



# Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club

## Newsletter August 2026

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

c/- Society of Friends, 227 College St, PN



PNTMC 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee, Rangī Woods.

L to R: Llew Prichard, Jenny Prichard, Dave Grant, Gaewyn Grant, Woody Lee, Penny Abercrombie, Janet Maessan, Peter Darragh, Mick Leyland, Pauline Coy, Graham Peters, Nicola Wallace, Neil Benton, Michelle Benton, Suzanne Jensen, Vern Jensen, Trish Eder, Warren Wheeler, Kathy Corner, Ernie Cook, Anne Lawrence, Chris Saunders, Janet Wilson, Richard Lockett, Doug Strachan, Harley Betts, Roy Rolston, Chirs Morton, Tina Bishop, Sue Pither, Tim Short, Robyn Wheeler, Debbie Short, Sally Hewson, Yvonne van der Does, Bruse van Brunt, Martin Lawrence

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## Club Nights

*Club nights are 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.*

**Thu 13<sup>th</sup> August**

**Ruahine Whio Forever**

**Janet Wilson**

Janet recently gave a presentation to Forest and Bird updating the Oroua and Pohangina Blue Duck Protection Projects post Cyclone Gabrielle and will repeat this talk at club night – with a few more updates and some lovely photos included. The Ruahine Whio Protectors annual “Wild Ruahine” calendar will be available that evening for early sales. Come along and support the volunteers working in the Ruahines.

**Thu 27<sup>th</sup> July**

**PNTMC Club Photo Competition**

**Chris Tuffley**

Our annual photo comp to show off your best images in a range of categories. Details in the August Newsletter. Placegetters will be entered in the Interclub Photo Comp and FMC Photo

## Upcoming Trips

**Sat 8th August Snowballs at Sunrise** *Easy-Medium*

**Anne Lawrence**

**027 450 4212**

Either Saturday or Sunday depending on the best weather. A classic winter trip in the Ruahines. The track up to Sunrise Hut is regarded as the popular "jewel in the crown" for the Hawkes Bay region, passing through tall rimu at the bottom to low mountain beech near the top. We may carry on to Armstrong Saddle for views to Mt Ruapehu (depends on weather and people). Depart Milverton Park at 7.30am.

**Sun 23rd August Rangī Snowballs** *Easy*

**Doug Strachan**

**06-353 6526**

A favourite winter trip up to Rangiwahia Hut for some fun in the snow. Depart 8.00am Milverton Park.

**Sat 29th August - Sun 30th August Cow Creek Hut** *Medium*

**Janet Wilson**

**027 341 8945**

Plenty of variety on this Tararua trip, including a secret hollow rimu tree, cute Blue Range Hut, goblin beech forest, swing bridge and a classic ex-Forest Service hut for the night. Depart 7.30am Milverton Park.

**Trips beyond August can be viewed on the club website [‘trip card.’](#)**

**Trip Grading** - Trip grades depend on many factors, including weather and terrain. A reasonably proficient tramper 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  |
| BWD = Best weather day of a weekend |             |

Other Grades:

- Family (Fam)
- Technical skills (T)
- Inst (Instruction)

**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, there is probably a good reason for the delay. If you are in any doubt, please phone Bruce van Brunt 06 328 4761 or Verity Elder 0212601885

## Life Membership

The Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club (PNTMC) grants Life Membership to acknowledge individuals who have made outstanding, long-term contributions to the club. Historically, the club has capped this honoured group at three to four active members at any given time.

Life Membership PNTMC details include:

- The Process: Nominations are typically reviewed by the committee and voted on by members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM),
- The Privileges: Life members are exempt from paying the standard annual subscription fees, which are typically \$30 for individuals or \$35 for families.
- Notable Past Life Members: Historic honourees of the club include prominent figures such as Kevin Pearce, Lawson Pither, Russ Lacey, Owen Jensen, Peter Wiles, Terry Crippen and Tony Gates.

Notable Past Life Members: Historic honourees of the club include prominent figures such as Russ Lacey, Owen Jensen, Kevin Pearce, Lawson Pither, Peter Wiles, Terry Crippen and Tony Gates.

We currently have two Life Members, Kevin Pearce (elected in 1985, retired in Hokitika) and Peter Wiles (elected in 2005). Terry Crippen was also elected in 2005 but sadly passed away on 9 January 2020. Our most recent life member was Tony Gates, elected in 2013, only a few months before he passed away on 18 December, following a prolonged illness.

