



*PTC Monthly  
Newsletter*

**December 2020/  
January 2021**

<b>PTC</b>	Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc.)
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<b>Correspondence</b>	All correspondence to the Secretary, including change of contact details

#### **Executive Committee**

President	Diane Mellish	337 5530	Quartermaster	Brian Smith	355 9945
Vice-President	Gary Huish	332 7020	Social Events	Margot Bowden	332 7020
Treasurer	Mike Bourke	332 7097	Committee	Kevin Hughes	332 6281
Trip Planner	Kerry Moore	359 5069		Alison Maccoll	322 8540
Secretary	Merv Meredith	322 7239			
Editor	Raymond Ford	351 9496			



<b>New Member Enquiries:</b>	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. In addition to the monthly club meeting, a variety of social events are also held every month.

#### **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.

<b>Tuesday, 8 December</b> 	<b>PTC Christmas Bingo</b> <p>Come along for a fun-filled night of bingo based on what your fellow club members know or have done. Bring along some festive food to share. Bring drinks if you want and punch will be supplied. Organisers Maureen Thompson and Margot Bowden.</p> <p><i>Supper duty: Everyone attending the meeting</i></p>
<b>Tuesday, 9 February 2021</b> 	<b>Land Search and Rescue (LandSAR) Experiences - Luke Mahon</b> <p>LandSAR provide a vital and interesting service that we often we hear about, but not need. Luke Mahon will talk about some of his experiences in Canterbury.</p>

## SOCIAL EVENTS

<b>Tuesday 15th December</b>	<p><b>Christmas gathering at Kevin and Heather's Hughes place, 56 Luxembourg Crescent, Halswell</b></p> <p>Join us at 6pm for a Pukeko spotting stroll on the edge of Christchurch, or arrive at 7pm for the BBQ and Christmas Pud! BYO drinks and meat and a salad or dessert to share.</p> <p>Please let Margot (03 332 7020 or <a href="mailto:margot.bowden@gmail.com">margot.bowden@gmail.com</a>) know if you are coming for the barbeque by Sunday 13 December.</p>
<b>Tuesday 19 January</b>	<p><b>Pop Up Penguins Sculpture Trail</b></p> <p>Join us on a tour to some of the Pop Up Penguins in central Christchurch City. These giant and little penguin sculptures are designed by local artists and school children, and each one is stunningly different.</p> <p>Meet at 6pm at the corner of Manchester Street and Armagh Street, Margaret Mahy Playground. Dinner at 7.15pm at Sakimoto Japanese Bistro, 119 Worcester Street, Cathedral Junction. To view the menu: <a href="https://www.sakimotojapanesebistro.com/menu">https://www.sakimotojapanesebistro.com/menu</a>.</p> <p>Please let Margot know if you are coming for dinner by Sunday, 17 January. Contact: <a href="mailto:margot.bowden@gmail.com">margot.bowden@gmail.com</a> or 03 332 7020.</p>

## NOTES

### ***President's notes***

Hello trampers!

Here are the details of how you can all help to contribute to our photographic records:

EVERYONE: You are all entitled to post photos and comments on our FaceBook page. So if you have a great photo from a trip or social occasion or an interesting or funny story, post away! Please remember this is a public page so be respectful and mindful of others' privacy. If in doubt about how to put up a post, talk to Allison Maccoll or Maureen Thompson. Also feel free to email the trip leader one or two choice pics which he/she may wish to send on to me as part of the official trip record.

TRIP LEADERS AND SOCIAL EVENT ORGANISERS: Please send, or delegate someone else to send, a few photos to me [Diane Mellish](#) soon after your trip. File sizes of the order of 1MB are good. Please use your email programme to reduce the file sizes, if they are significantly bigger than this, before sending. No more than 5 photos for most trips, maybe up to 12 if it is a long trip to a destination rarely visited. Include a group photo if you can. And please edit them so that any photos that are out of focus or otherwise unsuitable are not included.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our end of year functions. Best wishes for a happy Christmas season, good health for the year ahead and lots of tramping-friendly weather and good company during the long days of summer.

