



Monthly newsletter of PTC. Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc.

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## February 2015

<b>President</b>	Gary Huish	332 7020	Brian Smith, Quartermaster	355 9945
<b>Vice-President</b>	Leo Manders	356 1731	Raymond Ford	351 9496
<b>Vice-President</b>	Kevin Hughes	332 6281	Margot Bowden	332 7020
<b>Treasurer</b>	Sue Piercey	384 9567	Maureen Thompson	377 2482
<b>Trip Planner</b>	Dan Pryce	379 1976	Ruth Barratt	335 0010
<b>Secretary</b>	Merv Meredith	322 7239	Geoff Price	343 5001
<b>Editor</b>	Kerry Moore	359 5069		

### **New Member Enquiries**

Please contact Stan Wilder, 980 5291, to request an info-pack. You will also receive three complimentary newsletters

**CORRESPONDENCE**, including changes of address etc. can be sent to the club secretary—see above

**OUR CLUB** consists of people of all ages who tramp for recreation. Regular trips are organised, ranging from 'easy' to 'hard', day trips to long weekends. Various instruction courses run each year to improve members' skills for back-country tramping. In addition to a monthly club meeting, a variety of social events are held.

**CLUB NIGHTS** are held on the **second Tuesday** of each month at the Canterbury Horticultural Centre, South Hagley Park (entrance on Riccarton Ave), starting promptly at 7.45 pm. Doors open 7.30.

**The Feb club night is exceptional and will be at St Peters Church Hall corner Yaldhurst and Main South Roads**

**Tue 10 Feb**

### **A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush**



Chris Todd will describe a lightweight expedition to attempt a first ascent of the south face of Langutai Barfi, a 7000m peak on the Pakistan - Afghanistan border.

**For this month only, we meet usual time, at St Peters Church Hall corner Yaldhurst and Main South Roads**

**Supper Duty: Diane Mellish, Darcy Mawson, Graeme Paltridge**

**Tue 10 Mar**

### **Trekking Tana Toraja**



The Tana Toraja area of Sulawesi in Indonesia is known for its elaborate funeral ceremonies lasting up to ten days, animal sacrifices and traditional boat-shaped houses. **Maureen Thompson** spent ten days there during last year's funeral season. She explored the area on day-walks and also trekked through mountain-side rice paddies.

**Supper Duty: Paul Moreham, Guy Mulligan, Graeme Nicholas**

# New Venue for Peninsula Tramping Club Nights

Sadly, after 16 years of meeting at the Horticultural Society, the PTC has been bowled out for the last time. The temporary February relocation due to World Cricket tournaments will be permanent as the Hagley Park venue is being sold and will not accommodate groups like us. We have been looking at a number of alternative meeting places for the club and are pleased to have found one for the second Tuesday of each month in the **Baptist Church Hall at 286 Oxford Terrace**. This is located on the **corner of Madras Street and Oxford Terrace**, just south of the Avon River and Kilmore Street. The venue allows us to move back to the City Centre and is centrally located with good connection to the one-way streets and ample car-parking. We will give more details prior to the 10th March meeting which will be the first at the new venue. The February meeting will still be held at St Peter's Church hall at Church Corner.

Gary Huish

## COMING TRIPS

### Day Trips

Depart from and return to a convenient point on the side of town nearest to the destination. Non-members are asked to phone the trip leader in advance. If you doubt your suitability for a day-trip, or if the weather is turning bad, contact the trip leader beforehand. A phone inquiry does not oblige you to go on the trip.

### Weekend Trips

May leave on a Friday night (usually for base camps) or Saturday morning. Please book with the trip leader by the closing date. Be certain you want to go on the trip when booking, as it is not fair on the leader to withdraw after the closing date (good excuses excepted). Numbers on some weekend trips are limited, so book promptly.