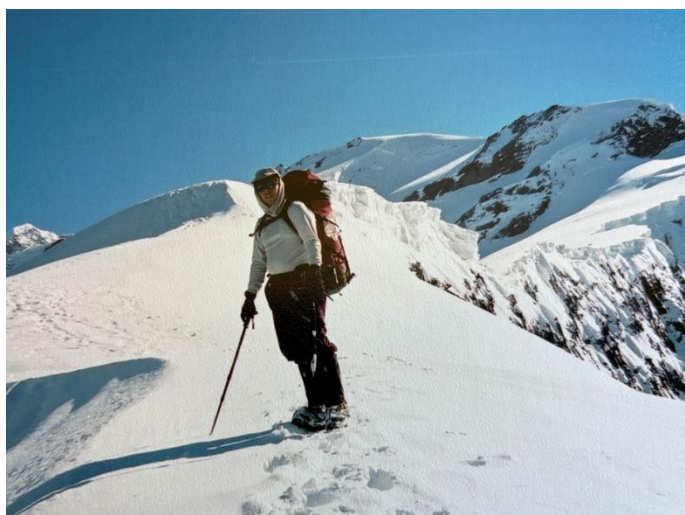
### **Bruce van Brunt – Proposed for Life Membership**

The Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club (PNTMC) grants Life Membership to acknowledge individuals who have made outstanding, long-term contributions to the club. Apart from the honour and recognition they also receive free on-going membership of the club.

At the AGM last year, we farewelled Bruce van Brunt after 30 years on the Committee, in various roles including time as President. A short note in the following newsletter mentioned that his experience with organising Snowcraft, alpine gear and making funding applications will be missed.

That was something of an understatement. Now, in proper recognition of his outstanding contribution to the club, the Committee nominates Bruce for Life Membership, voted on by members at the AGM.

Bruce joined the club in 1991, soon after arriving from the USA to teach Mathematics at Massey University. He attended Snowcraft that year, primarily to acquaint himself with New Zealand conditions after already having alpine experience in the mountains of the USA and Europe. His enthusiasm resulted in him being elected to the Committee. In 1994 and his expertise was immediately put to good use as a “helper” on Snowcraft that year. Little did he know that would be the start of 20 years involvement with Snowcraft, and 30 years on the Committee.



As Snowcraft Coordinator for many years he was instrumental in revolutionising the course content, equipment and safety. An instruction syllabus was introduced to ensure consistent tuition of best practise techniques; old club gear was replaced with full sets of modern gear for up to 10 students; and safety enhanced by the purchase of avalanche transceivers, shovels and probes. This more formal approach was

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aimed at not only improving outcomes for club members but also to promote the course to the wider public. Bruce was largely responsible for making the successful funding applications to Eastern and Central Community Trust to help fund the cost of the new equipment purchased over the years, as well as course fees for Outdoor First Aid and an Advanced Training Course for Instructors at Mt Cook.

Bruce recognised that future funding applications would more likely succeed if the community benefit was more intrinsically obvious and to that end, after being elected President in 2008, he was instrumental in the club becoming registered as a Charity instead of simply an Incorporated Society. We are one of the few tramping clubs that has taken this significant step.

His passion for climbing was shared with numerous others who accompanied him on many trips over the years. Our annual "Who has Done What" list records that he climbed almost 70 peaks in the 20 years from 1994 to 2015. Most of these have been in the Southern Alps, including repeat climbs to favourites such as Mt Sefton, Mt Aspiring, the Minarets, Rolleston and Ollivier.

He immortalised his first ascent of Mt Aspiring with an epic four-part trip report in the August – December 1995 newsletters. This was so memorable that it was awarded the Mills and Boon Award for Longest Trip Report that year and in 2015 was reproduced in the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee book "Old Boots and Packs". He went on to climb Aspiring four more times with various other club members over the years.

On trips back to the USA he has been able to include significant climbs in Washington, USA such as Mt Rainier (1996) and Mt Sherman (2010), while in South Korea he climbed the more modest but beautiful Odaesan (2007). Bruce has been particularly fond of our tongue-in-cheek annual awards, especially the Dave Hodges Award for Excellence in Pursuit of Forgetfulness, "our most prestigious award". These awards help to foster a sense of camaraderie and humility, important characteristics to help us in our appreciation of the outdoors.

It is therefore with no hesitation Bruce was nominated and elected to Life Membership at the 2026 AGM.

