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# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

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

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

## Newsletter November 2023

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*Ready to leave Renata Hut on Labour Day 2023, Tararua Forest Park*

*Pic from Woody Lee*

### Club Nights

*Club nights are generally held on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Quakers Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North. Doors open 7.15pm for meeting start at 7.30pm. All welcome.*

**9 November 2023**

**BYO Pics**

**All**

Summer is coming but let's not forget what we have enjoyed over the winter. Bring some pics from trips you have done since June and tell us what you have been up to.

**30 November 2023**

**Kakadu Trekking**

**Anne and Martin Lawrence**

Earlier this year Anne and Martin spent 25 days in Kakadu National Park - all very different to NZ tramping!. Come along to hear about it and to see some of their pics.

## Upcoming Trips

**1-2 November 2023      Waiopehu Hut      M      Ernie Cook      027 303 1363**  
 Something different - a mid-week trip. Leaving Palmerston North late morning on the Wednesday returning Thursday. Hoping to complete loop. One short day. One longish day.

**4 November 2023      Stanfield Hut      E      Woody Lee      0210 444 552**  
 An easy Saturday tramp to the eastern side of the Ruahines. We will start from Tamaki West Rd and follow the Holmes Ridge track and an unmarked riverbed route to the hut. After lunch we return the same way. We will leave from Milverton Park at 7.30am.

**11-12 November 2023      Cow Creek Hut      M      Roy Rolston      0274 767 188**  
 Another try from a recent postponed trip. The main option is to tramp in via the Ruamahanga Track and out via Blue Range to Kiriwhakapapa Road or vice versa. Also possible in or out via the river and Roaring Stag Lodge for a different challenge depending upon the weather and river levels. Leave Milverton 7.30am. Contact Roy at least a few days prior if possible.

**12 November 2023      Blue Range Hut      E/M      Blair Petersen      027 600 4263**  
 Join me for this trip into the quirky Blue Range hut, with a side trip to Te Mara high point. Excellent views further into the Tararuas on a good day, excellent views of the inside of the hut on a bad day.

**18-19 November 2023      Waikamaka Hut Loop      M/F      Chris Parker      027 341 0091**  
 A lovely mix of river and tops travel in the northern Ruahines. From the Sunrise carpark we rock-hop up the gravelly bed of the Waipawa River, up over the low Waipawa Saddle and downstream to the Waikamaka Hut for the night. Return back to the saddle then up over Te Atuaoparara high point for lunchtime views, then down and around to Sunrise Hut and back to the carpark.

**18 November 2023      Zekes Hut      M      Michelle Benton      027 355 2532**  
 If you missed the previous trips this year then join us this Saturday for a zip into Zekes. It is a bit of a long drive, almost to Waiouru, but the Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary is well worth a visit. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

**25-26 November 2023      Orsome Orongorongo      M/F      Blair Petersen      027 600 4262**  
 Anybody interested in the ultimate hut-bagging trip? By my count, there's approx 60 huts within easy reach, including some hard-to-get and valuable scrabble letters. We may not get to all of those, but I'm hoping to tick off quite a few. Camping at the Catchpool Valley DOC campsite, which includes flush toilets and a cooking shelter. Please contact me by 22nd Nov at the latest.

**26 November 2023      Mania-Rangi Loop      M/F      Anne Lawrence      021 450 4212**  
 We'll do the loop if we have enough people to organise a key swap. Otherwise we'll just do the Mania Track and come back the same way.

**2-3 December 2023      Atene Skyline      M      Stephen Legg      027 647 0095**  
 On this overnight tramp we will listen and look for birds along the way and whilst overnight at the half-way campsite. Atene Skyline Track northern entrance is at the Whanganui River Road in Whanganui National Park. It is a 12.7 km round trip. It climbs steeply at the beginning and descends steeply at the end. We will take our time to observe the birds on the way. At the campsite we might hear kiwi and morepork at dusk. We will continue round the track to the southern entrance. There are 2 km of road walking back to the northern entrance. Depart Saturday 7:30am from Milverton Park.