**Diane Mellish**

### ***Night sky notes – December / January***

Short summer nights are not conducive to star gazing, but if you *are* outside there are few sights to see. Low in the west after sunset is the bright planet Jupiter, with fainter Saturn a bit above and right. They get closer during December and by 22/12 are almost on top of each other. This line-of-sight pairing happens every 20 Earth years. Orange Mars is roughly due north at dusk, but less bright than it was a couple of months ago.

The evening sky lacks conspicuous constellations, but the Southern Cross is upside down and low in the south, with the two bright 'pointers', A and B Centauri, a bit to its west. The bright star Canopus is in the southeast, and Sirius is roughly due east. That means we can see the three brightest stars all at once: Sirius, Canopus, and A & B Centauri. Orion and the tight star-cluster Matariki/Pleiades are rising in the northeast. Rigel, Orion's brightest star, is the 7<sup>th</sup> brightest in the sky.

The large and Small Magellanic Clouds, high in the southern sky, are easily seen by the naked eye on a dark night. They are relatively small galaxies gravitationally linked to our own Milky Way galaxy.

Moon phases: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 8/12/20 and 6/1/21; new moon 15/12/20 and 13/1/21; 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 22/12 and 21/1/21, full moon 30/12 and 29/1/21.

**Graham Townsend**

## ***Membership***

The club welcomes new member – Helen Binnie.

## ***Christmas Base Camp - Okarito***

Escape the Christmas rush in peaceful Okarito. Maureen Thompson has booked Fernbird Retreat, a comfortable house, for the nights 23 to 29 December, leaving on 30 December. Stay as many nights as you like. Visit the web-site for photos and details. <https://www.holidayhouses.co.nz/listing/56238>.

**Cost:** Depends on numbers, but it would be up to \$50 for your own room and \$30 each to share a room. It could cost less if we fill the place up. Linen is provided, but BYO if just staying a night or two. Another option is to camp at the nearby community camp ground for \$15 pp. <http://okaritocampground.co.nz/>.

**Food:** A communal Xmas dinner, which usually supplies Boxing Day as well. Other meals are self-cater or share, as you like. The kitchen is well-equipped. There are no shops in Okarito, but there is a 4-Square store at Franz Josef which is 27 km away.

**Transport:** If you can offer/ need transport, let me know. I could maybe link you up with someone, or otherwise organise your own transport. We can car-pool for day-trips to Franz or Gillespies Beach.

**Booking:** Book with Maureen Thompson email [mothompson1212@gmail.com](mailto:mothompson1212@gmail.com). Wifi is available at Fernbird Retreat. My phone is 021 266 5778, but once I'm at Okarito phone reception might be variable. I'll only book the sleepout if we fill up the main house. When booking please include your arrival and departure dates, phone, email, car registration, and emergency contact details. The base camp will depend on appropriate Covid levels. I have not had to pay a deposit and we pay on departure.

## ***Notice of 2021 AGM***

The PTC 89<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting is to be held in the Oxford Terrace Baptist Church Hall, on:

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 starting promptly at 7.30pm, prior to our normal club night.**

The agenda will include:-

### **1. Election of Officers and Executive members**

Nominations for positions, signed by the nominee, proposer and seconder, may be sent to the Secretary prior to the meeting. In addition, nomination forms will be available at the door.

### **2. Notified motions**

Note that any member wishing to give notice of a motion for consideration at the AGM should forward their notice to the Secretary at, or prior to, our 9<sup>th</sup> February Club night.

The complete AGM agenda, including any Notices of Motion received, will be circulated on PTC Communicator in late February.

Merv Meredith, Secretary [secretary@ptc.nz](mailto:secretary@ptc.nz)

## 2021 Subscriptions

Individual 2021 subscription renewal forms are enclosed with this month's newsletter. The subscription rates have increased to reflect the increased cost of postage i.e. \$50 for hardcopy members and \$35 for electronic members.

Please note: Kiwibank will no longer accept cheques, so any payment of subscriptions will need to be either paid directly into our Kiwibank account 38-9015-0030334-00 or paid in cash.

Mike Bourke (Treasurer PTC)

**Deadline for the February newsletter:** – please send items for the newsletter, e.g. trip reports, notices, etc. to: Raymond Ford [fordrm@snap.net.nz](mailto:fordrm@snap.net.nz) by 30 January 2021.

