trip was up the Travis with Terry and Peter Wiles. We stayed in Cupola hut and climbed Cupola then had a fantastic climb up the South ridge of Hopeless, over the top then down, down, down the snow into the Hopeless, up the Travis and finally back to Cupola hut.

Also the Easter trip up the Sabine with a climb of Franklin and up and over Moss pass and down the Durville. Nearly everyone got stung at some stage by a wasp – they were pretty aggressive with the onset of winter.

Also an amazing trip up the Cascade with Terry and Peter Wiles. It rained like heck so was very tricky crossing some of the streams going up valley on the true right. In the end the rain and high rivers thwarted our attempt to get into the Red Hills. After a couple of days we did manage to cross the Cascade and come down the true left following remnants of an old road that Charlie Douglas and co had made in the 1800's. I remember pack floating across a very deep Cascade to get back to our vehicle.

Terry was a great companion on all those trips and others. Absolutely reliable and meticulous with his navigation. He also was so generous with his time in helping others. I joined him and Bruce on some of the Snowcraft courses. Again, meticulous and thorough with the instruction. Terry was a tramping legend. He will be sorely missed.

Terry, a farewell memory From Peter Darragh

I met Terry through the club and have been friends with him for over 40 years and shared numerous adventures. We tramped and climbed and travelled in all kinds of places, or simply hung out. One adventure happened in Morocco.

We were staying overnight in a Moroccan town and the next morning Terry was in his usual

organised way packing as we were moving on that day. Meanwhile I wanted to take some photos of the place before we left. I followed some kids to an area where I would get a better view. While taking my shots however I was approached by the police. I was then escorted to the local police station. My camera was a film camera not a digital and the police confiscated it and the film was removed. I was a little concerned about what would happen next and how to get out of this pickle. However Terry eventually turned up bringing me food. He had been told by our hosts where I was. They were very worried because it was a very big deal to be involved with police in Morocco. Terry sat with me, amused by the situation. I however was concerned about how much trouble I was in.

The Police thought I was a spy. The area I had followed those kids to was apparently a military base. In the eighties Morocco was involved in a violent conflict over the Spanish West Sahara. Terry thought he'd have to come back in about ten years to get me. Therefore I was potentially in some danger away from home in a foreign country but Terry thought it was a hoot. When nothing further was happening. Terry went away and continued to come back and check on me from time to time. It turned out I was detained for over 5 hours. When my innocence was established Terry was able to take me back to our accommodation to continue our travels. I was lucky to have him around!

Terry had at least been willing to return to retrieve me if indeed I had been detained for ten years or longer!!!

He was a great friend and will be sadly missed. We were fortunate to have had him in our lives.

Thoughts of Terry

From Warren Wheeler

Firstly, I want to acknowledge a number of people who contacted me to say they couldn't attend Terry's funeral but would have liked to be there to remember Terry:

Anja Scholz – DOC Ranger and Compliance Officer at Franz Joseph

Malcolm Parker – currently canoeing with Scouts down the Whanganui River

Malcolm Leary and Grant Christian – who are climbing at Mt Cook

Alasdair Noble, Clive Marsh and Andy and Zoe Backhouse - old climbing friends.

Catherine Jackson, PNTMC member.

Terry had a great sense of humour and was more than keen to participate in some of our more crazy ideas, such as the End of Millennium International Expedition to Climb the South Face of K2 Before Breakfast and Mount Cook by Noon (these are two grassy sandhills in paddocks near Bainesse) AND the Social Climbers Champagne Picnic on Colenso Peak, when he carried the top of his plastic deck table up from Kawhatau Base, AND a traditional Mid-Winter Dip in the snow fed Kawhatau River, AND baking tent pegs and other specialty shapes for Tararua Biscuit Competition Club Nights.

Terry was always very safety conscious and tried to make everyone else aware of the risks as well, however it is hard to allow for the idiot factor, like the time when the ice axes tied to our packs started fizzing as we were climbing out of Oturere Crater and when we reached the top I raised my ice axe "just to see what would happen" and sure enough all but mine stopped fizzing. Fortunately, we were not struck by lightning, but being pelted with hailstones served to teach us a lesson and avoided what Terry would say was "Not a good result".