**3 December 2023 TBA**

If anyone wants to lead a day trip (perhaps Atene Skyline medium-fit trip) please phone Warren 06 356 1998. Keep an eye out for any trip details on our website.

**9-10 December 2023 Kawhatau-McKinnon Hut M/F Roy Rolston 0274 767 188**

A destination that is difficult to get to because of access issues, we will take on the approx 2 hour river route firstly to Kawhatau Base and up a steep ridge to McKinnon Hut to stay Saturday night returning back down same way or via Crow Hut and the river on Sunday. Ideally leave Friday arvo staying Kawhatau the night leaving full day Saturday to get to McKinnon. Some of the track is said to be somewhat overgrown so the tramp will be a bit of a look see and perhaps we could take on some basic track clearing as we go. Contact Roy a week out if possible to work out a plan.

**10 December 2023 TBA**

If anyone wants to lead a day trip on Sunday please phone Warren 06 356 1998. Keep an eye out for any trip details on our website.

**16-17 December 2023 Short Knights E/M Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998**

Celebrate the longest day (almost) by camping out on the Toka tops in the western Ruahines. Up Shorts Track and along the ridge to Toka for dinner and sunset. Return via Knights Track after sunrise and breakfast. Depart Milverton Park at 2pm on Saturday.

**17 December 2023 Short Knights Long Day M/F Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998**

For those keen to do a loop day walk instead of camping overnight. Contact Warren to confirm who will lead this trip. Depart Milverton Park at 7.30am.

**Trip Grading**

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

Easy (E):	3-4 hrs	Other Grades:
Medium (M):	5-6 hrs	Family (Fam)
Fit (F):	about 8 hrs	Technical skills (T)
Fitness Essential (FE):	over 8 hrs	Inst (Instruction)

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 as there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone Martin Lawrence 357 1695 or Graeme Richards 021 149 8267.

**New Members**

Welcome to Anatolii Tsyplenkov and his wife Veronika Tsyplenkova who have been here a few months already and are looking forward to exploring more of the outdoors here and around New Zealand.



**Christmas Gift Ideas – Posters and Books**

Need some gift ideas? Details below.

**“Every Effing Inch” By Tim Pankhurst**

Fear and Loathing on Aotearoa New Zealand’s Long Trail - the 3012km Te Araroa



Tim’s account of this epic journey with his wife Sue and former Wellington mayor Dame Kerry Prendergast is required reading for everyone who has walked the Trail, those who are thinking of getting into the back country and those who never will, but can experience it from the couch. Published on Nov 8, rrp \$40. A special pre-publication price of \$30 (plus p&p) is offered to PNTMC members. It is available direct from the Underground Bookstore ([theundergroundbookstore.nz](http://theundergroundbookstore.nz)) or major bookstores.

**PNTMC Jubilee Book**

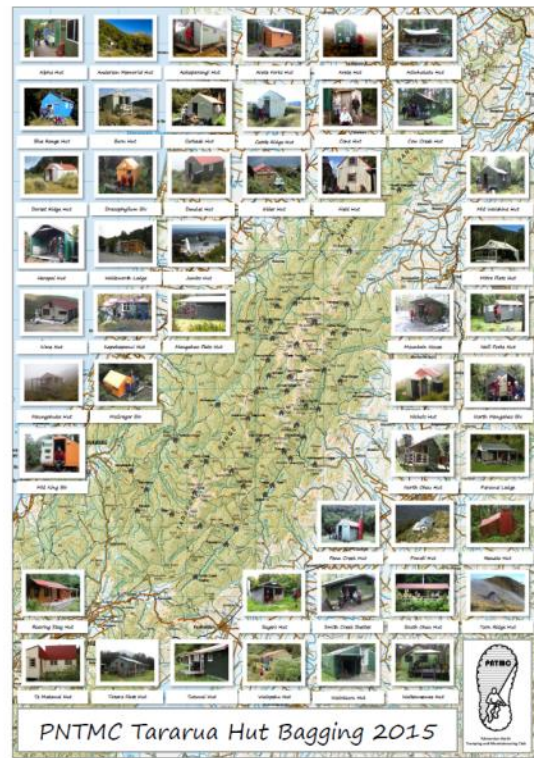


**Old Boots & Packs - The First 50 Years of the Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club (PNTMC)** will interest and amuse mountain users, historians, photographers, hut baggers and tree huggers. Read about current and past members’ exploits, which include climbing our highest peaks (sometimes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

Get ready to put your feet up and enjoy. Only \$35 from our editor Doug Strachan 06 353-6526.

