



Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

www.pntmc.org.nz

PO Box 1217, Palmerston North

Newsletter April 2024



Wondering if the clag will lift on Rangi-Deadmans Loop, Ruahine Forest Park

Pic by Lynette Price

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.

11 April 2024 **AGM**

We would love to see you at the AGM. The business of the AGM will kick off at 7.30pm. Please give some thought to standing for the committee. See Notices for more details.

25 April 2024 **Mystery Topic**

Oh, the suspense. Will it be fun, informative, controversial? A picture show, a competition or a "fireside chat"? Come along and find out.

Upcoming Trips

5 - 7 April 2024 Te Matawai 50th M Blair Petersen 027 600 4263

2024 is the 50th anniversary of the current Te Matawai Hut, so that sounds like a good excuse to go there. The plan is to go into Waiopahu Hut on Friday 5th, lunch at Te Matawai on the 6th and on to Mangahao Flats Hut that night. Walk out to the road end at the top Mangahao dam on the 7th. This will be in conjunction with MTSC (the original Te Matawai Hut was built by MTSC) and am hoping to have the use of the MTSC van for transport at both ends.

7 April 2024 Beginners Tramp #3 E/M Robyn Wheeler 06 356 1998

The third in our Beginner series, this time we walk up to Blue Range Hut in the eastern Tararua Ranges. It involves a steady uphill climb through beautiful forest to a quirky hut with views across to the main range. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

13-14 April 2024 TBA

If anyone would like to lead a trip this weekend please call Warren 06 356 1998.

14 April 2024 Mangaweka Rail Tunnels E/M Malcolm Leary 06 327 7825

A variation on Malcolm's annual Farm Walk. The 7 km Mangaweka Deviation opened in 1981 with the old railway line and tunnels converted to a walkway. The tunnels are quite long so you will need to bring a torch. Instead of returning the same way we may drive up to Manui Road and walk over to Egmont Peak (839m asl) for the spectacular view if the weather is fine. Depart Milverton Park at 7.30am.

20-21 April 2024 TBA

If anyone would like to lead a trip this weekend please call Warren 06 356 1998.

21 April 2024 Ross Peak E/M Warren Wheeler 06 356 1998

This prominent local peak is up in the leatherwood of the Ruahine Ranges. Access is from No.2 Line off Pohangina East Road. I must admit despite all my years here I have never actually been there. Check out the trip report in the November 2020 Newsletter. Depart Milverton Park 7.30am.

27-28 April 2024 Birding Adventure M Chris Tuffley 06 359 2530

We will be seeing how many birds we can add to the NZ Bird Atlas. Destination will depend on the weather etc. Contact Chris for details.

28 April 2024 Roaring Stag M Verity Elder 021 260 1885

A return day trip to the delightfully situated Roaring Stag Hut. From the Putara Road end we make our way up to the Herepai/Roaring Stag junction before dropping down to the hut. Return via the same route.

4-5 May 2024 TBA

If anyone would like to lead a trip this weekend please call Warren 06 356 1998.

5 May 2024 Beginners Tramp #4 E/M Robyn Wheeler 06 356 1998

The last in our Beginner series, this time to the Wharite transmission tower at the south end of the Ruahine Ranges. We will follow the Coppermine Creek track then head up the Wharite track through bush to the leatherwood belt, which can be a bit muddy. On a clear day there are 360 degree panoramic views over our local region and beyond.

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	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.

Notices

AGM 11 April 2024

Venue: Quakers Hall, 227 College Street, PN.
Time: Doors open 7.15pm for meeting start at 7.30pm. Supper to follow along with a Committee Cake Competition.

If you would like to help with the running of the club we welcome your nomination to join the Committee. Nomination forms will be available on the night.

If you are unable to attend please send your apologies to Anne Lawrence, Club Secretary or any other Committee Member.

Outdoor First Aid Course

On Saturday 8 June 2024 there will be a one day course for 10 members, ideally trip leaders and Snowcraft Instructors. It will be held at Pohangina Hall and run by Peak Safety. Participants will receive a certificate but it is not a full NZQA course. The club has obtained funding from Eastern and Central Trust but participants will also need to pay a small fee (\$30 each – to be confirmed).

If there is enough interest from members then we could consider holding another course next year. Contact Robyn Wheeler 06 356-1998.

Hut Upgrade and Maintenance

Mid-Pohangina Hut Upgrade

Pics by Janet Wilson

Over the four days 7-10 March 2024 a work party carried out annual maintenance as well as helped to install a new roof and wood burner to upgrade the old fireplace. Our team painted a new colour scheme on the outside with the inside due to be done in the next month or so. The opportunity was also taken to install a water tank and stand. Well done to PNTMC members Janet Wilson, Kirsten Olsen and Chris Rayner (the designated builder). They were flown in to Mid-Poh along with materials and equipment and three DOC workers including Monika Coles (who is also a club member).