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|---|---|---|
| <b>8 Feb</b><br><b>Sun</b><br><b>■</b>            | <b>MT NOBLE</b><br><b>Stuart Payne 337 2275</b><br>A trip into the foothills off the Lake Sumner Road. A <b>moderate</b> round trip in North Canterbury with views of Virginia Peak and the Three Deans.<br><b>Start: 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St</b>  | <b>Maps BV23,M33</b><br><br><b>Approx cost \$14</b> |
| <b>15 Feb</b><br><b>Sun</b><br><b>■</b>           | <b>OASHORE BAY</b><br><b>Geoff Spearpoint 329 0008</b><br>Join Geoff for an <b>easy</b> beach stroll at Birdlings Flat and surrounding coastal areas. We will then gather at Geoff's place nearby for a BBQ and an evening of relaxation. BYO.<br><b>Start: 10am Halswell School 437 Halswell Rd</b>  | <b>Maps BY24,N37</b><br><br><b>Approx cost \$8</b>  |
| <b>21-24 Feb</b><br><b>Sat-Tue</b><br><b>■■■■</b> | <b>ROUTEburn - NTH COL - LK NERINE - PARK PASS</b><br><b>Raymond Ford 351 9496</b><br>This <b>moderate-hard</b> trip covers some of the Five Pass trip from the Routeburn Track over Sugarloaf Pass to the Rockburn and the spectacular Theatre Flat. The route to Park Pass then climbs the ridge to drop to Lake Nerine and then sidles to North Col and beyond..<br><b>List closes 7 Feb</b> | <b>Maps CA09,CB09,D40,E40</b>                       |
| <b>21-22 Feb</b><br><b>Sat-Sun</b><br><b>■■</b>   | <b>SYLVIA TOPS</b><br><b>Merv Meredith 322 7239</b><br><b>Moderate</b> tramp over this 1500-1600m range between Nina and Doubtful valleys in the Lewis Pass area. Probably camping out at the bush-edge near Devils Den Biv.<br><b>List closes 14 Feb</b>   | <b>Maps BU23,M31</b>                                |
| <b>22 Feb</b><br><b>Sun</b><br><b>■</b>           | <b>HUT SPUR - JORDAN SADDLE</b><br><b>Penny Webster 349 3693</b><br>Quite a long <b>hard</b> day, tramping up and beyond Bealey Spur to Hut Spur (behind historic Bealey Spur Hut), eventually dropping down to Jordan Saddle. Jordan Stream is then followed to the Waimak River and then to the road.<br><b>Start: 7am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd</b>                                     | <b>Maps BV20,K34</b><br><br><b>Approx cost \$24</b> |

- 28Feb-1M** **HAWDON - EAST HAWDON** **Maps BV21,K33**  
**Sat-Sun** **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
 ■■ Not a long trip, but **moderate-hard** challenging terrain. Crossing over the tops between the heads of the APNP Hawdon and East Hawdon valleys, probably via the summit of 1700m Smooth Peak (a misnomer) Take an extra sandwich  
**List closes 21 Feb**
- 1 Mar** **COACH STREAM - RABBIT HILL** **Maps BW21,K35**  
**Sun** **Ruth Barratt 335 0010**  
 ■ **Easy-moderate** (mostly easy) round-trip to point 1179m in Korowai/Torlesse Tussocklands Park and maybe on to Rabbit Hill depending on weather, enthusiasm etc. Returning on the Old Coach track. Starting from near the Big Pines at the bottom of Porters Pass.  
**Start: 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$12**
- 7-10 Mar** **GREEN LAKE** **Maps CE07,CE06**  
**Sat-Tue** **Dan Pryce 379 1976**  
 ■■■■ This pretty lake south of Manapouri near Lake Monowai will be our base. We may tramp to Lake Monowai for a night as we explore the area and enjoy a beautiful part of Fiordland. **Easy-moderate.**  
**List closes 14 Feb**
- Sat 7 Mar** **WILDING PINES—SEE NOTES**
- 8 Mar** **ASHLEY GORGE** **Maps BW22,23,L34**  
**Sun** **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
 ■ An **easy-moderate** walk/splash down from Lees Valley's middle bridge to Ashley Gorge picnic ground. This is Canterbury's mini "Grand Canyon". If you haven't walked it before, you will be impressed. If you don't want to walk it, bring an inflated inner tube.  
**Start: 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St** **Approx cost \$11**
- 7-8 Mar** **SUDDEN VALLEY - DISCOVERY STREAM** **Maps BV21,K33**  
**Sat-Sun** **Organiser Dan Pryce 379 1976**  
 ■■ **Moderate-hard** tramp in Arthurs Pass National Park, linking the Sudden and Hawdon Valleys via Discovery Stream, which is accessed from the Hawdon, before ascending a narrow scree-filled gully to the ridge. A scree slope provides a rapid descent into Sudden Valley.  
**List closes 28 Feb**
- 14-16 Mar** **ANNETTE PLATEAU** **Maps BX15,H36**  
**Sat-Mon** **Raymond Ford 351 9496**  
 ■■■ A **hard** trip along the Sealy Range beyond the new Mueller Hut in Mt Cook National Park. Expect some impressive views, including Mt Cook, Hooker Glacier, Mt Sefton with its icefalls and the Mueller Glacier. We intend to camp on the Annette Plateau and climb 2627m Mt Sealy. Descent from the plateau would be via Sebastapol Ridge.  
**List closes 28 Feb**
- 14-15 Mar** **MONS SEX MILLIA** **Maps BU23,M32**  
**Sat-Sun** **Organiser Dan Pryce 379 1976**  
 ■■ **Moderate-hard** tramp off the Lewis Pass highway to this 1800m high point on the Poplars Range. Camping out on the tops, no bugs no people!  
**List closes 7 March**