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**PNTMC Hut Bagging Posters**



Posters are still available for both the Ruahine Hut Bagging 2012 and Tararua Hut Bagging 2015. See website for an image of each.

Size	Members	Non Members
A1	\$24	\$30
A2	\$12	\$18

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

Contact Anne Lawrence 06 357 1695.

**HUTS AND HIGH POINTS SCRABBLE CHALLENGE  
Top 10 with 1 month to go**

Club Member	Scrabble	Bonus	TOTAL
Ernie	260	292	552
Blair	208	237	445
Chris T	239	159	398
Janet	156	160	316
Monika	157	159	316
Elly	262	49	311
Heather	147	107	254
Warren	85	117	202
Adam	98	29	127
Kirsten	67	60	127

## Trip Reports

28-September – 3 October 2023

Great Barrier Island

Report by Anne Lawrence

On Thursday afternoon, eight of us met over coffee at Auckland airport before boarding the small plane to Claris. The flight is only 30 minutes but it transports you to a different world – off-grid, windy roads, spiky hills, golden beaches, bush, bush and more bush. Despite the feeling of sparse isolation, Great Barrier Island does have a few shops, a pub and 3 schools! Houses range from basic caravans through every variation of bach to a few grand-looking mega houses.

We piled into our two vehicles (Barry's vehicle, which he parks by the Claris airport, and a rental) and drove to Barry and Christine's place. It's in a beautiful location, amongst bush, close to Awana Beach. There was plenty of room for all of us. We were careful with power and water usage but the solar system and solar water system and water pump coped well with the eight of us.

Over the next 4 ½ days, we explored the island. The weather was inclined to wet, cold and windy so we adapted plans accordingly. With Barry as our guide, we traversed a fair bit of the island. Our first tramp was up to Coopers Castle where we had views over the Island and beyond. We soaked in Kaitoke hot pools (actually not hot, more like tepid, due to the amount of rain). We conquered Hirakimata with its myriad steps, petrel nests and fantastic views ending in the magnificent Windy Canyon. We walked the Haratoaonga Track, a lovely walk along the coast looking out to Rakitu island. We marvelled at the lushness and variety of the bush (of note were the abundant puriri trees) and thick undergrowth (helped by no deer or possums on the island).



*View from Mt Hirakimata. Pic by Martin Lawrence*

We visited Medlands Beach and saw wetlands in various stages of recovery and were impressed by the effort that volunteers have put into replanting. Barry pointed out a number of rare and endangered plants.

We found Claris Museum and Art Gallery well worth a visit and enjoyed a meal at the Irish Pub in Tryphena. On Tuesday we headed back to Claris for the flight back to Auckland and our team went their various ways. I was quite sad to leave – we had spent five very enjoyable days together, and there is still much to explore on the island.





*Photographers in their element.*



*Pics by Janet Wilson*



Thanks to Barry and Christine for generously sharing their place with us, and to Barry for sharing his extensive knowledge and enthusiasm for Great Barrier and its flora and fauna.

We were Barry Scott, Adele Singleton, Jeff Baldwin, Janet Wilson, David Soong, Robert van Bentum, Martin and Anne Lawrence.

**30 September 2023**

**Burton's Whare**

**Report by Nicola Wallace**

I woke up at 6.15am, wondering why it wasn't raining. I'd pulled out of this trip two days before, based on a forecast of rain and low temperatures. But now, with a good morning, I wanted to go. A phone call to Richard, a hurried pack and breakfast, and it was all on.

Seven of us travelled up Scotts Rd and parked down the side road by the gate. It was a cloudy morning with a few spots of rain, and not cold. The conversation flowed freely, and we soon came to the Moturimu Shelter. It looked in good order, but one of its aluminium chairs had been stripped of its cushions and flung over a No Fires sign.

