



*PTC Monthly
Newsletter
February 2021*

PTC	Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc.)
Postal Address	The Secretary, PTC, PO Box 13 258, City East, Christchurch 8141
Web address	www.ptc.nz
E-mail	secretary@PTC.nz
Facebook name	Peninsula Tramping Club Christchurch
Correspondence	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			



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. 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.

Tuesday, 9 February 2021 	Land Search and Rescue (LandSAR) Experiences - Luke Mahon <p>LandSAR provide a vital and interesting service that we often we hear about, but do not need. Luke Mahon will talk about some of his experiences in Canterbury.</p> <p><i>Supper duty: Tanya Jacobson and Margot Bowden</i></p>
Tuesday, 9 March 2021 	Annual General Meeting and the Pacific Crest Trail - Penny Webster <p>Penny Webster managed to walk the Pacific Crest Trail along the Pacific Ocean seaboard of the United States during Covid conditions last year. Come and hear some of her tales of trails.</p>

SOCIAL EVENTS

Tuesday, 16 February	Mary Duncan Park, Port Hills Come and join us for a scenic walk through Mary Duncan Park, Port Hills. Meet at the entrance to Mary Duncan Park, Port Hills Road at 6pm. There is parking across the street from the entrance to the park. Dinner at 7.15pm at Valley Inn Tavern, 2 Flavell Street, Heathcote Valley. To view the menu: http://valleyinntavern.co.nz/menu/ . Please let Margot know if you are coming for dinner by Sunday, 14 February. Contact: margot.bowden@gmail.com or 03 332 7020.
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NOTES

President's notes

Hello trampers. I hope you have started the New Year with some great adventures, and that you are excited about the varied programme of trips lined up for the coming months. Trip leaders please remember to post something on our FaceBook page about your adventures. Or email me a few sentences and a couple of pics and I will post them. Also send me mellishdiane@gmail.com up to 5 photos (reduce to about 1 MB) for our website gallery. No worries if you forget, I will email a reminder!

WE NEED NOMINATIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. PLEASE START NOMINATING.

Nominations close just before our March meeting. We have a number of long-standing exec. members retiring this year, and we really need new people coming on to the committee. We have the offices of President, Secretary and Treasurer covered but are looking for Trips Planner(s), Vice-Presidents, Newsletter Editor and a Social Events Co-ordinator as well as general exec members. Alison Maccoll is preparing some documents outlining what is involved in the titled roles, so if you have any questions please contact Alison. (Phone number above).

Hoping for lots of nominations and see you in the hills.

Diane Mellish

Night sky notes – February

High to the north in the evening sky is the bright constellation Orion with its triple-starred belt boxed in by a rough oblong of bright stars including the bluish supergiant Rigel – much hotter, and 70 000 times brighter, than the Sun; and orange Betelgeuse – a huge but relatively cool star nearing the end of its life.

A bit to the NW is another red giant star - Aldebaran in the constellation Taurus, near the Matariki star cluster. Further west again is reddish Mars - the only planet easily visible in the evening sky, setting around midnight. Bright Venus rises in the eastern pre-dawn sky, along with Saturn and Jupiter.

The Milky Way (The edge-on view of our home galaxy) - runs roughly N - S through Orion to the brilliant star Sirius, then further south past Canopus and the Southern Cross. The two "Clouds of Magellan" - small galaxies gravitationally bound to our Milky Way galaxy but about 160 000 and 200 000 light years away - are high in the southern sky, and easily seen by eye on a dark moonless night.

Moon phases in Feb: last quarter (½ illuminated): 4th, new moon 11th, first quarter: 19th, and full moon: 27th.

The evening of May 26th brings us an eclipse of the Moon (so called 'blood moon') – more info later.

Graham Townsend

Notice of 2021 AGM

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

Tuesday 9th 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 9th 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

2021 Subscriptions

A reminder to please pay your subscriptions if you have not already done so. The subscription rates are **\$50** for hardcopy members and **\$35** for electronic members. You can pay online into account number 38-9015-0030334-00. Please put SUB in the particulars box and YOUR NAME in the Reference box.

Mike Bourke (Treasurer PTC)

Deadline for the March newsletter: – please send items for the newsletter, e.g. trip reports, notices, etc. to: Raymond Ford fordrm@snap.net.nz by 27 February 2021.