- 15 Mar Sun** ■ **PREBBLE HILL CAVE STREAM** **Chris Leaver 322 6445** **Maps BW21,K34**  
 This **easy** trip goes over and under some of the more interesting limestone formations in the Castle Hill basin. From the Cave Stream car park we head down Broken River before climbing 902m Prebble Hill. On our return we traverse the underground Cave Stream. Bring a torch and a change of clothes, you will get wet!  
**Start: 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$16**
- 21-22 Mar Sat-Sun** ■■ **MINGHA - DECEPTION** **Kevin Hughes 332 6281** **Maps BV20,K33**  
**Moderate**, classic crossing of the main divide from near Otira following the **Coast to Coast** trail, up the Deception River, over 1070m Goat Pass and down the Mingha to Arthur's Pass. Following the greats: Gurney, Murray, Ussher but we'll take time to smell the mountain flowers. Camping out or staying at Goat Pass Hut.  
**List closes 14 Mar**
- 22 Mar Sun** ■ **DRY ACHERON STREAM TO BIG BEN** **Leader to be advised** **Maps BW20,21,K35**  
**Moderate** trip up 1416m Big Ben peak in the south of the Korowai/Torlesse Tussockland Park. Travelling up the Dry Acheron Stream easement. Views include Lake Coleridge basin and the Rakaia River.  
**Start: 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$16**
- 28 -29 Mar Sat-Sun** ■■ **WOOLSHED HILL - EAST HAWDON** **Murray Hight 347 4014** **Maps BV20,21,K33,L33**  
**Moderate** tramp in Arthur's Pass National Park starting from Hawdon shelter, following the bush track to Woolshed Hill and camping out. An option Sunday may be to travel along the Savannah Range and drop into Casey Stream and walk out to Andrews shelter.  
**List closes 21 March**
- 28 Mar Sat** ■ **KAITUNA CHALLENGE** **Merv Meredith 322 7239** **Maps BQ27,M36**  
 Having missed a few years, our annual not-too-serious classic bike-walk-run bike event, is on again this year. The format stays the same. We have team, individual men's and individual women's categories.  
 Participants cycle along the Summit Road starting from the Sign of the Kiwi, down to Gebbies Pass and around on the flat to Kaituna Valley. Dropping their bikes, they tramp/walk up to Packhorse Hut then run/jog/walk the downhill leg back to Gebbies Pass where their bike is miraculously waiting for them, to leap on and dash off downhill to Teddington and then continue on, in and out of the bays between there and Governors Bay.  
 The finish line is at the Governors Bay Hotel, where entrants are greeted by a cheering mob of PTC supporters. Once everyone is there, the day concludes with lunch and presentation of the prestigious trophy. Entry fee to this popular event is a mere \$4 to cover costs.  
 Typical event time is 3 to 4 hours, with starting times staggered from **8.30am** onward so that contestants hopefully finish together. If you haven't been in one of these before, now is your chance. You don't have to be a gun biker, or runner, or even a runner at all. Supporters on the day very welcome, plus helpers with transport, etc would be appreciated.  
 To enter, or for more details, call **Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
**Entries close Wed 25th March**
- 29 Mar Sun** ■ **WOOLSHED HILL** **Dan Pryce 384 7065** **Maps BV21,K33**  
**Easy-moderate** climb through beech forest to open tops above Hawdon Shelter in Arthur's Pass NP and maybe a brief wander along the tops of the Savannah Range. We might meet Murray's party on their way out.  
**Start: 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$24**