After first morning tea at the picnic table, we left the road and entered the bush, after each being counted by the black post. I waved at its magic eye, even though I knew I was just a number. I'd learned about this counter, along with the new deviation we would follow later, at Dave Grant's Te Araroa talk at club night on Thursday.

The bush was lush and looked in good condition, but there were very few birds. We descended gradually on a good track and emerged at a wide, deep and turbulent side stream. Even the streamside rocks were very slippery. We linked up in twos or threes and crossed safely. Sidling above the Tokomaru River, we saw a deer, and after hearing "baaaaaa", a white goat. After second morning tea, we started on the new detour, which has been cut by Te Araroa volunteers to avoid the slip area, the slip which had blocked the river flow and flooded the track. A DOC sign at the bottom told us not to cross the Tokomaru River.

We started climbing, and climbed.... And climbed ..... and climbed about 200 vertical metres, to around 390m ASL. Along the way we stopped to spot a noisy Paradise Duck (male), sitting in the fork of a high, dead tree. It was a good track, but more of a climb than we expected. Totally floodproof though. As expected, we descended by the same amount, losing our height gain. Apparently this detour track was completed in only 4 work parties. That's hard work for you!

A DOC sign at the bottom told us that the whare site was only 1 minute away, but I didn't believe it, because the figure on the sign was 10 minutes with the 0 crossed out. But the sign was correct, and we arrived at the whare site sooner than I expected. It had taken us 3 ¾ hours to get there, but it didn't feel that long.

We lunched at the picnic table. (Thanks Te Araroa Trust for these picnic tables). Only a few raindrops fell, and it was only a bit chilly, not cold. A few months ago I'd walked Burton's Track, had found a pair of binoculars at the whare site, and hung them up, can't remember where. Today they were still here, hung on the history sign, looking very mouldy. Someone had left an old glass bottle by the table, the words "Essence Coffee Chickory" moulded into the glass. Could it have come from Jim Burton's whare?



After filling our stomachs and admiring the clematis growing high in a totara tree, we set off at about 1pm, up the hill again. The sun was coming out now, and the temperature getting warmer. The hill didn't seem so bad as the track is well cut. I saw two more goats. We flooded our boots once more in the side stream, and started up the loooong climb to the top and the forestry road. Once more the conversation flowed freely as the sky darkened. Once the track flattened out it seemed to drag on and on, though the walking was pleasant enough. Finally we arrived at the road, and another cuppa at the table. Just the road bit to go now.

We arrived back at the cars before 5pm. It was longer than probably any of us expected, due to the new detour. But it was really good! This trip had been listed in the newsletter as E/M but at lunchtime we'd decided it was an E trip, back to back with another E trip. E on the way in, E on the way out. I'm so glad I went.

Thanks to Richard for leading this trip, and to Peter and Richard for the driving.  
We were Richard (leader), Peter, Heather, Verity, Warren, Blair, Nicola.

**8 October 2023**

**Maharahara**

**Report by Heather Knox**

The Maharahara Peak track is generally described as steep and muddy. After what seemed like a LOT of rain in Palmy on Saturday night / early Sunday morning, Verity, Woody and I were wondering what state the track would be in. Would it be too slippery on those steep muddy sections to get to the top?! Who knew? We went off to investigate anyway. Small patches of blue sky were spotted on the way to the road end, so that boded well.



We left the car park around 8.30am and headed up across the farm land, over a couple of stiles and boggy bits, to the Ruahine Forest Park entrance. Once in the bush, the track was less muddy than expected, but the steep sections were still pretty steep!



We stopped after about an hour at a spot with a nice view of the farm land below, and a rainbow, and enjoyed a well deserved snack.

After that we continued up, up, up through the bush and into the clouds, along the tops, reaching the high point around 11am. Unsurprisingly the view was the white inside of a cloud.

So we looked at the sign telling us we were at a view point, checked the map and decided against going further along the track to bag Matanginui as well (another time), took a few photos and then headed back down again.