Next Executive Committee meeting: Tuesday, 23 February 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 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.

- Sun**
7 Feb
● **[Gorge Hill—Cave Stream](#)**
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 before the cave walk.
Call Kerry M by 9pm Friday 5 Feb. **Approx cost \$16**
- Sat,Sun**
13-14 Feb
●● **[Sudden Valley](#)**
Kerry Moore 359 5069
An easy-moderate up and back trip to visit this scenic valley. Camping at the bivvy.
Book by 7 Feb.
- Sun**
14 Feb
● **[Mt Bradley circuit](#)**
Norman Burden 358 5115
An easy-moderate 6-7 hour circuit starting in Orton Bradley Park, going to Packhorse Hut then on to part of Te Ara Pataka Track and down the Orton Bradley Valley to the cars.
8am at Cashmere Rd opposite Princess Margaret Hospital near Hackthorne Rd. **Approx cost \$5**
- Sat-Sun**
20-21 Feb
●● **[Deception—Mingha](#)**
Wendy McCaughan 385 1293
The most popular 2-dayer in APNP. A moderate walk up the bouldery Deception River, past Upper Deception Hut to stay at well-sited Goat Pass Hut. Sunday we have an easier walk down the Mingha River.
Book by 14 Feb.
- Sun**
21 Feb
● **[Bealey Spur](#)**
Graeme Nicholas 027 504 7726
Popular easy-moderate walk to this historic musterers' hut, through beech forest and tussock clearings which offer fantastic views of the upper Waimak and the mountains of Arthurs Pass National Park. If time permits it is worth walking beyond the hut, further up the spur.
Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd **Approx cost \$22**
- Sat,Sun**
27-28 Feb
●● **[Hope-Kiwi Lodge](#)**
Alison Maccoll 322 8540
Easy-moderate tramp in Lake Sumner Forest Park, overnighting in the spacious Hope Kiwi Lodge/Hut. Good track all the way through beech forest and along river terraces. If enough people go, a crossover via Lake Sumner is possible.
Book by 21 Feb.
- Sun**
28 Feb
● **[Mount Barrosa](#)**
Kevin Hughes 332 6281
An easy-moderate 780m climb trip in the Clent Hills area up from the Ashburton Gorge Rd. Open tussock country with good views all the way up to this 1364m peak. Popular with rock hounds looking for agates.
Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd **Approx cost \$20**

- Sat,Sun
6-7 Mar
●●
- [Bealey Spur—Blind Spur](#)**
Kerry Moore 359 5069
A moderate circuit up Bealey Spur, camping at a tarn on Blind Spur then dropping into Bruce Stream to return.
Book by 28 Feb.
- Sun.
7 Mar
●
- [Nikau Palm Gully](#)**
Awaiting leader
This bush-clad gully is quite a dramatic spot, and the plentiful nikau palms here are notable for being the southern-most limit of this species in New Zealand. This is an easy tramp towards the eastern heads of Akaroa Harbour.
8am at Cashmere Rd opposite Princess Margaret Hospital near Hackthorne Rd. Approx cost \$13
- Sat,Sun
13-14 Mar
●●
- [Walker Pass - Tarn Col - Edwards](#)**
Peter Umbers 359 9118
One of the best-known APNP tramps. This moderate trip takes in the Hawdon and Edwards valleys, a couple of attractive alpine passes and views of what's left of Falling Mountain. We need to get to Hawdon Hut on the Friday night to set us up for the longish day to Edwards Hut.
Book by 7 March
- Sun.
14 Mar
●
- [Birdlings Flat - Magnet Bay](#)**
Gavin Chalk 027 750 8943
Easy-moderate trip along the coast from Birdlings Flat to Oashore, Tokoroa, Hikuraki and Magnet Bays. Returning the same way.
8am at Cashmere Rd opposite Princess Margaret Hospital near Hackthorne Rd. Approx cost \$7
- Sat-Tue.
20-23 Mar
●●●●
- [Rock Burn – Lake Unknown](#)**
Raymond Ford 022 318 0872
A moderate-hard trip near Route Burn. We go over Sugarloaf Pass, camp at Theatre Flat, Lake Unknown, Park Pass, North Col to camp on North Branch of the Routeburn Rr. 4 days tramping, 2 days travelling
Book by 14 March
- Sat-Tue
20-23 Mar
●●●●
- [Serpentine Range, Routeburn area](#)**
Diane Mellish 337 5530
A moderate-plus tramp up the Routeburn to Lakes Harris and Wilson. Day 2 we camp at point 1550 on the Serpentine Range then on to camp in the North Routeburn Rr. We may do a side trip to Emily Pass. Tramping 4 days, travelling 2 days.
Book by 14 March
- Sun.
21 Mar
●
- [Hurunui Peak](#)**
Leader needed
An easy 937m climb inland from Balmoral Forest and overlooking Island Hills Station.
Meet 8am at Placemakers, 319 Cranford St. Approx cost \$19
- Sat,Sun
27-28 Mar
●●
- [Hunts Creek Hut—Mt Barron](#)**
Names to Kerry Moore 359 5069
A moderate-hard walk up Kellys Creek, over Hunt Saddle to stay at Hunts Creek Hut. Exiting Sunday over Mt Barron.