**Next Executive Committee meeting:** Tuesday 26 January 2021.

## FORTHCOMING TRIPS

### Day Trips

Depart from and return to a convenient point on the side of town nearest to the destination. Our website [www.ptc.nz](http://www.ptc.nz) has maps of these meeting places. 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 accepted). 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 about club biking trips, contact Chris Leaver 03 322 6445, or [newptc75@gmail.com](mailto:newptc75@gmail.com).

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Sun</b><br><b>6 Dec</b><br>•           | <b><u>Purau Saddle—Hilltop</u></b><br><b>Kerry Moore 359 5069</b><br>A long day makes this a moderate trip. Walking between Purau Saddle and Montgomery Park (near Hilltop Tavern) along the summit walkway. Takes in part of the Te Ara Pataka Track and passes through several bush reserves. Good views of much of Banks Peninsula. We aim to have a group starting at each end with a car-swap. Take plenty of water!<br><b>8am on Cashmere Rd at the eastern end of Princess Margaret Hospital</b><br><b>Approx cost \$14</b> |
| <b>Sat, Sun</b><br><b>12-13 Dec</b><br>•• | <b><u>Griffin Range Serpentine Mine</u></b><br><b>Peter Umbers 359 9118</b><br>A moderate tramp on Griffin Range to the serpentine mine near 1517m Mt Griffin<br><b>Book by 6 Dec</b>  |
| <b>Sun</b><br><b>13 Dec</b><br>•          | <b><u>Manuka Hut</u></b><br><b>Diane Dixon 359 9170</b><br>An easy flat walk to this hut on the Te Araroa Track<br><b>Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd</b><br><b>Approx cost \$22</b>   |

- Sat,Sun**  
**19-20 Dec**  
●●
- Carroll Hut**  
**Names to Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
An easy-moderate trip for the naturalists. Enjoy Westland forest, summer flowers above the bushline and see fault scarps near Carroll Hut  
**Book by 13 December.**
- Sun**  
**20 Dec**  
●
- Club Picnic**  
**Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
Diamond Harbour and its reserve have lots of options. The picnic will be in the Stoddart Point Reserve on the lower level at Diamond Harbour, starting from 10am. Drive in to the left of the shops on the road down to the jetty and then to the right at the first hairpin, into the reserve. Plenty of options in the area—walking, biking, swimming. Bring your kayak, boat. You can bike to Camp Bay or up the Port Levy road. You can catch the ferry from Lyttelton.
- Wed-Tue**  
**23-29 Dec**  

- Okarito Christmas Base Camp**  
**Maureen Thompson 021 266 5778**  
Escape the Christmas rush in peaceful Okarito. Maureen Thompson has booked Fernbird Retreat, a comfortable house, for the nights 23 to 29 December. Stay as many nights as you like. Check out the website for photos and details.  
<https://www.holidayhouses.co.nz/listing/56238>
- Sat-Tue**  
**26-29 Dec**  
●●●●
- McKerrow Range**  
**Diane Mellish 337 5530**  
The date is likely to move for this moderate-hard tramp above Makorora to 2002m Mt Shrimpton. Expect splendid views around Mt Aspring NP. Camping by tarns in the McKerrow Range.  
**Book by 20 December.**
- Sun**  
**3 Jan**  
●
- Childrens Bay Farm walk**  
**Jill Fenner 980 6228**  
An easy 3-hour circuit from Akaroa to Takamatua then back via some quiet roads. Also known as the Rhino Walk. Coffee stop in Akaroa or on the way home.  
**9am on Cashmere Rd at eastern end of of Princess Margaret Hospital.** **Approx cost \$12**
- Sat-Tue**  
**9-12 Jan**  
●●●●
- Mt Titiroa**  
**Raymond Ford 022 318 0872 or fordrm@snap.net.nz**  
A prominent light-coloured granite 1715m peak near Lake Manapouri, with great views of Fiordland mountains and lakes. A moderate-hard trip from Lake Manapouri, climbing up the north ridge of Mt Titiroa, camping on the mountain. Either returning the same way to Lake Manapouri or crossing over to the Borland Valley  
**Book by 2 January.**
- Sun**  
**10 Jan**  
●
- Timutimu Head - Scenery Nook**  
**Danny Lee 357 1457**  
Easy-moderate tramp over peninsula farmland, via 380m Lucas Peak to Timutimu Head, the western head of Akaroa Harbour. Then on to a natural tidal seal swimming pool at Scenery Nook. Impressive red volcanic sea cliffs are an added attraction  
**8am on Cashmere Rd at eastern end of of Princess Margaret Hospital** **Approx cost \$14**