At the first comfy looking, sheltered from the wind, spot we stopped for an early lunch and watched the clouds blow by. Plus pondered why a fairly new looking fence had been built next to the track there. There wasn't any wind, but it still wasn't that warm, so we headed off again once we'd refueled. Down, down, down. Out of the clouds and back into occasional patches of sun shining through the bush. The last section across the farm land seemed much shorter to go down than come up, and we were all done and taking our boots off at 1.15pm.

Thanks to Verity for leading and driving. A great Sunday trip out with good company.

**20-24 October 2023**

**Summer Kime**

**Report by Ernie Cook**

**Pics by Woody Lee**

The genesis of the idea to leave Palmerston North on the Friday evening and stay over-night at Parawai Lodge was born of a passing comment made in general conversation with a stalwart member of the Club. I thought at the time what a good idea that is, so I filed it away for future reference. We departed Palmerston North just after 8:00 p.m. on the Friday evening and drove to the car-park on Otaki Gorge Road. We were the 14th car into the car-park. Okay, it looks like there could be a few about for the long week-end I thought. We arrived at Parawai Lodge to find quite a few set up in the lodge and in the morning there were three tents pitched nearby. A quick look around the lodge revealed some people had set themselves up on double mattresses so I was hopeful of securing a bed. A couple of blokes were very accommodating and moved up top leaving us 3 mattresses together on the bottom. Tick.



Blair's alarm sounded at 5:00 a.m. and we were on the trail by 6:00 a.m. Tick. We were at Field Hut before 9:00 a.m. and it was here that we encountered our first fellow adventurer of the day, a runner. Table Top was ticked off, so on to Dennan. Again the best approach was to be along the South East Ridge as on our previous climb. This route avoids the band of leatherwood that guards the more direct approach up the West Face. Past Bridge Peak, over Hut Mound and on to Kime Hut. We were first to the hut arriving about 1:00 p.m. We secured three mattresses side by side as I reckoned the hut would be full come evening.

This left us well placed to venture along the main ridge to secure an elusive "V" and "Y" off Vosseler and Yeates respectively. However, despite having just the one pack between us our energy levels were a bit depleted and we succeeded only in mounting Boyd-Wilson's Knob. So back to a full hut where at least four people were to be sleeping on the floor or benches.

Among the people at the hut were four members of the Masterton Tramping Club who were on a "fit" trip, among them, Club Captain, Conrad. He had read our newsletter and seen the Scrabble Challenge Table and was curious as to what it involved. I was able to fill him on the details. Interestingly, they had travelled from the direction of our intended route having spent Friday night at Renata Hut, so we were able to glean some intel about what lay ahead. One of their group had carried 5 litres of water up out from Elder Hut due to the water issues at Kime Hut. A tremendous effort! I had previously laboured up from there with just a day pack.



The morning brought a change in the weather with quite a strong breeze and wetting clag, something that I personally have not experienced much of in the Tararuas. Everyone seemed to be just continuing on with their plans so I reasoned that if it was good enough for them it should be good enough for us. The team certainly never voiced any qualms about continuing. So we rugged up in raincoats, gloves, warm hats and over-trousers for those that had them. I donned my poly-pro longs.

We left about 8:00 a.m. and travelled over Field Peak, Hector and everything in between until we arrived at Aston to head off down to Elder. We met three trampers out of Alpha Hut who reported that Alpha had been full to the rafters the previous evening. Blair was quick to quiz them as to whether any were intending to travel on to Renata Hut but they replied in the negative. We were pleased to get into the shelter of the bush which necessitated a re-arrangement of clothing.







We lunched at Elder Hut, which while a good lunch stop was not so attractive as an overnight stop, with mouldy-looking mattresses.



The weather was brightening up and we could see a couple of ridges that we thought would lead us to where we wanted to go. The track was well enough marked though muddy patches were prevalent along the ridge tops.

We scaled Renata and then began a nice long descent to Renata Hut where Roy was waiting, having tramped in from Otaki Forks Road-end. He had arrived about 20 minutes before us and 5 minutes or so before Woody. He hadn't got the fire going but soon did so and we enjoyed an ambient warmth.