- 3-6 Apr** **WHITCOMBE PASS - MATHIAS PASS** **Maps BV18,BW18,J34**  
**Fri-Mon** **Organiser Dan Pryce 379 1976**  
 ■■■■ **Moderate-hard** trip from Glenfalloch Station in the upper Rakaia River, over Whitcombe Pass,  
**Easter** Frew Saddle, Mathias Pass to the North Mathias River.  
**List closes Sat 21 Mar**
- 3-6 Apr** **HARMAN PASS - TAIPO RIVER** **Maps BU20,BV20,K33,K34**  
**Fri-Mon** **Leader to be advised**  
 ■■■■ **Moderate** tramp on the west side of APNP. Up the Waimak over Harman Pass, down Mary  
**Easter** Creek to Julia Hut then down the turbulent Taipo River. We can exit on the other side of  
 Jacksons or via Kelly Range and Carroll Hut  
**List closes 25 March**
- 3-6 Apr** **CROMWELL BASE** **Maps CC12,F41**  
**Fri-Mon** **Glenda & Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
 ■■■■ **Easy through to moderate-hard.** Returning to the Cromwell Top 10, we have booked  
**Easter** accommodation for 12 -14 max. from Thurs night. Lots of choices for day trips, eg, Bendigo,  
 Carrick, Cairmuir, etc and in a thriving vineyard area of course. Makes for a very sociable long  
 weekend. Budget \$195 for accommodation and transport.  
 Be in early to book a place so we can finalise booking  
**List closes 18 March**
- 5 Apr** **MT BRUCE** **Maps BV20,K34**  
**Sun** **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
 ■ **Moderate** tramp over 1630m Mt Bruce at the northern end of the Craigieburns. The route  
**Easter** initially follows the track towards Lagoon Saddle, before turning off and climbing scree and  
**Sunday** tussock slopes to the summit. A scree slope leads down to the saddle at the head of Broad  
 Stream, which can then be followed out. Great panoramic views from the top.  
**Start: 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$22**
- Sat 11 Apr** **WILDING PINES—SEE NOTES**

## SOCIAL EVENTS

Tues 17 Feb



### Suburban Scramble and dinner at The Brickworks, Cashmere

Ascending Broad Oaks to Huntsbury Ridge and down through some of the city's hidden walkways. Meet at 6pm at Centaurus Road Shopping Centre. There is plenty of parking behind the shops as well as in front. Dinner at 7.15pm at The Brickworks, 69 Centaurus Road, Cashmere. For the walk just turn up. For the meal phone Margot Bowden 332 7020 or email [margot.bowden@gmail.com](mailto:margot.bowden@gmail.com) by Sunday 15 February.

Tues 17 Mar



### Walk and dinner at Brighton

Details in March Footnotes. Contact Margot Bowden Phone 332 7020 or email [margot.bowden@gmail.com](mailto:margot.bowden@gmail.com)

Wed 15 Apr



### Le Sud

### Court Theatre Comedy

NZ History's funniest "What If"

By Dave Armstrong—The Motor Camp, Kings of the Gym

Director Ross Gumbley

Featuring Mark Hadlow

We have booked the best seats in the Court Theatre, Bernard Street, Addington.

**Book your seat, \$42 discount price by Monday 23 March,**

with Brian Smith 355 9945, 027 740 3035, [brian21x@xtra.co.nz](mailto:brian21x@xtra.co.nz) -- continued over page

The Conservative Government of North Zealand (Le Nord) limp, pimp and pawn their way through negotiations with their nearest neighbour, French-controlled Le Sud (South Zealand), in an attempt to stop their country falling deeper into recession.  
Another hilariously topical comedy with more grudges than a Bledisloe Cup Match

## NOTES

**Membership** We welcome **Tim and Mary Hines** who are rejoining  
We say farewell to **Ton & Nicole Buhrs** who are departing Canterbury

**Deadline for the March newsletter** Sun 1 Mar

**Next committee meeting** 7:30pm Tue 24 Feb at Dan's

## WILDING TREES 2015—ECAN 'No Green Needles' days

Support the annual outings organised so local tramping clubs can assist with the eradication of wilding trees in the Canterbury high country. ECAN uses clubs to control fringe spread, while commercial contractors tackle denser, larger stands. The days are always good fun and let us go places we don't normally get to as well as giving a sense of achievement and helping Club funds significantly.

This year the planned days are: **Sat 7 March and Sat 11 April**

More details will follow closer to the time, so pencil these dates in now and plan to come.