- Sat,Sun**  
**16-17 Jan**  
●●
- [Avoca Homestead--Torlesse Range](#)**  
**Honora Renwick 942 8368**  
Parking at the end of Craigieburn Rd and walking the short distance to the old Avoca Homestead. Day 2, climbing a vehicle track towards Bold Hill, then onto the main Torlesse ridge and down Landsdowne Spur for an invigorating splash down Broken Rr to Avoca Homestead and the cars.  
**Book by 10 January.**
- Sun**  
**17 Jan**  
●
- [Peak Hill](#)**  
**Alison Maccoll 322 8540**  
Easy-moderate climb in open country up a 1240m hill with superb views of Lk Coleridge on one side and the Rakaia River on the other. The upper slopes of Peak Hill have recently become crown land, with public access from the Algidus Road, thanks to Tenure Review of the pastoral lease property. Check out this excellent new public facility.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$18**
- 23-31 Jan**  
**1 week**
- [Upper Rakaia--Lord Valley-- Wanganui Valley](#)**  
**Geoff Spearpoint 027 318 4727 (phone or txt)**  
Up the Rakaia Valley crossing over the Main Divide to the Lord Valley and out, via the Blue Lookout, to the Wanganui Valley. The weather forecast will dictate which 7 days we use between 23 and 31 January. We are planning to fly from the road end up to around Banfield Hut in the Rakaia valley to avoid river crossings and the bluffs. Tentative helo cost \$150 to \$200 each.  
**Book by 8 January.**
- Sat,Sun**  
**23-24 Jan**  
●●
- [Nina Hut](#)**  
**Names to Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
An easy, flat walk in beautiful Nina Valley forest to this modern hut  
**Book by 17 January.**
- Saturday**  
**23 Jan**  
●
- [Omahu Bush—Coopers Knob](#)**  
**Diane Dixon 359 9170**  
The reserve has a variety of tracks plus, nearby is Coopers Knob and Gibraltar Rock. Easy  
**9am on Cashmere Rd at eastern end of of Princess Margaret Hospital.** **Approx cost \$3**
- Sat,Sun**  
**30-31 Jan**  
●●
- [Klondyke—North Rahu](#)**  
**Derek Gane 337 8264**  
Moderate tramp from Rahu Saddle in Victoria Forest Park. Camping out in a tarn basin below some 1500m peaks. A round trip, dropping into Klondyke Stream for the return trip. Some great views of the surrounding area from the tops.  
**Book by Sun 24 January.**
- Sun**  
**31 Jan**  
●
- [Boby Stream - Onepunga Falls](#)**  
**Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
An easy walk up Onepunga Stream to the falls.  
**Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St.** **Approx cost \$10**
- Sat,Sun**  
**6-7 Feb**  
●●●●
- [St Arnaud Range](#)**  
**Names to Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
A moderate trip in the St Arnaud Range overlooking Lake Rotoiti on one side and the Wairau Rr to the east. Lots of tarns to camp beside  
**Book by 31 January.**



- Sun [Gorge Hill—Cave Stream](#)  
 7 Feb Names to Kerry Moore 359 5069  
 ● Easy-moderate wade along Cave Stream as it flows 360m underground and emerges to join Broken River. Be prepared for wet and cold conditions. Take a torch and a second one for backup and a dry set of clothes to change into later. We'll do a warm-up climb of Gorge Hill with its fascinating sculpted limestone.  
 Meet 9am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd Approx cost \$15
- Sat,Sun [Sudden Valley](#)  
 13-14 Feb Names to Kerry Moore 359 5069  
 ●● An easy-moderate up and back trip to visit this scenic valley. Camping at the bivvy.  
 Book by 7 February.

