



*PTC Monthly
Newsletter
April 2018*

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| PTC | Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc) |
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| Correspondence | All correspondence to the Secretary including change of contact details |

Committee

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|----------------|---------------|----------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| President | Diane Mellish | 337 5530 | Editor | Raymond Ford | 351 9496 |
| Vice-President | Gary Huish | 332 7020 | Quartermaster | Brian Smith | 355 9945 |
| Vice-President | Kevin Hughes | 332 6281 | Social Events | Maureen Whalen | 027 819 9251 |
| Treasurer | Mike Bourke | 332 7097 | Committee | Keith McQuillan | 384 6164 |
| Trip Planner | Kerry Moore | 359 5069 | Committee | Maureen Thompson | 021 665778 |
| Secretary | Merv Meredith | 322 7239 | | | |

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| New Member Enquiries: | Stan Wilder | 260 2340 | Contact Stan to request an info-pack. You will also receive three complimentary newsletters |
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Our Club

The PTC 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

Club Nights are held on the **second Tuesday** of each month at the **Baptist Church Hall, 286 Oxford Terrace (corner of Madras St. and Oxford Terrace)** at 7.45 pm. Doors open 7.30pm.

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| Tues 10 April | PTC Alpine Tramping Trips – Geoff Spearpoint and Others Join PTC members talking about the alpine tramping trips to the Murchison and Tasman Glaciers in February 2017 and the Marion Plateau in February 2018. Some tall tales but mostly true about the club's alpine travel in some of the South Island's beautiful mountain scenery. Supper Duty: Calum & Pat McIntosh |
| Tues 8 May | Fixing an island from scratch: A first-hand account of island restoration in the Falkland Islands - Peter Carey Sub Antarctic Foundation for Ecosystems Research (SAFER). About 20 years ago, Peter bought 4 islands in the Falklands with the plan to restore them to prime wildlife habitat. Since then he has been squeezing in field work there between work and family commitments in Christchurch, and just last winter undertook an eradication operation to rid the islands of mice, rats, and rabbits. |



FORTHCOMING 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, contact the trip leader beforehand. A phone inquiry does not oblige you to go on the trip. If the weather is turning bad, contact the trip leader or if you use email check the Communicator the day before for trip updates.

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.

Bike Trips

The Club has a mountain biking section, Fat Tyre Fanatics, who head out on casual day trips throughout the year. For details on biking trips contact Chris Leaver 322 6445, or ptc75@clear.net.nz.

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| 7-8 Apr | Kellys Creek--Hunts Creek Hut | BV20 |
| | Peter Umbers 359 9118 | |
| ** | A moderate trip in Arthurs Pass NP to some less-visited country. Staying at Hunts Creek Hut where you can hear kiwi calls at night. Returning the same way. List closes 1 Apr | |
| 8-Apr | Cutty Grass Hut | K36 BX20 |
| Sun | Keith McQuillan 384 6164 | |
| * | Near Mt Hutt, this easy-moderate walk starts on the Mt Alford track, climbs a little and then crosses to the track that leads up-valley to Cutty Grass Hut. Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd | |
| | | Approx Cost \$15 |
| 14-15 Apr | Sylvia Tops | M31 BU23 |
| | Merv Meredith 322 7239 | |
| ** | Moderate tramp over this 1500-1600m range between Nina and Doubtful valleys in the Lewis Pass area. Crossing the Nina to climb up through the bush then travel the length of these great tops to Devils Den Biv, perched above the saddle at the western end. On Sunday, returning down Blind Stream to Nina Hut and a cruisey walk from there out to the road. List closes 8 Apr | |
| 15-Apr | Camp Saddle - Lyndon Saddle | K34 BW21 |
| Sun | Kevin Hughes 332 6281 | |
| * | Easy-moderate loop that gets you above 1500m in the Craigieburn Range. Features some nice ridge walking, with great views of the range and its beech forests. Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd | |
| | | Approx Cost \$17 |
| 17-Apr | <u>TRIP PLANNING MEETING FOR 2018-19</u> | |
| 7pm | Bring your trip suggestions to the meeting at Sue and Stan Wilder's, 54 Warden St, Richmond . | |
| Tues | If you can't attend, please give your trip ideas to Kerry M 359-5069 or a committee person. | |