## Notices

### **PNTMC Photo Competition 2026**

Taken any good photos lately? Enter them in our annual photo competition and let our expert judge decide the best three images in each category - an audience vote (show of hands) will then determine first, second and third places. Placegetters in each category will be entered in the Interclub Photo Competition; and the first and second place images in the FMC categories (everything apart from Overseas and Topical) will be entered in the FMC Photo Competition.

#### Categories are:

- ABOVE BUSHLINE (With no Human Element) - ABN
- ABOVE BUSHLINE (With a Human Element) - ABW
- BELOW BUSHLINE (With no Human Element) - BBN
- BELOW BUSHLINE (With a Human Element) - BBW
- NATIVE FLORA, FAUNA AND FUNGI - NFF
- LONG EXPOSURE - LE
- OVERSEAS - OS
- TOPICAL - TOP

Photo competition rules are consistent with those of FMC – winners of our competition are automatically entered into the FMC competition. Entries for all categories must be taken on or after 1 September 2025; photos cannot have been entered before; and apart from photos entered in the Overseas category, all images must be taken in New Zealand, which is defined as within our Exclusive Economic Zone. Removal or insertion of features not in the original image during postprocessing is **not** allowed.

The definition of a “human element” is flexible but the general intention is: Where the photo contains as anything other than as a very minor feature: people, a hut, a track sign/marker, bridge, ice axe and anything else that has been introduced by humans into the environment, then we would define that as having “a Human Element”. But if a photo has what could be called a Human Element, but that element is very small, inconsequential, and not a feature in the photo then you could count it as “No Human Element”.



PNTMC 2025 Photo Competition: Below bushline with a human element: 'Riverside Camp' – Emma Gregg

Definition of “Long Exposure”: The intention of the long exposure category is for photography of scenes that the naked eye cannot normally comprehend. These shots would require a very long exposure and the use of a tripod. The category is intended for highly technical images of shots taken at night, (including star trails), or in extremely low light situations such as caves or canyons. The category is not intended for normal dusk/dawn photography, or images where a long exposure is used to ‘blur’ the image (such as flowing water, or movement of the subject). This category is intended to encourage more entries, by separating such highly technical photos into their own category. We hope to get more participation from entrants who are not put off by the thought of having to compete with such highly technical photos.

Definition of “Topical”: People in tramping related activities.

Name your entries with the 2/3 letter code for the category followed by the image title: for example 'ABN Ruapehu Sunset.jpg' for an image titled "Ruapehu Sunset" entered in the Above Bushline with no human element category.

Submit your entries by emailing them to [pntmcphotocomp@gmail.com](mailto:pntmcphotocomp@gmail.com) (a cloud storage link such as Dropbox/Google Drive/etc is preferred), or by giving them to Chris Tuffley (021 167 6423) on a USB stick.

**Deadline: Thursday 13 August 2026**

#### Book launch on NZ women mountaineers.

This new title includes Catherine Jackson mother (an ex club member). This is what Catherine says about her:

*“Gillian Soper was her name before she married - she did climbs in the late 1940's & early 50's, using a guide until my father came along. Several first ascents - first party to do the Grand Traverse of cook (all 3 peaks) using Zirbriggen's route up. First up Hamilton & Malte Brun from the east. Did lots of other spectaculars including De la Beche (full of massive crevasses) as well as Tasman (caught in snowstorm on return, with guide had to bivvy, and returned to find search party scraping the latest avalanches for them - Urk). Died 2024.”*

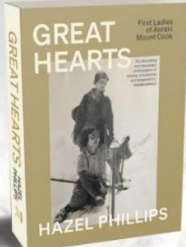


**Film:** The forthcoming release of ‘EVEREST DARK’ by Demand Film.nz will be screening at Event Cinemas on Tuesday September 8 at 6.30pm. <https://tickets.demand.film/event/13572>

Massey University Press warmly invites you to the launch of a new book by Hazel Phillips

## GREAT HEARTS

The First Ladies of Aoraki Mount Cook



Hazel will talk about the historic feats of early women climbers in the Mount Cook region and the barriers they faced. The book will be launched by mountaineer Jo Morgan

Wednesday 9 September, 5.30 for a 6pm start  
Tararua Tramping Club, 4 Moncrieff St  
Mount Victoria, Wellington

UNITY BOOKS



**The Tramping Life podcast** - If you're looking for some tramping-related listening, Wellington based tramper Jonty Crane has spoken with trampers, mountaineers, conservationists, authors and advocates about their outdoor experiences. Episodes cover favourite tramps, huts, conservation, outdoor culture and memorable backcountry experiences. The Tramping Life is on all major podcast platforms or at [www.thetramplinglife.com](http://www.thetramplinglife.com).