Terry had a remarkable gift of persuasion, which became fondly known as "being Terried". I fell victim to this phenomenon first by purchasing his Macpac Ascent for near new price (this "autographed edition" is still going strong 25 years later) and second by accepting

to take over as President from him back in 1997 (a position I then held for ten years). He was hard to resist but people seldom regretted being "Terried" into doing something, whether it was progressing on to the more advanced Snowcraft Courses (good, good), carrying the heavy rope or leading club trips.

Terry lived very frugally and saved his money for important things like a new tent or another trip to Mongolia. Or a pink flip phone. Pink? Yes, "why buy the black one, it's so much more expensive."



Terry was meticulous and well organized so he has never received our most prestigious award, The Dave Hodges Award for Excellence in Pursuit of Forgetfulness. However, over the last 20 years he has featured in our Annual Awards many times. These awards are announced at our End of Year BBQ and presented to those worthy recipients who have helped make the year so memorable. I will mention just a few of the awards to illustrate how he has come to be held in such high regard.

- In 2001 he received the Cross Dressing Award for his purchase of trousers from the Ladies Rack because "they'll do anyway".
- In 2002 it was the Blarney Award for Excellence in Composing Concise Prose for Public Consumption in Matters Pertaining to Recreation on the Outdoors for his Wilderness magazine articles.
- In 2004 it was the Just Gremlin Font of Knowledge Award for just grabbing a

dead tree and warning his companions to “mind the wasps”.

- Also in 2004 the Best No Show Award for kicking his door and injuring his foot too badly to attend Snowcraft 3.
- In 2005 it was the Plan B Award for turning rock climbing at Titahi Bay into a shopping spree in Wellington.
- In 2010 the Wall of Fame Award for his collection of 15 summits over summer.
- In 2012 the Rock Solid Award for his dehydrated quince compote.
- In 2014 the Pretty Good Award for his penchant for praise.
- In 2016 the No Back Chat Award for him and Ange for the fastest pack up to catch a helicopter back flight from Chancellor Hut.

Thank you Terry for all the fun and adventure we have had together. You are a legend and we love you.



High Up in the Mountains Dedicated to Terry Crippen and the mountaineer in all of us.

By Warren Wheeler, 13 January 2020

High up in the mountains
With cloud stretched out below
I wondered what was out there
How far that I could go.

So I climbed back down the mountain
To the valley far below
And followed the flowing water
As far as it would go.

And when I reached the ocean
I turned and looked back
And saw far away in the distance
The mountains looking back.

All the cloud had lifted
The world was plain to see
Just how far that I could go
Was really up to me.

So I turned to my companions
Afloat upon the sea
“I must go back to the mountains
Will you come along with me?”.

All as one cried out aloud
Their hearts set voices free
“To the mountains, the mountains
That’s where we want to be.”

So we climbed up in the mountains
And year on year went by
Until age curtailed our efforts
Of reaching for the sky.

Now my climbing days are over
It’s as plain as plain can be
That climbing in the mountains
Was time well spent for me.

I dream now of the mountains
Of the land stretched out below
High up in the mountains
As far as we could go.



Trip Reports.

Mitre Peak Mt Holdsworth Circuit 10 to 12 December 2019 Report and pics by Grant Christian Trip Participant: Grant Christian

I had been thinking the circuit from Holdsworth Lodge to Mitre Flats, up to Mitre Peak and along the range to Mt Holdsworth would make a challenging two day tramp. I worked out that Tarn Ridge Hut would be close to the half way point if I did two long days. Unfortunately Tarn Ridge Hut had a broken door and was not suitable to use. With a favourable forecast for a few days I settled on another plan. Head into the hills in the afternoon and go from Holdsworth Lodge to Mitre Flats Hut. The next day I would go from Mitre Flats Hut to Mitre Peak and along the tops to Jumbo Hut. McGregor Biv was an option if the trip along the tops took longer than expected. The last day I would go from Jumbo Hut, back up onto the range to Mt Holdsworth and then back down the track via Powell Hut.