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| 21-23 Apr | Campbell Pass--Gorgy Creek | BV20 |
| *** | Diane Mellish 337 5530 A moderate-hard climb via Campbell Pass to a beautiful tarn at the head of Gorgy Creek List closes 15 Apr | |
| 21-Apr | Mt Cass | N34 BV25 |
| <u>Saturday</u> | Keith McQuillan 384 6164 Easy walk on limestone hills to a 525m hill overlooking Waipara and Kate Valley landfill. https://visithurunui.co.nz/images/Hiking/casswalkway_jul09_brochure.pdf Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St | Approx Cost \$12 |
| * | | |
| 28-29 Apr | Zampa Tops | M31 BT23 |
| ** | Gary Huish 332 7020 Moderate hike near Cannibal Gorge in the Lewis Pass area. We'll stay at Ada Pass Hut Saturday night and get an early start Sunday to go along Zampa tops via the big tarn and 1710m Zampa List closes 22 Apr | |
| 29-Apr | Hidden Valley Track | |
| Sun | Jill Fenner 980 6228 An easy walk up Bowenvale's Hidden Valley Track to the Summit Rd then along Crater Rim to the Bridle Path Memorial and back the same way Meet 9am at the Bowenvale car park | |
| * | | |
| 5-9 May | Milford Track | D40,E40 CB09,10 |
| ***** | Peter Umbers 359 9118 New Zealand's world famous walking track, timed out-of-season so normal hut fees apply. Awsomely spectacular in any weather. Moderate. List closes 29 Apr | |
| 06-May | Tiromoana Bush | N34 BV24 |
| Sun | Maureen Thompson 021 266 5778 Easy coastal trip east of Waipara, through bush and wetlands to a remote beach. Great views to Pegasus Bay and Banks Peninsula. Nice walk and pleasant day out. Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St | Approx Cost \$10 |
| * | | |
| 12-13 May | Carlyle Hut, Glenhope Station | M32 BU23 |
| ** | Awaiting confirmation An easy-moderate trip up Carlyle Stream to the hut among the forests and peaks on the north side of the Lewis Pass road. Could be a bit of snow around which will add to the ambience. Staying in this recently renovated hut List closes 6 May | |
| 13-May | Lake Rubicon - Bobs Knob | L35 BW21 |
| Sun | Keith McQuillan 384 6164 Popular moderate round-trip up to a ridge below the Torlesse Range, with good views of the latter, taking in Lake Rubicon. An enjoyable tramp not far from town. Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd | Approx Cost \$11 |
| * | | |
| 18-19 May | Bobs Camp Circuit | M34 BW23 |
| ** | Kerry Moore 359 5069 Easy-moderate ridge circuit via Pinchgut Hut, Whare Track, Bobs Camp Track and Cattle Peak Route in the Mt Thomas area. List closes 12 May | |

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| 19-23 May | Wellington Base Camp | BQ32 |
| ***** | Sue Piercey 384 9567 Doing a range of easy trips in Wellington province List closes 1 May | |
| 19 May | Mt Alexander | N33 BV24 |
| Saturday | Keith McQuillan 384 6164 | |
| * | Easy-moderate wander in open, rolling North Canterbury farm country, to this 750m lookout near Scargil. Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St | Approx Cost \$13 |
| 26-27 May | Mt Fyffe - Kowhai River | O31 BT27 |
| ** | Diane Mellish 337 5530 A moderate traverse of Mt Fyffe. Friday evening start to Kaikoura and walk up the 4WD track to Mt Fyffe Hut for the night. Saturday involves the Mt Fyffe traverse across Gable to Gables End and down to the Kowhai Saddle and Kowhai Hut. Sunday is a more leisurely walk down the Kowhai River and out. List closes 24 Apr | |
| 27-May | Black Hill, Rakaia | K35 BW20 |
| Sun | Gary Huish 332 7020 | |
| * | A moderate-hard trip, hopefully in good snow, to this 2067m peak. Up the south bank Rakaia road, to start up a farm track behind Redcliffe Station and over Redcliffe Hill. A round trip south to point 1934m and down it's spur back to the farm track is possible. Ice axe and crampons required. Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd | Approx Cost \$17 |
| 2-4 Jun | Merv's Mountain Ramble | |
| Queens Birthday | Merv Meredith 322 7239 | |
| *** | Still a nascent neural circuit in Merv's mind at this early stage List closes 27 May | |
| 03-Jun | Paterson Hill | L34 BW21 |
| Sun | Kerry Moore 359 5069 | |
| * | An easy-moderate circuit up to this 1113m hill overlooking Staircase Gully at the SE end of the Torlesse Range Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd | Approx Cost \$11 |
| 4-7 Jun | Hump Ridge Track | C46 CFO7 |
| **** | Dan Pryce 356 1962 The highlight is a loop track at the top of the Hump Ridge range which winds around soaring limestone tors and offers panoramic views of south-west Fiordland, the Southern Ocean, and Stewart Island. Easy-moderate List closes 20 May | |
| 10-Jun | Thirteen Mile Bush | K35,L35 BW21 |
| Sun | Awaiting leader. Call Kerry M 359 5069 if you can help | |
| * | Easy-moderate trip on the flanks of Ben More in the Big Ben Range. We'll park at the end of the straight just 12km inland from Springfield. Thirteen Mile Bush contains the headwaters of North Selwyn River. Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd | Approx Cost \$11 |