Before the makeover



New colour scheme and water tank.



The old fireplace



Chris Rayner with new woodburner installed.



One of many helo loads



Kirsten sanding before the paint goes on

Ngamoko Hut Maintenance

Report by Michelle Benton.

On the same weekend 9-10 March 2024, Neil and I made it into Ngamoko Hut and back out again (*a good walk both ways, no helicopter ride for them – Ed*) and managed some painting in between.

The hut was dry so we washed and sanded and painted. We did two coats.

We did the boards which had just had primer but while the paint was out we also cleaned, sanded, filled, painted the two front corners as well as they were bare and deteriorating at their bottom edges.



Someone had emptied a pan of hot fat out the back window so we cleaned all that off and repainted that section of wall under the window. There was also quite a large crack opening up on the side so we filled and painted that too. We gave the rest of the walls a brush down.

We heard the whio in the evenings but I didn't manage to see them on the river.

Had a great weekend.



Nice Job at Ngamoko Hut

Trip Reports

3 March 2024

Beginner Tramp #2- Rangiwahia

Report by Robyn Wheeler

It was a day of mystery and mists. Warren and I met the other trampers at Colyton and proceeded to Rangiwahia in two cars. Unfortunately, the group left Milverton Park without Brenda and Mario who alas were just a little too late.

Six of us set out at 0930 from the carpark. The cloud never did lift, however we had only a few drops of rain and the temperature was very pleasant for the walk up to the Rangiwahia Hut. It was an uneventful tramp and we arrived at the hut by 1100. Some exploring of the hut and surrounds was enjoyed.



After a leisurely lunch and augmented by Warren's Watermelon we headed back down. There was some idle talk about going further however with no view out it lacked appeal.

The only excitement of the day was my faceplant onto the track at the junction of the slip diversion. Thanks to Rose and Bronwen for their swift first aid, sympathy from husband and the group. How quickly it all happens! Lots of stories of mishaps then shared which made the rest of the walk down fly by arriving back at the cars at 1.30pm.

We travelled home by the scenic inland route to Apiti or Main South Road stopping to enjoy the ambience of the Apiti Pub. Not a long day, however Warren and I diverted to London's Ford and had a quick swim. A very nice way to spend the day.

We were Robert, Bronwen, Rose and Peter D, Robyn, and Warren

9 March 2024

Archey's Lookout

Report by Woody Lee

Jo and I met Nicola, Robyn and Warren at Milverton Park on Saturday morning. Nicola picked Brenda and Mario up before the Manawatu river bridge then picked Kim up at Kahuterawa Road.

We arrived at Poulton Dr road end at 8.30 and met Leonie who came from Levin.



We crossed a wide stream before the farm gate and met a farmer on his farm bike. We got into a nice grassy campsite with a toilet block after crossing the paddock, and then continued crossing many small streams until we walked up about 400m of elevation.

We stopped at Archey's lookout to enjoy the views. We all agreed to continue walking up to the Horowhenua lookout (671m) for our lunch.

It was a steep uphill and not easy to find the orange markers. We missed the markers a couple of times. We arrived at our destination shortly after mid-day.

To my disappointment, we didn't get nice views from the Horowhenua lookout because of overgrown trees blocking the views. (*Taller people stood on the wooden seating platform to see out but the view was obscured by a cloudy haze – Ed.*) We had a lovely lunch under the sunshine. Warren carried a watermelon all the way to the top and kindly shared with us, which was nice.



We descended after taking a group photo on the platform.

We got back to Archey's lookout in 20 minutes and walked down crossing about 20 streams again to the carpark. On our way down, we met two solo Te Araroa Trail walkers doing their NOBO.

We stopped at Shannon dairy for an ice cream. Many thanks to Nicola for leading this fantastic trip. Participants were Brenda, Mario, Kim, Jo, Leonie, Robyn, Warren, Nicola and Woody.

10 March 2024

Ohau Gorge - Roy's Last Hurrah.

**Report Sarah Bramwell
Photos Warren Wheeler**

We met at Poads Road End close to 8.15 with Warren and Roy arriving in style in a cloud of dust in the 1976 Renault. Roy thought Warren's parking could have been a bit tidier!

Roy announced that this was possibly going to be his last trip with the PNTMC as he heads down to Takaka. (*See "Last Hurrah" by Roy later in this newsletter – Ed.*) It was special to spend the day with him on his last walk with the club (but we hope he might get back for a tramp or two in the future).