I set off from the car park around 3:30 p.m., thinking it might take up to five hours to reach Mitre Flats Hut. The first section to Atiwhakatu is easy walking and I maintained a brisk pace to arrive at the hut in about 1 ¼ hours. I had a quick snack and drink and set off towards Mitre Flats. The track after Atiwhakatu is much rougher and up and down. My pace dropped and it took me another 2 hours 40 to reach the hut. On arriving at the hut I smelt smoke and thought there must be a fire going. A little surprising given it was quite warm. The sole occupant told me she had arrived to find a bottle of milk that had gone off and had been chewed into by mice. She had lit some rubbish to try and overcome the smell of the rancid milk.

During the night my sleep was interrupted by the scurrying about and antics of the mice. Although we had both hung our food in what we thought were safe places we got up at one time when things were particularly noisy, to check on its safety.

Next morning I set off up the long climb to Mitre, 1200 metres above. I was mindful of the long day ahead of me and tried to set a pace that I could maintain all day. I worked out I was averaging 100 metres in altitude every 12 minutes so was happy my progress. On the way up I passed my fellow hut occupant who was heading for Dorset Ridge Hut. I reached Peggy's Peak feeling good and from there it is a short distance to Mitre. It was a clear and calm day and I took in views of Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe, Taranaki, Kapiti Island, the South Island and Tapuae o Uenuku. After a break on Mitre I headed off down the steep route to the saddle leading to Brockett, 150 metres below. From here I had another 120 metres to climb to the top of Brockett. A similar pattern was repeated to get to the top of Girdlestone. I first noticed here that I was already getting a little tired. The descent off Girdlestone was even more than the previous two but thankfully Adkin peak was 80 metres lower than Girdlestone and the approach was longer.

After Adkin I kept looking ahead and estimating how much climbing I had to do. I was starting to find the uphill hard work. My legs were feeling heavy and I was puffing and taking breaks on the way up. North King was another 140 metre climb following the descent from Adkin. I struggled along to Mid King, thankful that the ascent this time was only about 70 metres. Unfortunately this was soon followed by South King and another climb of 130 metres. I stared into the distance at McGregor, which looked like it stood well above the range, thankfully, beyond that, what I could see appeared to be easier terrain.

The Broken Axe Pinnacles stood between me and McGregor. I sidled the first of the pinnacles but then went back along the top to check my GPS position. This showed me as being on the high point of the Pinnacles, although I could see higher points ahead. It is unclear from the map which of these bumps in the range, between South King and McGregor, actually make up the Pinnacles. I sidled the next bump, which looked difficult to climb, but was obviously higher than where I had stood

with my GPS. The following bump was further along but was higher again. The track went over this bump so I went over the highest point on this section of the range.



Photo: looking west from Mitre.

From here the climb up McGregor looked less daunting, it was only another 120 metres or so. I took my time, stopping a few times to catch my breath and allow my quads some respite. Angle Knob was another kilometre away and the climb looked a bit easier. I rested a while on the lower part of the range and looked at McGregor Biv, contemplating staying there for the night. It was tempting but I thought it was a bit early in the day to stop, despite my weary limbs.

I could see the ridge from Angle Knob was mostly sloping down towards Jumbo so thought this section should be okay. I eventually came out on top of Angle Knob and headed for Jumbo. Although it was mostly descending there were still some easy ascents that I found tiring. I was definitely looking forward to getting to Jumbo hut. Any thought of carrying on along to Mt Holdsworth and Powell Hut had long been forgotten. The descent from Jumbo to Jumbo Hut seemed hard enough today, with my feet feeling sore and my back feeling the strain. I finally arrived at Jumbo Hut nine and half hours after leaving Mitre Flats. Not an overly long day for me but I was certainly spent.

Next morning I was feeling much stronger. I headed back up on to the range and reached Mt Holdsworth in good time with no difficulty. I walked quickly down to Powell Hut and had a

look around inside, this being my first visit to the new hut. Impressive. Not looking forward to a long walk downhill on an easy track I started slowly running on the bits that weren't steep or uphill. I had just started walking for an uphill section when I spotted someone ahead. I was still walking fast so was quite surprised when I didn't catch anyone. The track started descending and I started to run again, eventually catching up to a grey haired guy, probably older than me, who was striding along at a fair pace. I greeted him as I passed and continued to jog slowly down the track. I kept slowly jogging and after several minutes I heard a noise behind, it was the same guy. I don't know if he had started running or was still just walking very quickly but I didn't hang around to find out. I picked up the pace and kept running all the way to the bridge just before Holdsworth Lodge. He wasn't seen again. It took me an hour and a quarter to get down from Powell Hut. I have run up faster, but that was 20 years ago and not with a 10kg pack.