SOCIAL EVENTS

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| Tue 15 May | <p>City Explorer and Pub crawl. Check out the quirky, trendy new corners of the South Frame. Sorry but we will probably peer into the pubs rather than sample their wares. Meet at the colourful Welles St bar, 44 Welles St for an optional drink and snack any time after 5.30 pm. How about the beer nuts \$4 or Halloumi Fries with pomegranate \$12? Welles St is between Colombo and Manchester St just south of St Asaph St. At 6.15 pm we'll head off to explore the local area. Check out the outdoor video game, climbing rocks, Dux Central alleyways, street art and the Boxed Quarter. Dinner will be at approximately 7.15 pm at Thai Box, 270 St Asaph St (corner Madras and St Asaph). Main dishes \$19 to \$28. You don't need to book for the Welles St drink and the walk, but we do need names for the dinner to Maureen Thompson by 6 pm Sunday 13 May. Mobile 021 266 5778 or email mothompson1212@gmail.com. If the weather is really bad we could linger a little longer at Welles St, skip the walk and head to Thai Box at 7 pm https://www.facebook.com/thaiboxnz/menu/</p> |
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NOTES

Membership: The PTC welcomes new member Sonja Risa, and accepts with regret resignations from Lisa Williams and Margaret Lovell-Smith.

Deadline for the May Newsletter: Thursday 27 April – please send newsletter items to Raymond: fordm@snap.net.nz

Next Committee Meeting: Tuesday, 24 April 2018.

President's notes: April is a great month for tramping, and I know that many of you will be out enjoying the variety of trips our programme offers. **TUESDAY, 17 APRIL** is an important date on our calendar – it is the annual TRIP PLANNING MEETING. Thank you to club members who made trip suggestions on the feedback form when you paid your subscription. Other ways you can have input into the programme are by attending the planning meeting (it is open to all club members), or sending your ideas to Kerry Moore or me before that date. Many old favourite trips are recycled from one year to the next, but fresh ideas generate extra enthusiasm and draw in new members. So . . . do some homework before the 17th and wow us with some exciting new possibilities. And please consider offering to be a trip leader. We need more leaders. There is plenty of support for you from PTC's experienced leaders. Happy tramping, Diane

Trip Photos: The Club maintains a gallery of photographs on its website. Keeping this up to date allows people to see what recent trips the Club has undertaken. Can trip leaders send or nominate someone to send some photographs from each trip to Kevin Hughes, ptc@nivek.co.nz, so we can keep this record current.

The April night sky. Most of us, at some time or other, will have stumbled reluctantly out of tent or hut for a night-time pee, only to be entranced by the impressive back-country night sky. But which bright stars are those? And which of them are actually planets? This is the first of an occasional series of brief Footnotes articles that aim to make your involuntary nocturnal safaris doubly satisfying.

For anyone wanting more information, a good source is: <https://www.stardome.org.nz/astronomy/star-charts/> For visits to our local observatory, check out <https://www.cas.org.nz/>

Looking west after sunset, the three stars of Orion's belt are easily spotted, framed by a wide rectangle of four other bright stars. The northernmost of those four is orange Betelgeuse – orange because it's reached the swollen 'red giant' phase so its surface is rather cooler than our Sun's, and much cooler than the fierce heat of blue-white surface of Rigel, at the other end of the rectangle. Between Rigel and the belt is the faint fuzzy patch of light called the Orion nebula. Easily seen in binoculars, and impressive in a telescope, this nebula is a nursery where new stars are forming from gas and dust.

Overhead, the Milky Way stretches in a band from NW to SE. Among its many stars you'll see the three brightest in the entire night sky: Sirius, Canopus, and Alpha Centauri. Alpha Cen is one of the two 'pointers',

near the Southern Cross. Alpha is interesting – it's actually not one star but two. In a small telescope the twin stars glare like oncoming headlights. These 3 stars are our closest stellar neighbours; their light set out a mere 4 years ago, just in time to connect with your eyeball. By comparison, light from the Orion nebula is 1350 years old, while light from our sun takes just 8 minutes to get here.