Guests have included Peter Hillary, Lou Sanson, Lydia Bradey, Craig Potton, Geoff Spearpoint, Megan Dimozantos, Rob Brown from the Backcountry Trust, and Victoria & Emilie Bruce.

## Matariki Weekend at Rangi Woods – (10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> July).

Report by Nicola Wallace

Photos by Nicola Wallace and Marti Lawrence

I arrived at Camp Rangi Woods at the same time as Michelle, her car loaded with food for all 38 of us present at the Jubilee. Even though I was early, lots of people had already arrived, and there was a happy bustle about the place. Ex members had come from both North and South Islands. Ten years ago, at the 50<sup>th</sup>, I had happily slept in my tent, but this time it was a bit cold, and worse, the ground was saturated, so I checked out the bunkrooms, luxurious as each are equipped with a heater. The main lounge room had a large woodstove, already pumping out heat. After a beautiful soup and bread lunch, many took off to do the Fern Walk. I set off to explore the nearby tracks through the Totara forest and check out the new slip that had fallen into the Pohangina River. It was important not to be late back, so as not to miss the gumboot throwing taking place at about 4pm.

Warren set up 2 stacks of firewood on the concrete outside the lounge. The object wasn't to throw the white gumboot between them, but to knock them over. I proved to be hopeless at it, but a few club members did very well, one knocking both over.



Later Neil fired up the barbeque outside, and dinner was “build your own burgers”, delicious. Michelle and Janet worked tirelessly in the kitchen over the jubilee, and there was also lots of home baking brought along by able club cooks. After dinner, some set off to visit the glowworms, which entailed a stream walk in gumboots, but I stayed back and sat in front of the woodstove. There was good entertainment: a display of stoves dating from the old white-spirits Optimus stoves, the newer MSR Whisperlite, Warren's old gas Blewitt, and a very tiny modern gas stove that looked like a BRS3000. Also tramping photos were projected onto a screen, playing in random order.

I didn't sleep well that first night, but a 6am rising to get ready for the Rangiwahia Hut tramp banished any sleepiness. Some departed at 7.30am, most at 8am and the weather looked good on arrival at the carpark. We had lovely views of Mt Ruapehu on the way up the hill, the sight of beautiful long ice crystals at the waterfall, and snow and ice underfoot approaching the hut. It was very cold outside, and some of us opted to eat lunch inside, as the woodstove was going. Sue Pither, our club Patron, held a small ceremony to honour both Rangiwahia Hut, and her late husband, former club President and Patron Lawson Pither. Sue gathered some ice crystals and sticks in a container, placed it in the centre of the table, and recited a passage out of “Shelter From the Storm”, detailing how in 1967 the third version of Rangiwahia Hut was built by PNTMC. The new woodstove that was dropped by helicopter on Mangahuia and sledged (runaway sledged) down to the hut on a sheet of iron. It was very special.

We set off from the hut at 12 noon, and drizzle started, turning to full rain by the time we reached the bottom. We had to be back at Rangi Woods by 3pm, for the club photo, the "Best Dressed" awards, and the cutting of the PNTMC 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cake, baked at home by Michelle. Warren of course won an award for his rustic and colourful tramping garb, so did Ernie for his balaclava-hat, I'm sure there were others which I've forgotten, and I was rapt to win a Ruahine Huts poster for my well preserved and colourful NZ made polar fleece jacket that I bought in the 1990s, about 20 years before I started tramping.



The 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee cake was stunning, with the PNTMC logo on top. It seemed a pity to have to cut it up, it was such a work of art. Well done, Michelle! I didn't eat any at the time, as I had just stuffed myself with nibbles. Some members had come just to attend these events this afternoon, so the lounge started to feel quite full.

Dinner was eaten by candlelight, the lights turned off, black tablecloths and candles at each table; it was kind of like eating in a hut. A lot of hard work had gone in to setting this up while we had enjoyed Rangi. Dinner was absolutely delicious, chicken, stew, and a huge choice of veges, and little rolls. Crumble for dessert.