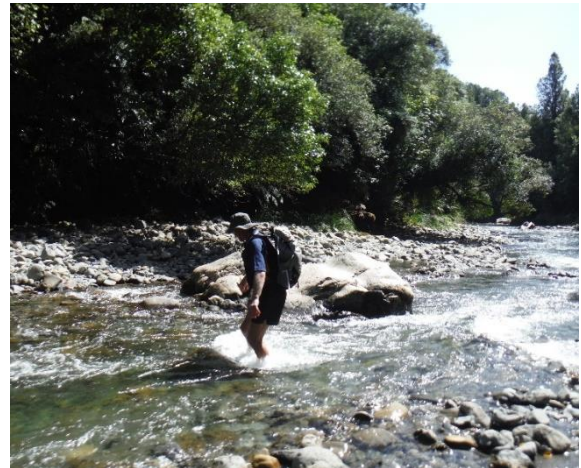
The walk in over the farm (thanks to the farmer) was amongst a variety of cattle who were all calm. Quickly into the bush and followed the sidle track above the Ohau Gorge. The slip that was talked about was easily passable and then we crossed the Blackwater Stream Bridge just upstream from the confluence with the Ohau River. We made a quick detour to show me the link track to the river route for the journey to South Ohau Hut then back to the confluence to start the river adventure.

A quick snack and I put on my wetsuit top which is ideal for river swimming. It felt quite cool to start but after a few minutes we adjusted – the river was at a reasonable level and it was a warm day.



Not long in both Warren and I sat down on some rocks as he lost his footing when we were crossing a swift part.

It was fun looking for the best route as we got to various deep-water pools, sometimes a rock scramble was needed or in my case found it easier just to swim – my two companions had a distinct height advantage!



The nikau palms and jade green river make it feel tropical such stunning scenery.

After a few hours we stopped for lunch and boots were taken off to empty out the gravel, then Warren unpacked some watermelon to share, which was greatly appreciated.

Post-lunch it didn't take long to get to the now defunct water intake - you have to admire the work that would have gone into these structures.



Roy and Warren entered the intake behind a steel panel but having spied *Dolomedes aquaticus* (a fine specimen at 7cm plus) I decided it was safer in the river.





Roy tried his best to move one of the steel railway irons in the river, but it was not to be budged.

Warren leapt up the bank not long afterwards to find the old 4WD track that links back to the farm track and Roy the good sort that he is picked up an old frypan and beer cans that had been left behind by past visitors.

A debrief, a farewell to Roy and another look at Warren's parking and we all agreed it had been a bloody good day in the Ohau Gorge.

We were Warren Wheeler, Roy Rolston, Sarah Bramwell.

17 March 2024

Deadmans Loop

Report by Nicola Wallace

Our leader Verity got her 3 passengers to the track start at 8.45am, where we met up with Lynette (from near Palmerston North), Mark (from Taihape) and Sarah (from Waikanae) who had come in their own cars. We were off at 9.15am. It was a cloudy morning, but the forecast was for improving weather.



Soon after we started the walk towards Rangiwahia Hut we came across the most beautiful stinkwort fungus at the side of the track, pink and looking very anemone like with brown stuff in the middle that looked like.....poo.

Once over the arched bridge we met a group of happy kids who'd spent the night in the hut, and by the time we arrived there for morning tea we were up in the cloud, it was quite chilly and only a couple of early day walkers were in the hut.

It was raincoats on after morning tea, with no sign of the forecast clearing weather. I really enjoyed the walk up through the tussock, but we didn't stop at the Triangle Hut turnoff or Mangahuia (1583m ASL) for more than a couple of minutes as there was absolutely no view, and it was very chilly. Verity sensibly had us stop at the tarn in the dip for lunch, very sheltered and quite warm. It was cool to see some pipit birds fly over.





Soon after lunch, not far down the Deadmans Track, the clouds miraculously parted in just a couple of minutes and we finally got our view. I took the lead for the first time and enjoyed the “different” view, as I usually walk around this loop in the opposite direction. Then a pipit landed on a waratah not far in front. He stayed while I managed to get a (zoomed in) photo.

The track was wet underfoot in the trenched bits, and it was cool splashing through. We checked out the campsite and the nearby tarn (about 45 minutes up from the bottom). The last couple of kilometres down to the carpark were quite steep, but the bush was beautiful with lots of beech and horopito. This part of the track seemed longer coming down than my memories of going up it, but I noticed more coming down.

We arrived back at the start at 3.30pm – 6 hrs and 15mins after setting off.

Many thanks to Verity for organising this tramp, and for the driving. She had some liaising to do, with people coming from different places. Thanks for everyone else for their good company, and good tramping pace.

We were: Verity (leader), Ernie, Heather, Peter, Lynette, Sarah, Mark, Nicola

Last Hurrah by Roy Rolston

Last Hurrah! Yes, I was back in Palmy for the week to finalize things before moving the last of our stuff and myself to our new house in Takaka, Golden Bay.