To the East, you may see Scorpius rising - the only constellation that actually looks like its namesake. Near the Scorpions's head is the unmistakably bright planet Jupiter. By midnight Jupiter will be high overhead and below it, fainter, slightly yellowish Saturn and orange Mars will be climbing into the sky along with the constellation of Sagittarius. **Graham Townsend**

TRIP REPORTS

Lake Stream - Klondyke 27-28 January 2018

The weather forecast was symptomatic of much of the summer; a bit of everything with hot weather mixed with afternoon thunderstorms. Still it was better than a number of times when this trip had been cancelled so four of us headed out. A trumper was drying her tent in the car park with great reports of camping at the



tarn in Rahu Stream so we set off up the ridge Klondyke track between Rahu Stream and Lake Stream. The first issue was water as it promised to be thirsty work and we presumed we could fill up at the Rahu Stream. This turned out to be further away than we thought; Vesna and Sue must have wondered whether Merv and Gary had gone back to the Springs Junction pub.

The bush on the ridge to Point 1401 was delightful, but the views from the bushline to Mt Haast, the Victoria Range to the north and the Main Divide to the east were outstanding. The ridge ahead, however, looked daunting.

The Victoria Range is granite resulting in spectacular spires and impressive cliff lines, but with a good foot trail, we managed to sidle around most of them. Merv was on a mission going over Point 1541, but the rest succumbed to another “wow, look at that” session enjoying the hot weather and lack of wind. The ridge foot trail continues to a cairn at the 1500m low point, but we dropped down steep tussock slopes and the occasional rocky section from the first low point that caused no problems in the dry conditions.

We selected camp sites near the stream flowing into the large tarn at 1,127m, and then the water beckoned. The top metre of water was incredibly warm for such a large tarn and Vesna and Gary swam across while Sue and Merv just cruised from the large rock forming a swimming platform. It was a very warm evening with Merv sleeping out to watch the colourful sunset and impressive cloud formations with not a thunderstorm in sight.

Next morning involved a steep climb back up the ridge for a descent into Lake Stream. We followed the ridge to the north and sidled under Point 1530 to the low saddle, but we were soon looking back at the tarn wishing for another swim. We had initially considered heading north along the range to Mt Blackadder but the sight of the spikes on its leading SW ridge the previous day had made the ridge directly west of the low saddle look quite attractive. The descent was steep but comparatively open until the 900m contour when cliff lines barred the way. Gary chose to go left but 150m of rata root traverse and 3 litres of sweat proved futile and we then headed right for the easing of contours evident on the map at 840m.



The remaining descent was going well until disaster struck just before we reached the flat 300m from the Lake Stream track. Sue stepped on a rotten branch and toppled over an adjacent log before a short slide down the slope. She announced she was fine and headed off before noticing blood coming from underneath

her gaiter and found a large double gash up her shin. Gary and Merv applied a dressing before Sue decided that she could still walk, and Dr Vesna replaced the dressing when we reached the track. Sue was still mobile and we walked out through the promised thunderstorms. Sue thought she could last until Christchurch although she required periodic stops to ease cramp through keeping her leg elevated on the trip home.

We dropped her at the Madras 24 hour medical center and a nurse must have thought we were callous as she hobbled across the car park with a blood stained bandage from knee to ankle. A long wait and referral to the hospital for another long wait made for a 4am home time with a 19 stitch souvenir.

Despite the ending, everyone agreed that it was a great trip to an impressive area.

Trampers: Merv Meredith, Vesna Mojsilovic, Sue Piercey and Gary Huish (leader). 🏔️ GH

Alpine Trip _ Marion Plateau - 3-11 February 2018

“Cyclone Fehi devastates West Coast” and “Dart Track Closed” don’t sound good two days before the planned alpine trip to the Marion Plateau, plus the combination with a super blue blood moon seemed to promise an inauspicious start. Where else could we go? “No problem, it’s only the Snowy Gorge bridge” says Geoff through his information sources in Glenorchy and off we go.



Day 1 involved a leisurely start for the twelve of us from Christchurch, an obligatory stop in Fairlie, some civilized food in Glenorchy and on to Chinamans Bluff to distribute party gear. The pack weigh-in produced some unpleasant surprises, but at least this year we had a graded track to get used to our loads. Merv still got an escort for the first 10 minutes so he didn’t repeat last year’s acrobatics. Camping a few hours in at Surveyors Flat allowed the first campfire.