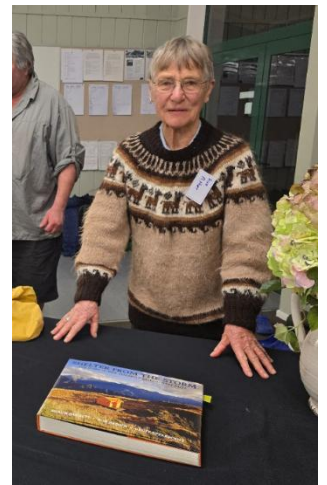
It was a busy evening. Sue Pither dedicated a copy of "Shelter from the Storm" to the club, with the suggestion that over time, club members attempt to bag the huts within the book and keep a record of these with the book. What a great suggestion to create a lasting legacy. Bruce van Brunt was put forward to become a Life Member of the Club (to be approved at the AGM). Bruce has had a long association with the club, and has contributed much, especially on the alpine side of things, and with fundraising for courses and equipment. Also, Janet gave a talk about the huts that our club looks after: Mid Pohangina Hut and Ngamoko Hut.

I ran out of steam, and was falling asleep by 8.30pm, so I missed the quiz, and headed to bed. Though I'm sure I heard some singing coming from the lounge as I toddled to the bunkroom.

I awoke to a good frost the next morning. White, crunchy grass and frozen puddles. Wherever I walked around the camp, I was generally followed by at least one Fantail, and I loved that. After a leisurely breakfast, there was a relaxing time before we cleaned up the place. Ice was scraped off car windscreens with credit and AA cards, and gradually people made their way home.

Many thanks to Michelle and Janet, for taking on the huge workload of all the food preparation, the meals were beautiful, and to Anne, and all the organisers. It was a great jubilee, and I know that all too soon we'll be celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup>!









## 'Across the Pass.' A collection of tramping stories by Shaun Barnett.

The 60th Jubilee celebration included a tramp to Rangiwahia Hut. At the hut, Sue Pither read a quote from Lawson's book 'Across the Pass' about the transport of a fireplace to Rangiwahia Hut.

**From Barnett's 'Across the Pass' (2021)**

### **LAWSON PITHER – The Stove at Rangi Hut (1993)**

".... A group of four, comprising of the President (Pither) and three committee members, decided that the stove appealed as a worthwhile project but the club had no spare funds and so economy was to be the name of the game. One Saturday, the four set off with a trailer to investigate the Balance to Pahiatua area, searching for lone chimneys (the result of house fires). The theory was that most of the chimneys could have a stove at the foot. There were many of these chimneys in this area but the years of weathering the majority were in appallingly bad condition or had been removed for use in the 'new house.'



After inquires concerning many chimneys, a generous farmer gave this group of eccentrics a reasonably good sample of the stove maker's art, which finished up in the writer's garden shed (cum garage). None of the group had experience in the field of stove engineering but it was decided to strip down and rebuild it. The stripping was completed and the shed, which comfortably accommodated a car, became full of sooty parts.

The group met regularly with much socialising, tea drinking etc, and after about six weeks, the job was done at no cost to the club. It was time for the trail run and the little beauty was moved into the garden and stoke up. She drew perfectly and an experiment with water in the wet back pipe was tried and had unexpected results. A jet of super-heated water shot out and demolished a row of Brussels sprouts. We decided then that a hot water service in the hut was beyond the group's capability.

The second phase was to deliver the stove to Rangi Hu. At the time our club had an excellent relationship with the New Zealand Forest service who very kindly offered to deliver the stove by helicopter. All they required was for it to be delivered to their base at Pohangina. The group was delighted to comply with the above and in due course farmers in the Rangiwahia area were surprised to see a helicopter with a stove suspended underneath heading in towards Rangi Hut in very cloudy conditions.

A message was received from NZFS that the pilot could not see the hut but had put the stove down on a knob which showed through the clouds. A search party from the club found the lost stove about a mile from the hut on the snow-covered slopes of Mangahuia.

It was easy to fix the stove onto a sheet of galvanised iron, and with ropes on each corner behold a sledge!

What developed was that the arranged load hurtled down hills at high speed, the President abandoned ship and the front rope party shot off to each side, out of the path of the juggernaut. Sufficient control of plain luck meant that the sledge did not descend the steep gully to the right of the track and the journey was completed very quickly without the injury to the haulers. The front of the hut was taken out and the stove put in and the chimney attached and the first brew under way – total cost nil."

This quote is included in Shaun Barnett's book 'Shelter from the Storm.' Later on, at the Jubilee, Sue presented this book to the club – in memory of Lawson Pither and as a wonderful legacy from her time as Patron. Lawson was Patron of the Club for nearly 40 years until his death in 2010 and Sue took on as Patron in 2011. We are looking at setting up a club competition focused on bagging the huts in this book. We have yet to refine the competition details so watch this space!