- Book by 21 March**
- Sun** [Gola Peak](#)
28 Mar **John Robinson 027 633 1476**
 ● Moderate trip on rolling farmland up the spur beside Pig Gully to 1285m Gola peak. We'll be looking down on a point where the Waipara River heads NE and the Okuku River heads SW.
Meet 8am at Placemakers, 319 Cranford St **Approx cost \$17**
- Fri-Mon** [Saxton--Leathem--Severn](#)
2-5 Apr **Diane Mellish 337 5530**
 ●●●● A moderate-hard circuit in Marlborough approached from the Molesworth Road.
Easter **Book by 28 March**

Daylight Saving finishes – clocks go back one hour !

- Sun** [Barnett Park—Uruman—Chalmers Track](#)
4 Apr **Helen Harkness 384 2890**
 ● An easy-moderate exploration above Redcliffs and Lyttelton. As well as the Uruman-Chalmers loop, it includes Mulgans, Frog Pond and Eastenders Tracks as well as Jollies Bush
Meet 9am at Barnett Park.
- Sat-Mon** [Nina—Boscawen--Rough Creek](#)
10-12 Apr **Merv Meredith 322 7239**
 ●●● A moderate circuit up the Nina Rr to Nina Biv then over Boscawen Saddle to Lake Christabel Hut. Day three goes to the highway via Rough Creek.
Book by 4 April
- Sun** [Three Deans](#)
11 Apr **Graeme Paltridge 384 3592**
 ● An easy-moderate circuit on these distinctive limestone hills inland from Amberley.
Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St **Approx cost \$11**

TRIP REPORTS

Okarito Base Camp - 23 to 30 December 2020.

Fernbird Retreat, Okarito (Pop. 30) was home for a week over Christmas 2020 for 8 PTC club members and friends. Our house was adjacent to the lagoon and had 5 comfortable bedrooms, a well-equipped kitchen and a balcony with a good view of the village and wetlands.

Three of us (Arif Matthee, John Robinson and Maureen Thompson) were the advance guard. Day one, with low tide at noon was an ideal time to do the local walk to Three-Mile beach. We limbered up with a yoga session on the lounge floor, to fill in the time before low tide. The previous night's rain and wind made the conditions perfect for a wild beach walk. We dodged the waves lapping at our feet. Huge boulders and soaring waterfalls made the walk interesting. A baby seal was spotted hiding behind a rock. A swing bridge over the tannin-stained lagoon provides access to Three-mile beach. No evidence remains of the 2500 miners who lived here between 1865 and 1867. They were seeking the gold that lay on the black sand, but where a rogue wave could sweep away your fortune in a second. The route back was the cliff-top track through wonderful West Coast bush. A detour to the trig point gave an overview of the area with the Okarito lagoon to the north and Mt Cook to the East.



Figure 1. Okarito Beach waterfalls after the rain. Photo courtesy of Maureen Thompson

On Xmas Day, Arif and John tackled the 8.5 hour Alex Knob track, while Maureen explored Okarito and put the roast dinner in the oven. The local internet tower was out of action the whole day so we had no phone, internet or landlines. The wharf is a fascinating place to read up on the local history. The short Pakihi walk up to a scenic lookout highlights the historic tree-felling industry. A traditional Xmas dinner was served that evening.