## TRIP REPORTS

### Carlyle Hut -10 – 11 October 2020.

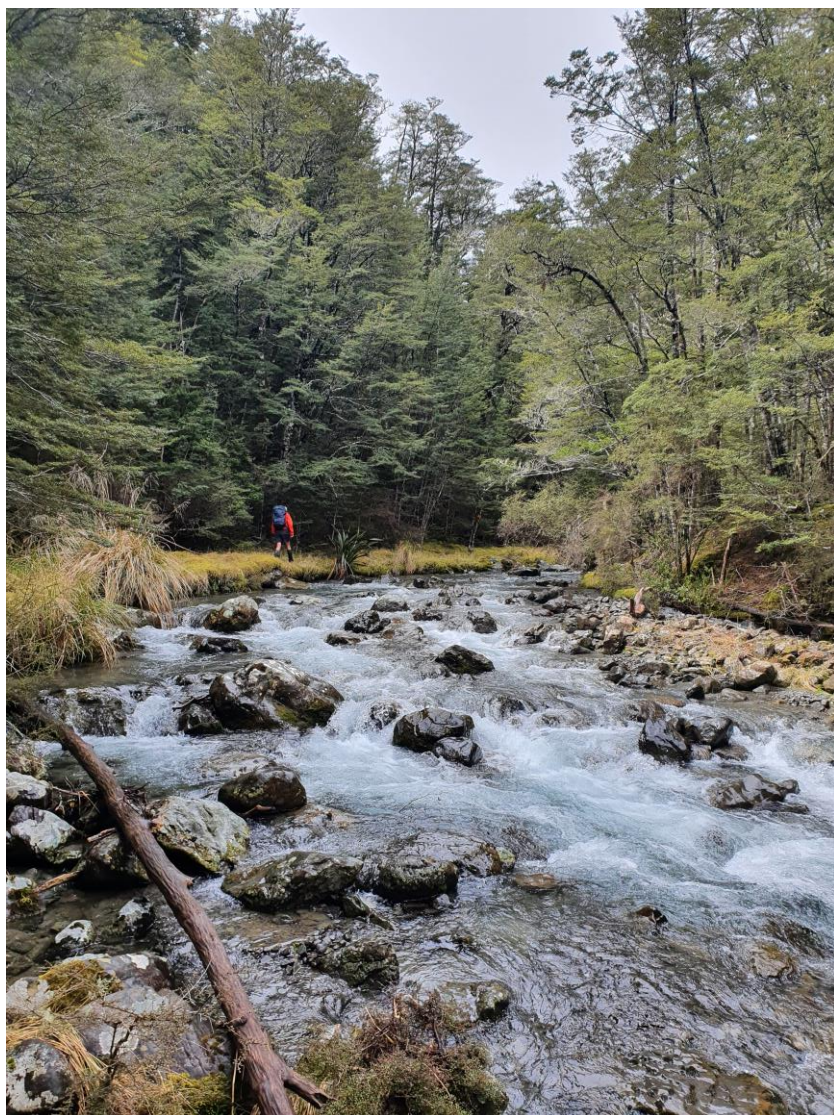


Figure 1 Carlyle Stream. Photo courtesy of Liz Wightwick.

Plan A was a trip up the Lawrence River, but when the weather didn't play ball, I suggested visiting the newly restored 8 bunk Carlyle hut in the Lake Sumner Forest Park, thinking we'd have no major rivers to cross and the weather nearer the east looks better. The New Zealand Conservation Trust commenced the restoration with a track trim in 2017, using Backcountry Trust funding. The hut was in a shockingly dilapidated state prior to their contributions. The restored hut and tidied track have helped the volunteers better deliver their predator trapping programme they are running in this area. These volunteers, who are committed to the protection the picturesque valley's birdlife, completed the work in 2019.

Murray (leader), Ian and Darcey were happy with that idea so on Murray's request I contacted the Glenhope Wye Station and met with success. Murray was surprised as the station owner is renowned for limiting access. I was asked three times if we were planning on hunting. Apparently, they do not like hunters. I got his wife who pushed her rentable hunting hut on me. "sure thing" I replied, "I'll put that on my list for next time". Nah, rather I'd bag DoC huts thanks.