For more info in the meantime, phone or email **Merv Meredith, 322 7239**

## TRIP REPORTS

### MOUNT PRINCESS, 8-9 NOV 2014

On one of the very few fine spring weekends, five of us travelled to the Lake Tennyson area north of Hanmer Springs to make an attempt on 2126m Mt Princess.

Callum coaxed his 4WD vehicle through many deep, awkward water channels cutting across the road to Maling Pass, but we all had to bale out and walk the last couple of km of road access. Glorious views of our objective and warm spring sunshine buoyed our spirits as we struck up the slopes towards our campsite. We found an idyllic spot at around 1600m, nestled amongst small tarns and remnants of winter snowfields, on soft, grassy terrain. Trip leader Callum's Indian meal was awesome. The "boil-in-bag" style meals are available at New World supermarkets and are an easy, inexpensive, delicious idea for short trips where weight is not a big issue.

We started early on Sunday as a nor'west change was forecast for the afternoon. Cramponing up crisp snow to a high rocky ridge behind Princess Bath was very pleasant and hopes were high. The Bath was completely blanketed in snow and ice—brrrrr—no bathing this time! After some hours scrambling along the lumpy ridge, gendarme after gendarme, we came to an exposed bluffy bit with mixed snow and rock that we were not happy to attack without the protection of ropes and helmets, which we did not have. Darn, time to back off! We made a quick exit down a very steep snow slope, nicely softened by the sun, towards the Bath and ambled back to camp.

Although this is a long, complicated way to approach the peak, it was interesting and fun to try, with great views of the Spencer Mountains. Next time I would probably start out the same way because the campsite is so perfect, but go via the Bath, climbing the steep slope directly behind it to the notch which leads directly onto the summit ridge. This would be much more direct and considerably faster. I hope the weather and company is as good next time. Thanks team, and especially Callum for organising and leading so well. It was a great trip.

**We were: Callum & Pat McIntosh, Chris Leaver, John Robinson and Diane Mellish. 🏔️ DM**



## Sawcut Gorge, 29 December

Old hands may have thought they had done this trip—an afternoon stroll up through the gorge, overnight at Isolation Hut and back out the same way the following morning. But this was not the trip that Sue Johnstone had in store for us.

Sue, and husband Dave, live at Elterwater, a small farm three kilometres north of Ward. And what they provided from Friday night through to Sunday morning was a base camp, with a happy-hour at Ward's East Coast Inn, a 4WD excursion that climbed 700 metres and included magnificent views of the snow-capped Inland Kaikouras and then a full day's tramp with a good mix of up and down through both mature and desolate forest, and finally a river stroll through stunning Sawcut Gorge.

After our Friday night happy-hour we stared out at the rain that had blighted our trip north. But Saturday dawned clear and we set off on our 4WD excursion, down the coast to Kekerengu before turning up Valley Road. We wound first past Bluff Hill Station, one of the largest farms in NZ, and on to Remuera, where Peter Green assisted us with the driving and vehicle shuffles. From here we tortuously wound our way up over Rag Saddle then Burnt Saddle with views of Alarm, Tapuae-o-Uenuku and Pinnacle until we alighted and donned packs. Well, most of us donned packs—Dan found the vehicle shuffle a bit complicated and alas his pack had not made it. Never mind, he was thus to get a free lunch and in return he carried Margaret's pack for her enquiring—"what on earth have you got in here, Margaret?"

We then strolled down to Zoo Hut—the reason for the name we did not discover. This stroll was as easy as it was going to get. Thereafter we sidled underneath huge bluffs buttressing the Iwitahi Ridge before descending to what seemed like the centre of the earth. Here, surrounded by towering bush-covered limestone bluffs, we had lunch and decided from the map that we were at a tributary of Brian Boru Stream. Soon after lunch we reached Brian Boru Stream and the biv of the same name.



The gorge begins soon after leaving the hut and within its narrow confines there are whiffs of sulphur. And despite the walls of the gorge appearing sheer, they are adorned with rock daises. After about an hour it seemed as if our way was going to be blocked by a dead end. But behold, ahead was an alleyway carved through the limestone, 50m long, 50m high and at its narrowest barely 3m across, Sawcut Gorge no less.

After the sawcut, we joined the Waima River and although approaching 7pm, the sun still shone. Finally at the head of Ure Road we reached a patient Dave, and friend Meg, who had been ready to receive us anytime from 4:30. So it was back to base and a great late-evening feast, compliments of Sue.