Boxing Day started with the Tatare Tunnel walk at Franz Joseph. It's a short walk requiring headlamps and wet feet. The tunnel was built to bring water to the gold mines. After checking out the DOC office we decided on a bike trip to Neils Creek. We got wet boots again as we crossed a river. DOC failed to tell us that the gate might be locked. Fortunately, my riding companions were able to heave my heavy e-bike over the gate. The old forestry track was quite wet and mossy, but it was a delightful ride. We arrived at a deserted beach with a meandering river mouth.

Day three took us to Gillespies Beach and an interesting walk via beach, lagoon and historic mining relics. On the way home Arif and John knocked off Lake Matheson and a new track to Lake Gault. The following day John, Arif and Deane took a

scenic helicopter flight over the glaciers, then fitted in the 5-hour Roberts Point track, which can be a bit slippery.

Over the next few days, Mark and Sue Piercey arrived, plus three of Maureen's friends (Francis, Kari and Deane) filling the house. Francis and Kari had an adventurous afternoon walk up Alex Knob, which turned into a rescue mission for an injured overseas tourist. The tourist had sprained her ankle not far from the summit of Alex Knob and was being piggy-backed by her friend and a passing tramper. Francis and Kari joined in to help but didn't get out until 10pm, on dusk. The tourists were exhausted as the injured girl and her friend had not eaten since breakfast.

It was a most enjoyable week with the added bonus of perfect weather and, amazingly, no sand-flies.

Base camp members were: **Maureen Thompson (leader), John Robinson, Arif Matthee, Sue and Mark Piercey.**
Guests: Deane, Francis and Kari... 🏠 MT



Figure 2. View of Okarito Lagoon from the Trig Walk. Photo courtesy of Maureen Thompson.

Childrens Bay and Onawe Peninsula - 3 January 2021

Only four were ready to begin their day-tripping this early in the New Year. Leader and driver was Jill Fenner. She had done the Childrens Bay walk before so knew to park near the boaties' slipway to start our easy clockwise circuit. We passed the series of animals that makes this walk so popular and even got past the crocodile unscathed, as we ignored the dictum to 'never smile at a...'. The giraffes look a bit out of place in grassland though I'm told they do eat grass sometimes. The rhino is a full-sized magnificent metal beast with its horn pointing us up the hill towards Moa Point. We got to a bench at a high point above Lushington Bay for morning tea and didn't see the point in looking for moas because that would have taken us back towards the car. Instead, we walked to Takamatua to eat lunch in the shade, near the jetty. The old Takamatua Road took us back to a grassy track and the rhino, then back on familiar tracks to the car.

With much of the afternoon in reserve Jill gave us a bonus walk. Onawe Flat Road goes from Duvauchelle to a car-park halfway along Onawe Peninsula, so we did the short walk to the high-point then back the same way. The weathered trachyte rock at the narrow waist of the peninsula is truly impressive and a fair bit older than the Lyttelton volcanics at 8 -10 million years.

We were: **Jill Fenner (leader), Joy Schroeder, Tanya Jacobson, Kerry Moore** 🏠 KM



Figure 3. Grazing 'giraffes' and Akaroa township. Photo courtesy of Kerry Moore.

Timutimu Head—Scenery Nook - 10 January 2021

Ten of us, in two cars, arrived at the gate at Lands End Road, and walked in a brisk, cool easterly to Lucas Peak. Some of us collected fresh mushrooms near Timutimu Head and on our way across the gullies to Scenery Nook.

As usual on this walk we got fairly strung out as we took our choice of the many sheep tracks that cross the area. The variable oyster-catchers didn't seem as bothered by us this year and the seals lazed while their pups frolicked. The humans ate sandwiches and took lots of photos of the wildlife and the crashing waves.

We were: **Danny Lee (leader) Kyung-Sang Lee, Jill Fenner, Tim Hines, Andrea Goebel, John Robinson, Dan Pryce, Wendy McCaughan, Sacha Baldwin, Kerry Moore** 🏠 KM



Figure 4. Viewing the wildlife, Scenery Nook. Photo courtesy of Kerry Moore.



Figure 5. View of Akaroa Harbour from Lucas Peak. Photo courtesy of Kerry Moore.

Mt Pfeifer – 13 -14 January 2021

Finally a fine, settled weather window of a few days appeared so I contacted the people who had been booked on the cancelled Mt Titiroa trip. Three others joined me for the overnight tramp just west of Otira. This trip has been on my wish list for many years and did not disappoint.

