



*PTC Monthly
Newsletter
March 2021*

PTC	Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc.)
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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 March 2021 	Annual General Meeting and the Pacific Crest Trail - Penny Webster <p>The AGM will commence at 7.30 pm.</p> <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> <p><i>Supper duty: Maureen Thompson, Tanya Jacobson and Margot Bowden</i></p>
Tuesday, 13 April 2021 	Rod Donald Trust and the Te Ahu Patiki project – Suky Thompson <p>Suky will speak about the Trust's work and the Te Ahu Patiki project to purchase Mt Herbert and Bradley for a conservation park. More information about the Trust and the project can be found on their website https://roddonaldtrust.co.nz/</p>

SOCIAL EVENTS

**Wednesday,
17 March**



Redwood Springs Evening walk and Dinner

The Styx River Esplanade is a hidden treasure with a bubbling spring and a double flying fox.

A one hour walk departing at 6pm from Murchison Park at the corner of Lowry Ave and Goodall Place. Toilet available. We will walk a loop through the suburban streets and the Esplanade, which brings us back to the cars.

We'll drive a short distance to Curry Time Indian restaurant, 284 A Main North Rd, Redwood. It's on the corner of Daniels Rd. Mains are approx. \$20. Dinner is at 7.15pm. Bookings for dinner to Maureen Thompson by Monday 15 March. Email: mothompson1212@gmail.com. Text: 021 266 5778.

NOTES

President's notes

Recently, it has been wonderful to stack up a few weekend trips in perfect weather, with great club members for company. It allows the luxury of musing on all sorts of things. Here is some of what I was musing on. Going through the Coast to Coast track, up the Deception River and down the Mingha River, I was amazed and delighted to find that the only sign that hundreds of people had been through a week earlier was grit on rocks and footprints in the sand. Both of these will have washed away in recent rain. We must be ever mindful of the 'Leave only footprints' philosophy. Except that it should sometimes be 'Leave NO footprints'.

On our St Arnaud Range traverse we descended through fragile, mossy ecosystems as we approached our camp beside the tarn. In these areas we should always try to pick a path on firm ground and not flounder straight on through the moss-fields leaving damaging boot impressions. I was very careful to protect the water in the tarn too, by taking water out and washing dishes well away from it and using a similar strategy for ensuring soap and toothpaste go onto the ground somewhere and not directly into the tarn. I'm even wrapping my brain around how best to prevent sunscreen residues from entering the water when we take a dip!

Diane Mellish

Night sky notes – March 2021

Reddish Mars is the only planet visible in the evening sky - low in the northwest and setting about 3 hours after sunset. It's close to the star cluster Matariki and to the bright orange star Aldebaran. But as some compensation for that chilly pre-dawn dunny visit, Saturn rises around 4 am, followed by Jupiter and then the tiny pinpoint of Mercury.

Moon phases: Last quarter 6/3, New moon 13/3, First quarter 22/3 and Full moon on 29/3.

In the evening sky, Orion is still conspicuous high in the nor-nor-west, with brilliant Sirius nearby and almost due north. Bright Canopus is almost overhead. Other than the Southern Cross & the Two pointers, most southerly constellations are inconspicuous. But away from city lights, you'll be able to see the faint haze of the Large and Small Magellanic "Clouds". The light from these dwarf galaxies set out 180,000 and 210,000 years ago, which is before most of us were born. Reflecting on this vastness vs. the tiny "pale blue dot" we call Earth, astronomer Carl Sagan said: "There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known." I'll sign off with that.

Graham Townsend

2021 Subscriptions – a final reminder!

ALL 2021 Peninsula Tramping Club subscriptions are due for renewal before the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 9th March 2021. Either \$35 for an electronic newsletter subscription, or \$50 for a printed newsletter subscription.

Payment can be paid directly into the PTC Kiwibank account 38 9015 0030334 00 - either online or by cash. If paying online, please put SUB in the "Particulars" box and YOUR NAME in the "Reference" box, so that your payment can be identified.

Members who have not paid their subscription by the AGM time will be unable to vote at the AGM and will no longer receive monthly newsletters.

Mike Bourke (Treasurer PTC)

Notice of 2021 Annual General Meeting

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 on the night.

2. Notified motions

Note that any member wishing to give notice of a motion for consideration at the AGM should have forwarded their notice to the Secretary at, or prior to, our 9th February Club night. None have been received.

The complete AGM agenda will be circulated on Communicator in early March.

Merv Meredith

Secretary secretary@ptc.nz

Deadline for the April newsletter: – please send items for the newsletter, e.g. trip reports, notices, etc. to the Editor by 1 April 2021.

Next Executive Committee meeting: Tuesday, 30 March 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.