From the biv, the track climbed steeply up loose rock beside a side-stream. As the climb tapered off we found ourselves in forest with little undergrowth and littered instead with rocks, giving the area a forlorn 'Lord of the Rings' appearance. This was in contrast to our earlier descent through beech forest, including many impressive matai trees.

After a few more hours we reached the junction to Napoleon Biv, where we turned the opposite way (left) and descended into Isolation Stream to arrive at Isolation Hut which sits opposite a massive and precipitous rock slope devoid of trees. Here we had lunch. A woman from Colorado was in residence as were two young hunters who had just shot a deer. It was tempting to settle in for the night, as the hunters were departing and a previous party had left a quantity of meat chops and a dozen beer. But we were intrepid explorers and though it was now 4:30 pm, we still had yet to reach our mission for the day—Sawcut.

Sunday morning was the time to enjoy Elterwater, where the house is set amongst mature trees in rolling

farmland, overlooking a lake formed by run-off. At breakfast Dave pointed out a crested grebe on the lake, the first I have seen from the comfort of indoors. During the morning most of us variously trekked to the farm's highpoint for all-round views or to 'South Point' for views up and down the lake. I say most. Dan sat on the deck, soaked up the sun and had another cup of coffee. Then after our farewells we made a quick trip to nearby Ward beach, where oval, perfectly flat pebbles are a feature and then headed for home.

On the tramp we were Sue Johnstone (Ward co-ordinator), Dan Pryce (Chch co-ordinator), Margaret Clark, Pauline Hill, Chris Leaver, Lois Moore, Graeme Townsend, Stan & Sue Wilder and Stuart Payne. 🏠 SP

## Stewart Island SW Circuit — 2-10 January 2015

Arriving in Oban our first mistake was setting off without consulting the map. After walking almost a full circle and up and down a hill unnecessarily we finally reached our destination—Tony and Karen's hostel. A quick gear reshuffle, a short walk over the hill and a pleasant boat ride later and we were settled at Fred's Camp Hut. Time to wander, walk along the beach and gather mussels for a seafood entre. The verdict on the mussels was good but too small to be worth the effort.

Heading off next day we were aware of dire warnings of "mud to the hips" from those completing the circuit. It started off OK, just a normal amount of mud in the forest, similar to what we would expect in Arthur's Pass or the West Coast. Further along it opened up into more scrubby country and we were presented with a number of boggy streams to cross. The walking pole test didn't seem to find a bottom so we all elected to follow Tony as he ably lead us around and over, often utilising fallen trees and branches to get us across. Perhaps because of this it took us longer than the stated 5 hours to reach Rakeahua Hut but our boots were dry and there was still plenty of time to relax. Our plan was to stay 2 nights there and do a day climb of Mt Rakeahua the next day. The climb, however, looked less than inspiring and we were by this time receiving information from several parties and notes in hut books to suggest that the next 2 days would be quite long. We decided to carry on to Doughboy Hut the next day and split the following day in two, camping at what we thought was a deserted town by the beach. Late night Kiwi spotting plans were cut short as just as it got dark at 10pm it started to rain.

Day two started well and we made good time until about 11.40. The day before we had discussed what we required of the perfect lunch spot and at this point we found it. A nice flat, grassy clearing in the forest right beside the river, both sun and shade and even a swimming hole and flat spots for tents too. Too good to bypass we elected to have an early lunch, a brew up and a swim. An hour later we headed off again and after some decent uphill we came out into the open on the tops. We had appreciated any wind reaching us through the trees as a pleasant cooling breeze on a hot day but not here. A section that on the map looked like a pleasant walk across flat tops became quite a drudge as we battled the unrelenting head wind and bush-bashed through scrub to avoid the bogs. Eventually it came to an end and we headed downhill only to find the track deteriorating into a scramble down a steep stream. We were lucky as I later heard it described as a climb down a waterfall. However this didn't last too long and a good track led us out to the beach with a DoC sign pointing the way back to Rakeahua Hut but no sign pointing to Doughboy. My memory of hut maps left me expecting to go right along the beach to the hut however both Kevin's map and GPS had the hut to the left. After some time exploring to the left and back up the track, looking for a missed turnoff we headed right and some way along the beach were relieved to spot smoke from the hut's chimney. Too weary for kiwi spotting that night we instead chatted to some interesting companions. One was travelling with virtually no food and living off the land and the other a local who gave us some good information about an off-track camping spot.