#### **From Barnett's 'Shelter from the Storm' (2012)**

.... "In 1967, the newly formed Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club (PNTMC) rebuilt the hut, the third version, and maintained it for sixteen years.

One of the tasks under taken by the club was the installation of a wood stove. The Forest Service agreed to fly the stove in by helicopter, but inclement weather saw it dropped off on a knob a couple of kilometres away from the hut. PNTMC members located the stove on the snow-covered slopes of Mangahua. Club President Lawson Pither recorded:

*It was easy to fix the stove onto a sheet of galvanised iron, and with ropes on each corner – behold a sledge! To sledge it down to the hut, it was decided that the President (myself) would control proceedings from the sledge. The rope parties provided forward momentum and when required parties acted as brakes on the steep slopes. What developed was that the arranged load hurtled down hills at high speed, the President abandoned ship and the front rope party shot off to each side, out of the path of the juggernaut.*

Happily, the party eventually managed to manhandle the wayward stove to the hut for installation, although it always smoked badly and eventually had to be replaced.

Nothing can survive restructuring for ever, and despite the efforts of the club, the ageing Rangiwhaia Hut finally had to be demolished in the summer of 1983-84. That same summer, the NZFS built the modern twelve-bunk hut. In the 1990s, DOC installed gas heating and cooking rings.

## **Trip Reports**

### **White Cliffs Boulders – (19<sup>th</sup> July).**

Report and photos by Emma Hoekstra

Kirstie, Kat, June and Emma drove to White Cliff boulders on Sunday 19th July.

The walk down had stunning views of the cliffs and farmland. Once down at river level, we headed to the patch of bush to find the boulders. We split up to explore the boulders. Some were perfectly round; a few were split in half and some had trees growing out of them. All of them were a lush mossy green.

The bush itself was very pretty, with lots of different birds. We could still hear the train going along beside SH1, but it was lovely having the place to ourselves, very peaceful. We had lunch by the river which was very fast flowing. We spent half an hour finding some very interesting rocks, even a fossil!

The walk back up was steep but didn't take long, and light rain only started once we got to the top. Driving back there were some stunning rainbows!



We were Kirstie (leader), Kat, June and Emma.

## **Iron Gate Hut – (4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> July).**

Report and photo by Janet Wilson

After a relaxed wintertime start and a meet and greet up at our Petersen's Rd shed, a group of 5 headed for Iron Gate Hut. Everyone was geared up for a social trapper outing, with gloves, spanners, eggs and a new volunteer keen to gain some trapping experience. The weather was fine with a light frost.

The track is officially "closed" due to a couple of slips - but there are alternative routes marked around both problem areas. The rest of the track is OK though parts need some cutting back - fair to say a bit more of an adventure than it used to be. The river can be used to bypass the slips when the flow is low enough.

We initially made good time "leap frogging" each other along the trap line, with Chris training up Matt. We did whatever maintenance was needed and replaced a couple of trap mechanisms. After completing the rather steep DOC marked bypass (avoiding the big Cyclone Gabrielle slip) we had lunch and investigated alternative routes around a washed-out creek - all of which didn't look straight forward.

Closer to the hut we heard the familiar whistle of a male whio and after gazing at the river for some time we spotted a very well disguised pair feeding and heading towards us. Chris, ever keen to get a good photo, crossed the river which earned him very cold feet.



The "lawn" at the hut was still well frozen when we arrived around 3pm. Blair soon got a roaring fire going, others collected wood and finished off the traps closer to the hut. The well insulated hut was soon warm, and we enjoyed a social evening before heading off to bed early.

Next morning was quite a bit warmer, with some rain overnight. We chose to use the steep bypass track but afterwards some thought the river may have been the better alternative, despite the cold feet. Thanks to the team for helping the Whio - it was an enjoyable weekend with good company and very pleasant weather for July.

We were Chris, Neil, Blair, Matt and Janet (leader).

## Presidents Report

### Anne Lawrence

It is with pleasure that I present this the 60th President's Annual Report.

### Your committee

Thanks to all committee members. I have enjoyed chairing our meetings – the committee works as a team to deal with any business and then enjoy a chat over supper. Thanks to everyone on the committee:

- Robyn Wheeler: secretary
- Martin Lawrence: treasurer and web-master
- Warren Wheeler: club night coordinator and trip card organiser
- Janet Wilson: vice-president and DOC liaison
- Verity Elder: newsletter editor, and organiser of Beginner Tramp Programme
- Graeme Curwin: supper provider
- Jo O'Halloran: our poster girl
- Lawrence O'Halloran: our foreign correspondent

Last year was a busy year for the committee with our focus on re-writing our Constitution. This year has been significantly less busy with the only really significant issues being planning our 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee and responding to the Conservation Amendment Act.