I contacted the farmers who in the past have allowed us to drive through their property at Aickens corner and park well off the road. But they no longer allow this and told me to park in the DOC roadside park. However, I did not want my car trashed so left my car at Otira hotel and did some hitching instead. Kind people looked after me and it was a very satisfactory option which caused no delays.



Figure 6. Chef Jane Liddle at work! Photo courtesy of Diane Mellish.

We had a very leisurely time at our camp in perfect summer conditions. Jane cooked dinner while I lazed about trying to recover from a serious bout of dehydration.

Unfortunately, this prevented me from climbing further next day. And many thanks to my companions who had carried my load when I was incapacitated with low energy and severe cramp. The views were wonderful and it was ideal bivvy bag weather. Luckily the thousands of frogs in the lukewarm tarn were still at the tadpole stage so it was a quiet, starry night. Thick mist filled the valleys below us by morning and did not disperse until almost midday. Helen, Jane and Peter set off at first light for the climb and returned just after midday. I had a blissful morning enjoying just being there and peak-spotting from the ridge. The descent from the saddle was marred by a few nasty falls – those boulders are slippery when least expected! Rata trees in full bloom were a highlight. Arriving back at the highway, I almost pushed Peter off the steps of the footbridge in my hurry to thumb a ride with a car I could hear coming around the bend. Happily, I was successful so we were very soon enjoying cool drinks outside the Otira Hotel, ending a very enjoyable trip.

Route Information: The route up to the expansive tussock basins leading to Mt Pfeifer begins at the Morrison footbridge, beside the highway where the Deception River meets the Otira River. It is best to travel downstream along the Te Araroa track about 400m before turning right and heading into Paratu Stream. This avoids floundering in the bush like we did on the way in! Several hours of constant climbing up the bouldery Paratu creek bed, with of sections of track in the upper reaches, bring you to Waharoa Saddle. Make sure you pick up the red marker on a branch which directs you left at the first branching of the stream. Also at about 850m altitude, look out for a cairn which directs you slightly right onto the upper track. After the saddle a very obvious track leads up the scrubby ridge to the tussock basins above. We camped at the first tarns at 1320m. Next day, the climbing route was over the prominent knob at 1460m, then a descent into the basin below and a sidle around to Pfeifer Bivvy (It is best to not drop right down to the lip of the basins – keep a bit of altitude on.) Then it is an obvious rocky scramble up to the peak.

We were **Diane Mellish (leader), Helen Binney, Jane Liddle, Peter Umbers** 🏠 DM



Figure 7. Helen Binnie on the summit of Mt Pfeifer. Photo courtesy of Helen Binnie

Peak Hill and more - a day of two halves and two parts – Sunday 17 January

The five of us headed away in 2 cars towards the Peak Hill carpark near Lake Coleridge. The weather was a bit “iffy” (rain showers but not too windy or cold) but most of us were keen to have a go at climbing Peak Hill – we’d all tried last year. We started off in a rain shower and looking up the Rakaia, the weather didn’t look that

great either. Once we reached the ridge the full force of the norwester and the rain showers sent us scurrying back down to find a sheltered (late) morning tea spot and then back to our cars. So that was the first half of the day and the first part.

Arriving arriving back at the cars, we headed back down the road to the carpark at the beginning of the Dry Acheron walk. After 20 mins walking along the tree line, we turned right and headed down into the river valley, finding a perfect spot for lunch – a grassy bank beside the stream that was sheltered from the wind.

After lunch, we headed up the river valley for an hour or so – lots of stream hopping but mostly relatively sheltered from the fierce winds. Eventually we turned back returning the way we came.

So that was the second half of the day and the second part.

We finished off with coffee and snacks at the Horarata Cafe, which, rather surprisingly, was still open at 4.45 on Sunday afternoon. Then it was back to Christchurch and home in time for dinner. A good day out even if the weather didn't quite play ball – we blew away the cobwebs and enjoyed the beauty of the countryside around Lake Coleridge.

We were: **Alison Maccoll (leader), Wendy McCaughan, Norman Burden, John Robinson and Dan Pryce...** 🌲
AM



Figure 8. Looking down the Acheron River. Photo courtesy of Norman Burden.