The next day we had a late start after checking out a nearby rock shelter. An uphill section was followed by a boggy flat top similar to the day before but shorter and with the wind behind us we were soon heading downhill again. Following the local guy's instructions we found the shortcut to the beach and the rope to assist us, then headed south along the beach to Kilbride. A guy on a motor bike pulled up for a chat. He owned the one house there and invited us to camp by his house, sheltered beside macracarpas. We cooked dinner on his porch and chatted about the place's history. The ladies happily accepted his offer of a hot shower.

In the morning we walked to the end of the beach to a scenic spot known as the The Gutter where a sandbar joins Ernst Island to the "mainland". The rest of the day's tramping consisted of a walk along the beach to Mason Bay Hut where we could enjoy a relaxed afternoon. In the evening we went kiwi spotting and Heather and Kevin spotted one lone kiwi.

It was an easy day's walk to Freshwater Hut with a good track and even a long section of boardwalk. This was the part that people can do as a day walk—fly in, boat out—and was maintained to a higher standard. Thinking we were an hour away from the hut we stopped for lunch then found we'd been only 20 minutes away. We had another relaxing afternoon and Karen and Tony got a good view of a kiwi as it wandered across the path.

We had completed almost the whole circuit with dry boots and so, on the last day it became a challenge to prove it could be done. The first swampy 4km was always going to be the trickiest bit but we rose to the challenge and, with some reasonable detours and jumping, we reached the other side with dry socks. We were lucky in that the recent lack of rain left us with a relatively dry track, making our dry feet feat possible. It was amusing to pass some very muddy people. We decided that where people went wrong was in assuming that the poles on either side of a big bog were indicating that you should walk straight through it from pole to pole but that actually they were to assist you to return to the track after your bog-avoiding detour. Also the friendly advice of the locals to "go straight through the middle" may have had some bearing on the matter. The rest of the track was pleasant forest-walking and we arrived back at Fred's Camp with over 2 hours to spare before our boat pickup. We'd allowed extra time as on some of the other days we were well over DoC's times.

Back in Oban we enjoyed a shower and Blue Cod dinner at the local hotel. Tony and Karen left on the ferry the next morning while Kevin and Heather stayed on another 2 days to relax and visit Ulva Island where they saw another kiwi. Ours was a 6 day Stewart Island tramp where all the mud was avoidable and it only rained at night. Is this a first? We were: **Karen Taylor, Tony Howden, Kevin & Heather Hughes.** 🏠 HH

## Richmond Alpine Section—27 Dec-3 Jan 2014-15

This stretch of the TeAraroa Trail is described in a 600kb pdf on the TA website and is considered the most demanding of the TeAraroa. It connects from the north with the Pelorus section of the trail. We chose to get on to it by driving almost to Nelson and walking in from Hacket Creek Picnic ground. Kerry had dropped off Maggie the dog to a minder before being picked up by Derek and Sue. On the way we collected Bill. We were happy to go in Derek's air-conditioned car on this warm sunny day. Unloading the car to get started Kerry opened a bag and pulled out a 3kg dog sausage. Sue feigned shock and horror at this addition to the rations which was obviously meant for Maggie dog. We managed to foist it on to some people who didn't even have a dog but said they'd give it to neighbours with a canine. Sue, Bill and Derek were relieved, they were going to eat human food.

We had a 7km hike into Hacket Hut on a warm afternoon, carrying proper food for 6 days and a spectrum tent. Being close to the road the hut gets a bit vandalised but was comfortable enough. Bill and Derek filled the rest of the afternoon on a side trip to Browning Hut. Kerry and Sue watched the hut wekas, with their half-grown baby. A Danish couple arrived from Browning but chose to go on to Starveall Hut. Perhaps they knew what we would find out when it got dark—mosquitoes lurked.

An early Sunday start on a warm day got us to Starveall for an early lunch, then on to Slatey Hut. We passed very close to Mt Starveall but the day had clouded in so no view was to be had. On the way we bumped into the other PTC trip doing a "day trip". Margaret Clark, Helen Harkness, Chris Leaver and Graham Townsend were based at Starveall Hut. We reached Slatey mid-afternoon and were able to dry our sweaty clothes before thunder sounded to the west and rain began.