**Communication - Newsletter, Website and Facebook** - We continue to produce our monthly newsletter, thanks to Verity. This is a time-consuming job, but one that Verity continues to do with a smile. Thanks, Verity for a great job and thanks also to Nicola Wallace again for helping us to save on postage by delivering many of these.

At last year's AGM we encouraged members to opt for online newsletters with the idea that we would continue to produce printed newsletters for the year. In line with this, we have now decided to produce online newsletters only. This will mean a significant saving on printing, paper and postage costs as well as being lighter on the environment.

Our website continues to be the place to go for up-to-date information about club events. Thanks to Martin for managing this.

Our Facebook page is also popular - thanks mostly to Grant Christian and Elly for keeping it up to date.

**Membership** - Our club continues to grow. Our total membership of 90 members includes 19 Family Members and 3 Life Members.

**Club Trips** - Thanks to Warren for organising our trip calendar. We continue to include trip plans for the month in our newsletter but trips are subject to change so we keep them up to date on our website. Thanks to Woody for keeping records of numbers on trips. Last AGM we reported that we were trialling running an overnight trip every second weekend rather than every weekend. This trial has been

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implemented in a bit of an ad hoc basis which seems to be working. It has accommodated the increasing difficulty of finding trip leaders and meant we have less trips that do not go.

In May this year we also reviewed travel rates. They had been set at 30 cents per kilometre for many years. Given significant increases in fuel prices, we decided to increase rate to 40 cents per kilometre (in line with 2<sup>nd</sup> tier IRD travel payments). We think this gives a more reasonable recompense for fuel costs to those people providing transport for club trips.

**Beginner tramps** - Thanks to Verity for running such a well-thought out programme. The programme included 3 beginner tramps and 4 workshops. The trips were 2 weeks apart with workshops typically alternating in between starting from January 31st to the start of April.

|                                                                                  | 2026 numbers*                 | 2025 numbers               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Enquires about club and beginner programme between end of Oct and start of April | 24                            | 28                         |
| Total participation in trips or workshop                                         | 14                            | 22                         |
| New members                                                                      | 1?                            | 3?                         |
| Workshop trip: Fern Walk and Basic Map reading                                   | 5 (3 beginners**, 2 PNTMC).   | 15 (10 beginners, 5 PNTMC) |
| Beginner trip: Atiwhakatu                                                        | NA                            | 10 (6 beginners, 4 PNTMC)  |
| Beginner trip: Mikimiki                                                          | Did not run to due to weather | NA                         |
| Beginner trip: Rangiwhahia                                                       | 11 (8 beginners, 3 PNTMC)     | 22 (15 beginners, 7 PNTMC) |
| Beginner trip: Blue Range Hut                                                    | 7 (5 beginners, 2 PNTMC)      | 11 (7 beginners, 4 PNTMC). |

\*Numbers do not include leader (add +1 for total on trip).

\*\*Beginners refer to new people or non-members not the experience or fitness they come with.

This programme has been running for a number of years and has been successful in getting new people into the outdoors. Not all of them become committed trampers, but some do. However, only a few become club members and it relies on a lot of time and commitment from the programme coordinator which is hard to justify with such small numbers involved. So we have decided not to run the Beginner Programme next year. The Committee will review this decision again for 2028.

**Applied Tramping aka Social Trapping Trips** - Support for the Oroua and Pohangina Blue Duck Protection Projects by club members has continued with enthusiasm throughout the year. The fly-in trips to the Pohangina River have been well supported by PNTMC members and have been combined with the FMC Love Our Huts campaign. These joint PNTMC and Ruahine Whio Protectors trips have been made possible with funding to RWPT from the Alan Rosoman Trust.

**Snow Skills** - Thanks to Grant Christian who took the lead on the Snow Skills course again this year. One weekend course was held, the second one being cancelled due to lack of participants.

It was run over one weekend (2 & 3 August 2025). There were seven people in total with Grant as only instructor. Thanks again to Sue Pither for use of her Rangataua bach.

Saturday was spent at Turoa where people were introduced to kicking steps, cutting steps, self-arresting and crampon techniques. Grant also covered avalanche hazards and how to recognise and avoid avalanche terrain. On the Sunday the group ventured further up the mountain to a frozen waterfall and inspected the hanging icicles then walked further north to explore some of the other valleys. This day

enabled everyone to gain confidence using their crampons and consolidate what they had learned the day before.