Day 2 was up the Dart River and allowed us to inspect the damage to the track caused by the 2014 landslide at Slip Stream and the resultant lake. The section around the lake itself felt like a work in progress and there were muttered curses as we zig-zagged up and down around massive boulders with occasional glimpses of the original flat track below us. Flood debris in the side-stream bridge handrails and views of the Dart River showed how high the water had recently been, but it was still high and not dropping. Plan A had been to cross the Dart River, and ascend the Whitbourn River to Key Dome, but that looked increasingly improbable. Plan B was to use the Cattle Flat bridge. This was a welcome sight, and the large rock biv looked palatial as we moved in.

Day 3 was the almost traditional second day of rain. Another night in the rock biv sounded attractive compared to navigation in the cloud and a wet snowgrass descent into Blue Duck River. The day was spent on a side trip to the bridge, reading, a swim for some, and a diabolical dice game introduced by Diane called Zilch.

Day 4 dawned fine with fresh snow on the tops and we were off. Across the bridge, up the river, and then the climb to the bushline through open beech warmed us up while some small tarns and a Bidi-bid problem for Merv provided a rest. A long sidle to about 1400m then provided a view down into Blue Duck River. Hmm, quite a drop down steep tussock. Glad we hadn’t tried this yesterday in the wet. Some sidling, above some bluffs then a long descent to the valley floor. Great campsite on the flats at the head of the valley. Three kea turned up at dusk, then calls high above, now five, up to eight by dark. Don’t worry, they will go by nightfall. Some hope! We went to bed, they started to play. Push the tent when they land on the ridge. Throw things when that doesn’t work. Will they ever go to sleep? The morning revealed the damage. Aarn’s ice axe had been carried well up the valley. The stove bags had been pulled from under large rocks spilling contents well up the slope. Holes were ripped in tent flies and groundsheets. Great, the birds were cheerful, but the people were grumpy.



Day 5 was the climb to Boys Col on the Main Divide. First up to Key Dome, past some fantastic tarns on the ridge, patronized by Liz and Gaylene. Crampons were donned for the snow ascent to the long Key Dome ridge. Crevasses on the climb to Boys Col were large but navigable with the last being bypassed by Geoff's cunning, almost subterranean, bergschrund along the rockface. And then we were there! The Marion Plateau with views across to the Darrans with incredible cloud formations, concealing then revealing. We set up camp with half the party on the West Coast, opting for evening sun, and the other half on the East Coast, hoping for morning sun. Geoff, Raymond and Gary went for

an evening recce of the crevasse field towards Mt Lydia for the following day.

Day 6 was full of anticipation and possibilities. First was the 2517m Mt Lydia ascent but the last 20m proved too far with a major gap before the summit ice-cap. Sidling around to the ridge provided most of the views, however, with tantalizing views down to the Snowball Glaciers, Joe River, Williamson Flat and the Arawata. That took care of the second objective. Then it was back to Boys Col for a brew, lunch and Calum's stand-up comedy. Geoff's third objective was a recce around the north of Mt Ian to the planned route over O'Leary Pass. Most of the Marion Plateau looked easy travel, but the crevasses on Mt Lydia had been massive. The lost weather day created a problem if we had issues getting to O'Leary. In the end the call was made to descend to Key Dome using the soft afternoon snow. We set what must have been a record for the number of people swimming in a ridge tarn before a delightful alpine meadow camp.



Day 7 revealed Geoff's change of plan. Rather than retracing our steps into Blue Duck with the tussock ascent we had been dreading, Geoff proposed reversing our original plan and drop into the Whitbourn. That involved a narrow ledge we had heard about and then commitment to crossing the Dart. What if it was still in flood? There was no Plan B. Photos of the ledge did not do it justice! It was eye-watering. Geoff and then Raymond went down to cut steps. Then it was our turn. No belay, just support the person in front, help the person behind. Everyone focused, concentrating. What a relief to reach the easier(?) slopes beyond, then down, down, down. The Whitbourn valley was pleasant by comparison but everyone was still edge. What about the Dart crossing? It was still coloured but only gaiter deep. Another swim and a brew. What a relief before the track bash back to the rock biv.

Day 8 repeated our trip back to Surveyors Flat. It was an anti-climax of a sort, but amazing for the lack of tourists with the Rees-Dart still being closed. A DoC ranger was surprised at our appearance, both in numbers and, possibly, maturity. (Liz calculated our average age at 63).

Day 9 completed our journey to the road end and civilized food at Glenorchy. Another great trip, inspired leadership and memorable comradeship.

Trampers: Raymond Ford, Calum McIntosh, Diane Mellish, Merv Meredith, Tony Lawton, Chris Leaver, Geoff Spearpoint (leader), Liz Stephenson, Aarn Tate, Peter Umbers, Gaylene Wilkinson and Gary Huish. 🏔️
GH