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|--------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Sunday | <u>Fishermans Bay Garden--Shell Bay—Pompeys Pillar</u> | |
| 7 March | Chris Leaver 322 6445 | |
| ● | Fishermans Bay garden visit (CHARGE \$10) followed by an easy-moderate walk down to Pompeys Pillar and back along the cliff tops down to pretty Red Bay for lunch. Shell Bay is a possibility for anyone wanting to explore further. | |
| | 8am Cashmere Rd, opposite Princess Margaret Hospital, near Hackthorne Rd. | Approx cost \$15 |
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| Sat,Sun | <u>Walker Pass - Tarn Col - Otehake Rr</u> | |
| 13-14 March | Peter Umbers 359 9118 | |
| ●● | We need to get to Hawdon Hut on the Fri night, then this moderate trip takes us over Tarn Col and down the Otehake west branch to Otehake Hut. Sunday we go up the Otehake east branch and back over Walker Pass. | |
| | Book by 7 March | |
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| Sunday | <u>Birdlings Flat - Magnet Bay</u> | |
| 14 March | 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 Cashmere Rd opposite Princess Margaret Hospital, near Hackthorne Rd. | Approx cost \$8 |
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| Sat-Tue | <u>Rock Burn – Lake Unknown</u> | |
| 20-23 March | Raymond Ford 022 318 0872 fordrm@snap.net.nz | |
| ●●●● | A moderate-hard trip near Route Burn. We go over Sugarloaf Pass, camp at Theatre Flat, Lake Unknown, Park Pass, North Col, either the north branch Routeburn River or Serpentine Range 4 days tramping, 2 days travelling. | |
| | Book by 14 March | |
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| Sat-Tue | <u>Serpentine Range, Routeburn area</u> | |
| 20-23 March | 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 River. We may do a side trip to Emily Pass. Tramping 4 days, travelling 2 days. | |
| | Book by 14 March | |
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| Sunday | <u>Hurunui Peak</u> | |
| 21 March | Kerry Moore 359 5069 | |
| ● | An easy 937m climb inland from Balmoral Forest and overlooking Island Hills Station. | |
| | Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St | Approx cost \$20 |

- Sat,Sun**
27-28 March
●●
Hunts Creek Hut—Mt Barron
Doug Forster 337 5453
We walk up the Kellys Creek Track, over Hunt Saddle to stay at Hunts Creek Hut. A moderate-hard exit on Sunday over Mt Barron.
Book by 21 March.
- Sunday**
28 March
●
Gola Peak
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 heads SW.
Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St
Approx cost \$18
- Fri-Mon**
2-5 April
●●●●
Saxton--Leathem—Severn
Diane Mellish 337 5530
A moderate circuit in Marlborough, approached from the Molesworth Road.
Book by 28 March
- Sunday 4 April - Daylight Saving ends— clocks go back one hour !**
- Sunday**
4 April
●
Barnett Park—Urumau—Chalmers Track
Helen Harkness 384 2890
An easy-moderate exploration above Redcliffs and Lyttelton. As well as the Urumau-Chalmers loop, it includes Mulgan's, Frog Pond and Eastenders' Tracks as well as Jollie's Bush.
Meet 9am at Barnett Park
- Sat-Mon**
10-12 April
●●●
Nina—Boscawen Saddle--Rough Creek
Merv Meredith 322 7239
A moderate circuit up the Nina River to Nina Bivvy then over Boscawen Saddle to Lake Christabel Hut. Day three goes to the highway via Rough Creek.
Book by 4 April
- Sunday**
11 April
●
Three Deans
Graeme Paltridge 384 3592
An easy-moderate circuit on these distinctive hills inland from Amberley.
Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St
Approx cost \$12
- Sat,Sun**
17-18 April
●●
Mons Sex Millia
Liz Wightwick 027 633 2038
trampingtrip@gmail.com
Moderate-hard tramp off of the Lewis Pass highway to this 1800m high point on the Poplars Range. Camping on the tops.
Book by 11 April
- Saturday**
17 April
●
High Peak, Rockwood Range
Kerry Moore 359 5069
An easy-moderate walk up 968m High Peak in the impressively craggy Rockwood Range.
Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd
Approx cost \$18
- Tuesday 20 April**
Trip Planning meeting - venue to be notified later