We travelled up on Saturday morning and were walking by midday. It's only a 4 hour easy going well-maintained track with a bit of up and down travel. Carlyle Stream meanders dreamily through the lichen draped beech forest making numerous photo stops





Figure 2. Carlyle Hut. Photo courtesy of Liz Wightwick.

inevitable. The Conservation Trust NZ is making good progress with their predator control as we heard Grey warblers and Tomtits, but the valley also has Yellow-crowned Parakeets and South Island Robin.

While we had our parka's on for the some of the time, it only drizzled minimally. We reached the hut by 4pm, and I quickly lit the fire with plans to heat the 2kg of steamed treacle pudding in the steamer container that I'd carried in. Murray and Darcey came out of the bunkroom after unpacking and congratulated Ian on his fire-lighting skills!! Typical!! Ian put them right as to who the pyromaniac was. I gently warmed the pudding with a cunning double boiler arrangement I set up over a large billy I found at the hut. Refreshments and snacks around the fire quickly saw Darcey recounting tales from his past travels and time spent living in the Pacific.

Murray made an excellent job of preparing one of Kerry Moore's delicious lemon dahl curries for our main course, which gave plenty of time for the pud to heat through. While doubling the recipe seemed a little excessive at the time of making, at serving time when I suggested I just quarter the pud, there were no complaints or suggestions otherwise. With LASHINGS of thickened cream and hot custard, it all went down a treat and nothing was left over. Then we all had to take a little lie down to recover. More great conversations around the fire before finally drooping eyelids took us to off to our pits to sleep like the dead. A nice bone-warming fire, good company and full tummies does that.

Next day Darcy was up and ready to go shortly after 6am to Ian's horror as he still quietly enjoying coffee in bed! The walk out was relaxed with no complaints over covering the same ground again. With such a pretty spot it's just as enjoyable seeing it I all again but from the other way.

We were: **Liz & Ian Wightwick, Darcy Mawson, Murray Hight (leader)** 🏔️ LW.

## **Kaituna Valley-Mt Herbert- Packhorse Hut- Kaituna Valley 15 November 2020**

With a forecast of 25 degrees I wasn't expecting too many people to turn up for this circuit so it was pleasing to have 7 of us. This meant that we could take two cars and not have to walk the road piece of the circuit from the end of Parkinsons Road to the end of Kaituna Valley road. We drove to the end of Kaituna Valley road and while the rest of us got ready, Norman and Mark drove back to Parkinsons Road where they left one of the cars before returning in the other car.





Figure 3. On the summit of Mt Herbert/ Te Ahu Patkiki. Photo courtesy of Norm Burden.

As we started to climb up the farm track into the open it wasn't unbearably hot, but it was hot enough for us to be glad of a shady spot on the Monument south track for morning tea where we enjoyed views back over the valley.

On and up, we soon joined Te Ara Pataka - the Summit walkway - and climbed to Little Mt Herbert (913 m). We had fantastic clear views along the tops out to Purau and Lyttleton Harbour, and over to Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere once we got past Te Ahu Patkiki/ Mt Herbert (919 m). There were a few other people out enjoying the day and at the Mt Herbert shelter, where we had lunch, we compared notes with a couple of over 40s trampers, who were doing a reccie for a club trip.

After enjoying the zigzag and the bush around the side of Mt Bradley, we arrived at the Packhouse Hut for afternoon tea. There were a number of other people including a family with two young children who had climbed up from Parkinsons road. I found out while reading the hut book that PTC member Geoff Spearpoint regularly pops up to the Packhorse hut for exercise.

It was a pleasant stroll back down the Kaituna Valley Packhorse hut track to the car. We all enjoyed a rest while waiting for the drivers to retrieve the other car. It had taken us 6 and a half hours so it was too late for a coffee stop on the drive back.

We were: **Joy Schroeder, Dan Pryce, Norman Burden, John Robinson, Wendy McCaughan, Mark Piercey and Sue Piercey (leader)** 🏠 SP.