**Club Nights and Social Activities** - Our club night programme continues to offer a wide range of talks and social activities – credit and thanks to Warren for masterminding the programme.

Photo Competitions: Thanks to Chris Tuffley for organising the club photo competition.

Following on from the Scrabble challenge of 2024 and 2025's What's in My Pack, we have taken a break from Club Challenges in 2026.

PNTMC entered two teams in 2025's inter club quiz. One team won, the other came second! 1st prize was donated by MUAC, a very generous 1 free night for the winning team and other PNTMC club members at the MUAC Hut on Mt Ruapehu, Turoa. Date TBC. Thank you to MUAC for hosting.

Our 60th Jubilee celebration was held over Matariki weekend this year (10th to 12th July 2026). This was a great success. It was attended by a total of 40 people - mostly current members but a few who had been members more than 20 years ago as well as Suzanne and Vern Jensen who were founding members. Part of the celebration included a tramp to Rangiwahia Hut. Here Sue Pither read a quote from Lawson about the transport of a fireplace to Rangiwahia Hut. This quote is included in Shaun Barnett's book 'Shelter from the Storm'. Later at the Jubilee Sue presented this book to the club – in memory of Lawson Pither and as a wonderful legacy from her time as Patron. Lawson was Patron of the Club for nearly 40 years until his death in 2010 and Sue took on as Patron in 2011. We are looking at setting up a club competition focused on bagging the huts in this book. We have yet to refine the competition details so watch this space!

**Club Gear** - Thanks to Peter Chamberlain who has taken as Gear Custodian. Peter has an excellent set-up for managing the gear. It is pleasing to note that club members and others continue to make good use of it.

Peter is going to be away for a few months later this year. Thanks to Graeme Curwin for filling in for Peter while he is away. The gear will be at Graeme's place and his contact details will be on the website.

**Club Huts** - In April and May of 2025 the renovation work on Mid-Pohangina and Ngamoko huts was finished. This involved many willing people - club members, DOC workers and others. Thanks to Janet for organising the work parties.

At Ngamoko the team made a number of improvements. The was weatherproofed. Three piles were replaced and the catching hut door was fixed. The toilet was upgraded and moved to a new site. There was much scrubbing and removal of moss and touching up of paint as well as trimming of vegetation around the hut. At Mid-Pohangina the old fireplace was removed and a new fireplace installed. A water tank was installed and the inside was painted. This has transformed the hut.

Janet said: *Completing the work planned for both of our 'club huts' feels, to me, almost too good to be true – the culmination of lots of wishful thinking, planning, cooperation and help from club members and some good staff at our local DOC office. Special thanks to club member Chris Rayner who took the lead as our club builder. Thanks to DOC for supporting our work and sharing the costs – a great outcome.*

**Federated Mountains Club (FMC)** - I want to express our appreciation for Emma Gregg's two years on FMC executive. Emma did an excellent job of representing our club and putting time and energy into FMC. Emma was one of the key drivers of FMC's love our huts (LOH) campaign, something that our club responded to enthusiastically. This year it was a little harder to keep track of which huts club members were involved with as part of the LOH campaign. However, club members did contribute, often in conjunction with blue-duck protection trips.

In June, FMC sent out a summary of the issues as they see them of the Government's proposed Conservation Amendment Bill and encouraged members to put in their own submissions. This committee is concerned that if the Bill goes ahead, it could fundamentally change how New Zealand's public conservation land is managed, so we put in a submission on behalf of the club. We also supported Brent

Barrett in organising a meeting to discuss the Act. The meeting was held on 30th June this year and it was pleasing to see a good number of club members at the meeting.

**Summary** - It is encouraging to see our club grow. As a club we benefit from the different perspectives that new people bring. We need to nurture new people, encourage them as they explore what our club has to offer and hope that they will reap the benefit of being members for years to come. I see an important task for the committee next year as the updating of club procedures and documentation around Trip Leadership Health and Safety and Overdue Trips

To conclude, I'd like to express my thanks Don French for continuing to review our accounts and to Sue Pither for continuing to be such an interested and supportive Patron.



## PNTMC Newsletter August 2026

- Upcoming Trips and Club Nights
- Life Membership - Bruce van Brunt
- Notices
- 60<sup>th</sup> Jubilee
- Exerts from Shaun Barnett Publications
- Trip Reports: Whitecliff Boulders, Iron Gate Hut
- Presidents Report

Send articles to the newsletter editor at  
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