We had decided to keep our house in Palmy and rent it out for now. There were a couple of things I had to do to comply with healthy homes, one of them was easy, the other was a lot more daunting. From the upstairs shower, I had to modify and add more ducting to what I had and run it to an outside wall vent. To find a good place to drill a hole for the vent up very high off the ground on the front of our house, I had visions of having to at least hire scaffolding or maybe a cherry picker.

After some investigation I finally thought I would just try using the ladders I had and without giving away any details here, presto I found a way. Cool bananas! That was the easiest part, everything else was a nightmare. Crawling around in very tight dusty spaces in the ceiling was not fun and with my outstretched arms I could only just reach to secure the ducting with tape to the vent housing. There were a lot of expletives as I got it done.

So in reward, I confirmed with Warren, I would join his river bash trip to restore my mental health. How hard can it be?

Not one to be that keen in wading through deep pools of cold river water I took the plunge so to speak and turned up a Milverton in my 30 year old Corolla to meet Warren in his God-knows-how-old French jalopy (48 years old, assembled in NZ – Ed.). So here we are, two old farts cruising along heading south in a dunga Renault to plunge into a river of cold water. Was this normal? Well at least one other thought it was when we met Sarah waiting for us at the end of Poads Road.

(See Sarah’s report – Ed.)



Yes, a few deep wades and one swim for me, I arrived back to Warren`s car in one piece and more importantly my head was in a good place. It had indeed been a good day.

But I was also in a sad place, as essentially this was my last trip with the club.

Hey, I want to thank everyone I have tramped with, sharing experiences along the way and tackling the ups and downs together to get to the other end.

Sometimes that was hard but mostly the sense of achievement to push boundaries and win while engaging in an environment we love is what I signed

up for and that's what I got. Thank You all for that.

Some of the **highlights** that come to mind are:

Snowcraft: Climbing Ruapehu Crater Lake, Tongariro: Awesome! Thanks Grant, Chris, Dieter and the team, **Sawtooth Ridge:** We DID it! Thanks Monika, Chris. **Tararua TA,** sun, overfull hut, rain, wind, fog, lost, drama, exhaustion, paradise, great scenery, we had it all, plus Covid for me after, thanks Ernie and Blair. **Dundas Bucket List Loop:** no wind, clear for miles, overfull hut, fantastic sunrise, thanks Woody, Brendon and Monika. **Matariki: Mataikona, Castle Point, Riversdale,** A fun time, food feast, board games, fancy dress, seashore, waves, Castle Rock, boogie boarding and the stars, thanks Janet, Graham, Lawrence, Jo, Stephen, Kirsten etc. **Cattle Ridge Hut:** First time thanks Martin, Anne and Rachel. **Pouakai Circuit:** Mt Taranaki grandeur personified everywhere! Tarn magic, Bells Falls naked dip, Dave`s bivvy, thanks Kathy, Jon, Liette and David. **Mokai and Ruahine Trapping:** Heli In, Heli out, Teams, Remote, Wild. Thanks Janet and team Whio Protection. **Kime Hut in Snow:** Magical, potholing, frozen feet, cold hut to ourselves, rainbows. Thanks Ernie, Monika and Jorinna. **Ruahine Tops Trapping:** calm, cloudy, fog, gale, lost track, regroup, retreat, extra night Iron Gate. Thanks Michelle. **Waiopahu Hut Loop:** Easy as, full hut, views, return Gable End, cross slip??, home, Covid, Covid, Covid oh no! Thanks Ernie, Warren, Robyn and Nicola. **Trapping Top Gorge:** windy, whio, high, tough going, mission done. Thanks Chris. **Club Night Bike Adventure:** Epic, Sore, Park Up, Covid, Restart, Great story well told. Thanks Richard. **Ohau River Gorge Bash:** Oh no! slippery, cold water, dark, deep, swim, come on sun, knee knocking, arse up, secret tunnel, dry clothes, ice cream. Thanks Warren and Sarah. **Plus many others,** but hopefully some of these will spur back good memories for you as well.

Well that's about it, I might just sneak back from time to time and catch a club trip, but for now I look forward to exploring the South Island. And rest assured, I am not joining a commune, another Gloriavale, religious cult, hippy hangout, although I have to say there is definitely more hippy-like characters around here. So I don't consider to have lost the plot, let's say I am just joining some alternative thinking people, some very clued up indeed I must say, to explore a more intentional communal way of living. It is very new and raw at the moment but I am confident it will all evolve over time to something unique and extraordinary. Time will tell.

Thanks again, it was a pleasure and I will miss you all.

Cheers Roy

PS: I am working on my next and final Nepal video. Look out for that coming soon.



PNTMC Newsletter

April 2024

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- Trip Reports on recent day trips
- Last Hurrah by Roy Rolston

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