I was pleased to get back to my car and satisfied with my efforts in bagging 13 peaks and five huts.

Waipawa Loop
12 January 2020
Report by Rachel Price
Pics by Warren Wheeler

This was my first tramp with the Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club. It was a great trip filled with variety, adventure and great company. A perfect way to start exploring Ruahine Forest Park.

It was already a hot morning when we started the track shortly after nine-thirty. The track leads into a predominately kahikatea and red beech tree forest offering shade from the hot sun. There were seven of us in the group as we followed the track while happily chatting with each other. The path to Sunrise Hut is a well-maintained track with a steadily graded zig-zag climb through the forest.

Along the way Warren the trip leader pointed out different plants. The most memorable being the pepper tree or horopito that I and a

few others sampled. Its peppery taste takes a few seconds to register on the tongue but once it does it quickly becomes hotter and hotter.

After two and a half hours we arrived at Sunrise Hut which is situated in a tussock basin. The amazing panoramic view of Hawkes Bay plains greeted us. We had a welcome lunch break on the deck of the hut while enjoying the view. A few other family groups were enjoying lunch on the deck as well.

After lunch, we headed up to the top of the ridge which was a very short distance from the hut where a sign warned this was only for experienced trampers. I had overheard a teenage boy repeating this to his father with reverence. We walked along an unmarked but well-defined ridge. It felt like a different day on the ridge due to a gale-force cold wind. We made our way along the narrow ridge-line stopping to brace ourselves from big gusts of wind. I was a little nervous with the strength of the wind but also excited by the challenge and adventure. We stopped along the way to admire the large slip from the top of the ridge.



High on Armstrong Saddle.

Near Armstrong Saddle we had an amazingly clear view of Mt Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe. Warren had been expecting to see mountain daisies but was surprised to find they had not flowered yet. Due to the gale-force wind, some of the group decided they would return from Armstrong Saddle to Sunrise Hut and back down via the side track to the Waipawa River. Warren, Neil and I continued walking south along the ridge-line battling the wind but quickly came to where we needed to descend.



Buffeted by the gale force wind.

I was surprised and excited to see a red female deer in the distance running at full speed. In only a few seconds she was out of sight. We climbed down a large scree slope reaching the stream.



Careful scree running.

The water flow was low, we hopped from rock to rock and walked on loose gravel as we continued downstream. The water was very clear and pristine. After walking for some time we were all pleasantly surprised when Neil startled a male Whio. It was a great sight to behold as it flew straight towards me. This was a real thrill to see as they are very rare in this area of the Ruahines. It was slow travelling as we were without a path.



Slow going down the stream.

Eventually, we came to where the streams meet each other and joined the Waipawa River.



Where the two streams meet.

We stopped briefly at the Waipawa Forks hut then continued our journey. After walking another hour in the hot sun alongside the river we were pleasantly surprised to see Janet and Lynne waiting at the end of the trail to give us a ride back to the car park. This saved us walking another few kilometres which my feet and body were very thankful for. It had been quite a full day with our journey taking us about seven and a half hours. At the car park, we met with the rest of the group who were in good spirits having enjoyed their return trip. We were all looking forward to a cool drink and some good food.

Participants were Janet Wilson, Lynne Atkins, Jo and Lawrence O'Halloran, Neil Benton, Rachel Price, Warren Wheeler.

**Beehive Creek
Sunday 19 January, 2020
Report by Doug Strachan
Doug & Big Jim photo series by Minami Strachan**

Unusually, Duncan Hedderley was the only person to make contact wanting to come on this annual pilgrimage to Beehive Creek, although Big Jim ended up tagging along too and effectively usurping my role as trip leader. If you stop reading this report now, you will miss what could be “the quote of the year from a PNTMC member”, so don't give up. And you don't wanna piss off Big Jim either, by not paying attention to his exploits.