Monday dawned drizzly and cool. We set off early expecting a long day as we planned to by-pass Old Man Hut. The rain barrel on Old Man was a welcome water stop. Our climb to point 1643 was soon "wasted" by a 300m descent before the bigger climb to 1731m Rintoul. The day was clearing so we got some views from the peak before a 470m descent to Rintoul Hut. Here we caught up with two young Swedes and their friend from Lower Hutt. The latter had well used Teva style sandals but was walking where possible with bare feet or with flax sandals. His pack was a primitive wood-frame construction. He'd planned to shoot game along the way but had lost a vital part of his hunting bow. At the last hut the Swedes caught up with us after a massively long day and reported that he wasn't able to keep up with them.

Tuesday's leg from R Hut to via Purple Top to Tarn Hut descends a forested spur. The hut and tarn is 15min off the main track but well worth a visit. After an early lunch we set off again, down the spur then diverted west a long way down to the Wairoa River. The Mid Wairoa Hut sleeps six so we four and two locals filled the hut. After a while Bill and the guy realised they had been on a tour together in Canada so exchanged email

addresses so they could see each-other's photos. It rained overnight but the first ford of many on Wednesday's stretch to Top Wairoa Hut was quite manageable. Alas an hour later at the second ford the river had risen and the rain continued. We stopped and pitched the tent close to the river and a mere 1m up from the river. At this point Sue, with her experience of camping by a flooding Pelorus River, balked at the idea of staying there. Bill and Derek also thought we should look for a better spot so we walked back along the track and were very lucky to find a better, higher site. There we stayed till the following morning by which time the rain had stopped and the river dropped. The next 7 crossings still demanded care. Near Top Wairoa Hut we began to see a different vista—barren scrubby red hills. We had lunch at the bright orange hut and then headed up over ragged boulders to a 1374m saddle then along a ridge leading to 1615m Mt Ellis. At a high point we contacted Dan to tell him we'd be out a day later than planned. He was able to arrange for Sue's husband Mark to pick us up at the track-end. Walking down towards the East Branch of the Motueka River we were impressed by the eroded nature of the landscape. With minimal vegetation and weathered rock the terrain is prone to flash floods. One such flood took out a hut, killing two hunters. The new Hunters Hut is now a 15 minute climb up from the river and gives a good view down-river and over towards Inwoods Lookout. In the evening we were joined by five European trampers who'd walked from Tarn Hut, bypassing two huts—a very long day.

Friday was another 9 hour tramp for us with lunch at Porters Hut. On this hot day we dunked ourselves in streams to cool off. The stretch alongside Maitland Stream was dry but fortunately fairly level after a steep start. We arrived at Red Hills Hut mid-afternoon and joined the two occupants in this recently built 6-bunk hut. Eric was a retired gent who is a ham radio enthusiast. He was able to chat to his wife and tell her when the pair would be down at the car park. His radio aerial was a tempting clothesline. Richard is an Anglican minister who spoke of the fall of man. The man was himself and the location was the precipitous track alongside "our" Wairoa River. Years ago he tumbled down to the river but not *in* the river and badly broke his arm and two ribs. Before the age of locator beacons Eric was able to summon help using his radio.

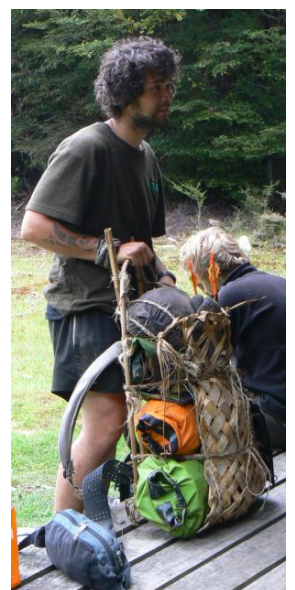
In the morning a steady downhill walk got us out to the road where we had time to take off our boots before Mark drove up to take us back to Derek's car. We had walked 90km and the road distance is about the same. Our six day trip stretched to seven but with unlimited time and sufficient food there are enough huts to do the walk in a leisurely eleven days. The Red Hills are interesting. They are part of Nelson's ultramafic belt of rocks, rich in iron and magnesium minerals, thought to be an exposed section of crustal rock.

Te Araroans often write an abbreviated entry in hut books to say they are south-bound.

SOBO PTCers were: **Sue Piercey, Bill Templeton Derek Gane and Kerry Moore.** 🏠 KM



Rintoul Hut.  
Late afternoon after  
the cloud had lifted



Return of the frame pack



Two parties merge briefly



Between Hunters and Porters Huts. The most barren landscape we trod