*Figure 4. Head of Lyttleton Harbour. Photo courtesy of Sue Piercey.*

## **Yeats Ridge Track Maintenance, Toharoa River --17 -21 November 2020**

Over-nighting Tuesday in Ross got us close to the Toharoa track-start for our walk into Cedar Flat where we planned to base ourselves for our track maintenance task. Liz has adopted the Yeats Ridge track, so armed with loppers and saws we headed along a boggy Toharoa Track over the bridge near the Adventure Ridge track then up our spur. The lower section in rata and kamahi forest wasn't overgrown to the point of slowing a tramper and is well marked with permolat. By mid-afternoon, we hadn't reached the denser flax, *Astelia*, *Dracophyllum* and cedar forest, but resolved to focus on the flax next day, Thursday. Back at the hut, Liz cooked a fancy noodle and haloumi dinner with asparagus and garden-fresh broad beans, topped off with a super lemon cake for dessert. A long after-dinner soak in the hot pool was reward for a hard day.

Day Two, we made a bee-line for the flaxy bit. Flax and *astelias* can be cut with knives or low-down with a saw. Near midday we made our way to a tarn for lunch and a cuppa, taking care not to include any of the myriad tarn tadpoles in our hot drink. While we were above the tree-line we took the opportunity to go a further 800m to [Yeats Hut](#) for a look-see. In the hut book, we noted the names of a couple we'd met the day before, doing a 6-day circuit. Going down "our" track we trimmed anything that annoyed us, and noted that any cut flax we'd left on steep bits of track were more slippery than the proverbial banana peel. Back at Cedar Flat we met Andrew Buglass, who we were expecting. He had come to help and encourage. For our Thursday night dinner Liz cooked a super vegetarian curry dinner, with broccoli and broad beans, then we finished the lemon cake. That night's hot pool dip was hotter than for Wed night.





*Figure 5. Peter Umbers snipping vegetation on the Yeats Ridge Track.  
Photo courtesy of Liz Wightwick.*

With Andrew along for the Friday spur attack, Kerry excused himself and worked near the hut, and lazed. Andrew was able to tell the workers, which plants demand attention by growing fast and bushy. We had chopped some that grow slowly and never get big. Some are best pulled as they will soon pose a problem if just trimmed. This energetic foursome went to Yeats Hut to improve the water drainage, and then on to [Crystal Biv](#) for a major workout. Back at base they had a well-deserved hot dip while Kerry cooked lamb and vegetables plus Moroccan lamb dehydrated meals on brown rice. Custard on gingernuts completed the meal.

Friday night was overcast, but the expected rain held off till 9am Saturday as we were walking out. It was steady from then, all the way to the cars. As we walked near a vertical gravel face, a small slip showered gravel near us. The rain kept us focused on walking so we reached the cars in good time and assembled for lunch at Hokitika. From there we dispersed, north or east or locally.

This was a well-planned, worthwhile foray that took advantage of fine mid-week weather to keep a Westland track in this beautiful area accessible to trampers.

We were: **Liz Wightwick (leader)** , **Andrew Buglass**, **Guy McKinnon**, **Peter Umbers**, **Kerry Moore**. 🏔️ KM

## **Mt Oxford—Oxford Hill—Ashley Saddle - 29 November 2020**

A light southerly kept us cool as we headed up towards Mt Oxford. Anticipating a cold wind on top we had an early lunch short of the peak as cloud swirled to our left and right. On nearby Oxford Hill, we stopped a while in the lee of a solar cell array then looked for a track down to Ashley Saddle. We found bits of track through the dracopyllum and tussock scrub with the best-defined one just above the saddle. The spur down to Mountain House car park was in open grassland with patches of trees in places, so we had a good view of the plains as we headed down in a cool easterly breeze.

Our clockwise circuit took us seven hours and was enjoyed by, **Kevin Hughes**, **Diane Mellish**, **Shiping Wang**, **Peter Umbers** and **Kerry Moore**. 🏔️ KM





*Figure 6. On the summit of Mt Oxford. Photo courtesy of Kevin Hughes.*



*Figure 7. On the descent from Ashley Saddle. Photo courtesy of Kevin Hughes.*