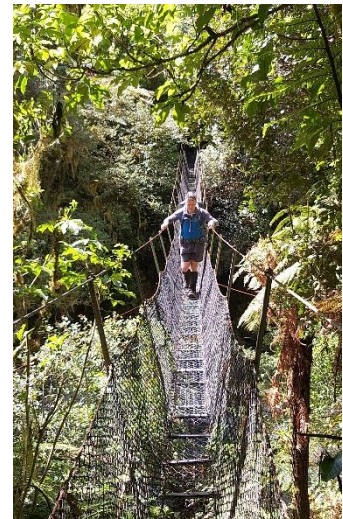


Renata is a lovely hut with a six-mattress platform and is obviously lovingly cared for. Very cosy with a compact bench but possibly lacking a table. The alarm sounded at 6:00 a.m. the next morning but it was 7:30 a.m. before we were ready to leave.

A good flat run to warm up on and then a reasonable climb up to Maymorn Junction high point. A bluebird day and the views across to where we had been the previous day in clag and not able to see anything were amazing. We were able to identify several of the high points that we had traversed.



Morning tea at Waiotauru Hut set on a nice terrace above the river. The last of the scrabble points for this trip. Quite a distance on a four-wheel drive track before changing to a sidle track above the river. We were fortunate to have Roy as he had sussed out the route the previous day and there were some changes in direction that may not have been so obvious to the rest of us. The track crossed a couple of slips, one of which necessitated quite a high and steep detour.



We passed some old machinery from another time as we neared the Otaki Forks camp-site. Once at the camp-site I changed into my hut shoes to give my feet some respite from the hard road surface. We reached the cars at about 3:45 p.m. having enjoyed three quite long days.

It is always satisfying to hear that team members have covered some new ground. For the veteran, Woody, it was all new ground from beyond Hector right around to our end point. For Blair, from above Field to Aston was new including a first of the ten highest Tararua Peaks. Beyond Elder Hut was also new to Blair. We were Woody Lee, Blair Petersen and Ernie Cook trip leader.

**23 October 2023**

**Moonlight Manawatu Gorge**

**Report by Anatolii Tsyplenkov**

During the long weekend of Labour Day, our group of seven went to the well-known Manawatu Gorge route. Despite most of the participants having been on this route before, it was a great weekend training session. Our goal was to practice night navigation and hiking with headlights, but ironically, the night was cloudless and moonlit. As a result, we only needed the flashlights for 20 minutes, but we were able to enjoy a moonlit walk in a pristine nocturnal forest.

The Manawatu Gorge track is a well-trodden trail, at times wide and gentle enough that even Palmerston North street racers could ride. The trail passes through indigenous forest, predominantly fern-covered, but occasionally majestic rimu and kahikatea trees can be seen. At the end of our route in (Sentinel Lookout – Ed.), besides enjoying a delicious dinner and casual conversations about work, we were treated to a magnificent view of the Ashhurst wind farm and the century-old railway running alongside the river in the gorge. Overall, the Manawatu Gorge Track is a place that definitely draws you back. Participants were Anatolii & Veronika, Warren & Robyn, Catherine, Kim, Verity (leader).



*Views from Manawatu Gorge Walk route from Ballance end to Sentinel Lookout*



## PNTMC Newsletter November 2023

- Upcoming Trips and Club Nights
- Christmas Gift Ideas – Books and Posters, Scrabble Challenge progress -
- Trip reports: Great Barrier Island, Burttons Whare, Mharahara, Summer Kime, Moolight Manawatu Gorge

Send articles to

the newsletter editor at [pntmci@gmail.com](mailto:pntmci@gmail.com)



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Send to  
PNTMC  
PO Box 1217  
Palmerston North

### PNTMC Contacts

President	Janet Wilson	329-4722
Vice President	Bruce van Brunt	328 4761
Secretary	Anne Lawrence	357-1695
Treasurer	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Webmaster	Martin Lawrence	357-1695
Membership Enquiries	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Gear Custodian	Anne/Martin Lawrence	357-1695
Newsletter Editor	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Trip Coordinator	Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Beginner Tramps	Robyn Boocock	356-1998
Snowcraft Coordinator	Dieter Stalman	027 450 9460