Up the creek, with Big Jim taking the shot!

In no time (well, after 30mins drive to be honest) we were booting up and slopping on sunscreen. I told the kids to do the tops of their ears, which cop a lot of light, and cats often get cancer on the tips of their ears because they have less hair there. I was scolded for telling them that for the umpteenth time. But it's true. They do. And we share a lot of DNA with cats.

The road and farmland sections of the loop walk seemed to pass by quickly on account of all the chin wagging. It was good Duncan had signed up to come because we didn't get a chance to catch up 5 days earlier at Terry Crippen's funeral, despite Maho and I and Duncan all attending. We thought about how you learn all these amazing things about people after they're gone. We did know that Terry weighed everything before going on a trip (and had helped people eat their excess weight allowance), but there were some

surprises. Who knew Terry was dux of his school? Who knew he and a mate had made bombs out of olden day's 'proper' fireworks when kids and blown up a row of letterboxes and never got caught? Terrence!

Descending down to the stream I opined that maintaining a bit of momentum going downhill rather than using the 'brakes' the whole way is often easier. Duncan said that sounded like one of Terry's truisms. Terry was no doubt looking down and nodding in agreement while zooming around on those fluffy white clouds overhead.

On passing through the gate designed to keep stock out of the waterway, we saw a determined sheep repeatedly try to push through the fence, and it finally succeeded. Hope the farmer doesn't think, "Some bloody walker must have left the gate open". The sheep was too quick for Big Jim to catch.



Cut it out Big Jim!

I dawdled lazily along the stream bed, much to the ire of Big Jim, who started throwing his weight around a bit and not always keeping his hands to himself, and those bloody great feet of his splashing down the creek put a bit of a dampener on things.



Big Jim prodding Doug along

As if that wasn't bad enough, we were about 2 weeks too early for the blackberries. The black ones we did find were sour. Every year I try and devise a scheme to get at the ripest berries that are just out of reach and were inaccessible to previous parties too. One time I took secateurs to cut a path into blackberry patches, but that idea proved fruitless. This year's plan was to take my long sleeved rose-pruning gloves, but the idea sounded better than it was. Well, who wants those out of reach ones anyway? They're probably sour.

The kids entertained themselves taking the wettest route. Big Jim got up to his usual antics. Maho enjoyed the perfect weather and scenery. Duncan and I grappled with the question, "What's the difference between fictional and fictitious?" Turns out they are both identical. Not really, that was a fictitious statement. Or was it?

Nearing the end of the walk, Conan was so intent on sticking to the stream that he passed the usual exit and ended up climbing out of the stream at Beehive Creek Bridge. We took off our boots but one of Conan's was stuck and he asked me to pull it off his foot, which took considerable force and he had to cling to the car. I commented that he's getting too big for his boots. Duncan and I then explained the meaning of that as a figurative expression.



Big Jim toying with Conan

We shifted the car to the picnic spot across the road and had lunch. This is where the quote of the year (and the year has barely begun) comes in. Anyway, we are sitting at the table and Conan has a banana and Minami has a plum.

Their conversation goes like this:

“Bananas are better than plums.”

“No they’re not. I’d rather eat a sour green plum than a ripe banana.”

“What about a plum full of maggots?”

“Better than a banana full of maggots.”

I chimed in and suggested not talking about maggots during lunch.

Despite that glorious conversation, the quote of the year is still to come. Conan wanted to get the buzz bars out of the boot (taking buzz bars to Beehive Creek has become a tradition) and asked me, “Is the boot open?” Well, the boot was visibly slightly open, so I replied, “Is the Pope Catholic?” As they had never heard “Too big for his boots” before, I proceeded to explain that if something is very obvious, then you say, “Is the Pope Catholic” because he obviously is, being the head of the Catholic church with its millions of adherents. To this Minami replied, in all earnest, “What if he isn’t really Catholic and was just desperate for a job?”



Gimme my hat, Big Jim!

We were: Big Jim, Duncan Hedderley, and the Strachan family (Maho, Doug, Minami, Conan)

**Mitre Flats - Cow Creek Loop
Wellington Anniversary Weekend 2020
Report by Michelle Benton
Pics by Warren Wheeler**

Saturday’s goal was to climb up to Blue Range and traverse its length, bagging Te Mara, Blue Hill, Lookout Point, and Blake before descending to Mitre Flats for the night. That turned out to be too optimistic and we reassessed after taking 6.5 hours to reach the top of Lookout Point. We estimated another 4 hours would be needed along the trackless ridge to Blake before descending to the flats. We opted to drop down the spur off Lookout Point and found ourselves on a spacious grassed flat on the Waingawa TL a couple of hours later.



Bagging Te Mara 1104m



Goblin forest galore

The rain the next morning caused a discussion of options after breakfast. We set off downstream still on the TL to make our way to Mitre Flats Hut. We found a lot of bog, deer sign and a slip we managed to cross at the bottom before the bridge and reached the hut by 10.30, one hour after leaving camp.



Fly camp kept the drizzle away.

The history board in the hut said that the original route into Mitre Flats was over Blake and that the first hut materials came over via a horse track. We decided to climb Blake and see if the horse track is still discernible. It's not. Two hours of wet bush-bashing later we debated which of Blake's two knobby heads is the true summit and bagged both to be sure. We descended the same way and arrived back very wet at Mitre Flats hut by 4pm. Six other trampers had arrived from various directions while we were away and provided pleasant company.



Blake high point 930m in goblin forest.

We got away just after 7.00 next morning and arrived at Cow Creek Hut via the track 4 hours later for lunch. Returned to the Kiriwhakapapa roadend by 7pm via Cow Saddle and the spur track that begins just beside the Cow Saddle sign (with a short detour to Blue Range Hut).



Nice lunch spot at Cow Creek Hut



Cow Saddle turnoff - next trip Waingawa

We were Warren Wheeler (able leader) and Michelle Benton.

Oroua River Iron Gates Gorge

26 January 2020

Report and pics by Warren Wheeler

This trip was originally programmed to explore the Lower Oroua from Iron Gates Gorge down to the road bridge, with Graham Peters as the leader. With race day fast approaching and his classic bike needing some final tweaks the role of leader was delegated to Janet. Janet took one look at just what this mission would involve and instead opted for a milder adventure – the classic loop up the Oroua side track past Alice Nash Memorial Lodge to the Tunupo Campsite and downstream to the Iron Gates Gorge...a perfect trip for a beautiful summer day. It also had the advantage that Janet could check traps along the way.

Turned out she scored a rat or three and at least one stoat, which was offered up to a dozy rainbow trout. This trout seemed strangely uninterested and had us bemused by its behavior, whether it was heatstroke or senility it didn't seem to want to rush away from us, even when we tried to catch it in bare hands. A large eel also joined the trout in the pool and showed a little interest, even coming right up to us, then heading back upstream, but not before taking a half-hearted nip at a large dead rainbow trout that drifted sedately into the pool.



We had found this newly dead trout some 100m upstream among rocks, seemingly dead from old age as there was no sign of it having been caught. Maybe it had done its dash after

spawning. We had decided to return it to the water and here it was already, despite the rapids and low flow it had not got caught up. We watched it sail on downstream and later spotted it several times as it went past. We wondered if the live one was on its last flick of the tail after spawning too. Maybe the water was just too hot for it to be bothered.

Another highlight for all but one was crossing the big pool – wading chest deep, swimming, feet first pack floating or head first – all options were explored by our adventurous group. One person concerned about getting their phone wet opted for the deviation over the rocky outcrop. Happy we all were.



Arriving at Iron Gates Gorge we saw someone ahead who had already gone through, but we decided not to follow despite how inviting it looked – some other time. We returned from the gorge up the steep Stoat Trappers Track and arrived back at the Shed a little hot and sweaty so a cold bath and a cool beer were a real treat (thanks, Janet).

Thanks to Janet for leading our wonderful little adventure.

Participants: Rachel Price, Jenny Mark, Michelle and Neil Benton, Warren Wheeler, Janet Wilson.



PNTMC Newsletter February 2020

What's inside this month?

- Club Challenge update
- Trip Reports
- Upcoming trips
- Tribute to Terry Crippen

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