- Sat-Mon**
24-26 April
●●●
- [Mt Brown Hut—Newton Range Biv--Styx River](#)**
Peter Umbers 359 9118
A moderate circuit from Lake Kaniere to Mt Brown Hut, along to Newton Range Bivvy then down the Styx River.
Book by 18 April
- Sun**
25 April
●
- [Mt Herbert from Orton Bradley](#)**
Dan Pryce 356 1962
A moderate circuit climbing to the Te Ara Pataka Track and 913m Herbert Peak with a gentler descent down the track to Diamond Harbour.
8am on Cashmere Rd at eastern end of Princess Margaret Hospital **Approx cost \$8**
- Sat,Sun**
1-2 May
●●
- [Pinchgut Hut—Bobs Camp circuit](#)**
Awaiting leader
A moderate walk via Pinchgut Hut, up the Cattle Peak Track to Bobs Camp Biv then back via Whare Track
Book by 25 April
- Saturday**
1 May
●
- [Mt Thomas—Pinchgut—Okuku Rr](#)**
Evelien Baas 027 557 5521
Starts at the Mt Thomas Wooded Gully camping area and goes up the Summit Track to Mt Thomas then past Pinchgut Hut to the Okuku ford. A larger group can split in two and do a crossover. Easy-moderate grade but moderate length-wise.
Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St **Approx cost \$10**
- Sat,Sun**
8-9 May
●●
- [Cold Stream Hut](#)**
Awaiting leader
An easy flat trip suitable for children up Jollie Brook then Cold Stream. Energetic people could exit along the Hooligan Range.
Book by 1 May
- Sunday**
9 May
●
- [Kennedys Bush—Governors Bay](#)**
Alison Maccoll 322 8540
An easy climb from Halswell Quarry up through Kennedy's Bush to the Summit Road then exploring the maze of tracks on the Governors Bay side of the crater rim.
Meet 8:30am Quarrymans' Quarters car park, Halswell Quarry
- Sat-Thur**
15-19 May
●●●●●
- [Kepler Track](#)**
Raymond Ford 022 318 0872
Rated moderate-hard at this time of year, the Kepler Track is an alpine adventure with stunning panoramas. We go from Lake Te Anau up to Luxmore Hut at 1085m, then traverse the ridge-lines of the Kepler Mountains, drop down to beautiful Lake Manapouri, before heading back through peaceful beech forest.
Book by 1 May

TRIP REPORTS

Gibraltar Rock--Omahu Bush – Saturday, 23 January 2021

Graeme's car carried six and Mary's took four to the Gibraltar Rock car-park on a breezy day. The rock was a scramble for four of us as the others took an early break. Some of our group saw deer as we headed down a

wide grassy track. Signs prohibit shooting or bow hunting which we found it easy to comply with. Leader, Graeme guided us into the bush reserve which has some very nice, narrow tree-lined tracks and some impressive stands of kanuka. Big podocarps are labelled. Lots of animal sign. The waterfall isn't a gusher, but it was worth a visit, and was wet enough to cool an overheated Sharna. We had a slow lunch looking towards Otahuna then headed up-valley on a wide track to the cars. We had time to go to Coopers Knob, but knew the wind would be bothersome, so we didn't make the effort. It was good to have representatives of three generations of the Campbell clan on the walk: Hilaire, Nessie and Sharna.

We were: **Graeme Nicholas (leader) Jill Fenner, Rhonda Trounson, Mary McKeown, Hilaire Campbell, Nessie & Sharna Campbell, Dan Pryce, Helen Harkness, Kerry Moore..... 🏠 KM**



*Figure 1. Our group minus Sharna who was boulder hopping and Kerry, busy on the phone (camera).
Photo courtesy of Kerry Moore.*

Alpine Trip – Upper Rakaia valley – Lawrence River – 24 – 30 January 2021

The last week of January marked the 12th Alpine Trip led by Geoff and, as always, it did not disappoint. In fact, it was a bit of a magical mystery tour.....

The planned itinerary promised exciting glacial traverses, specifically up the St James, across the Clarke Neve, over the divide and down the Radiant Glacier, traversing around the Lord Range and dropping into the Wanganui to walk out. “the best of plans...”

Gary drove us to Glenfalloch Station in a strong nor'wester. We took off, in 3 groups of 3, in a small chopper which boogeyed from side to side in flight, flying low to avoid the higher turbulence, thereby providing fantastic views of the river flats. This saved a day's walk up the Rakaia so we had only 4 hours walk to reach Meins Knob, the prominent T-junction where the Rakaia splits into rivers from the two large valley glaciers - the Lyell and the Ramsay.

Skirting around the base of Meins Knob and crossing the swingbridge, which two DOC workers were upgrading, we crossed the river flats to the Ramsay Glacier terminal lake. We could see the lower glacier, but the tops were covered in cloud and the wind was roaring down the valley. We pitched camp behind the best shelter we could find – behind a rocky ridge. However, the ridge did not facilitate a good night's sleep due to the synchronous symphony of flapping tents.



Figure 2. Ascending the Cockayne Glacier. Photo courtesy of Geoff Spearpoint

The next morning dawned with similar weather, the tops all in cloud and the wind still strong. The prospect of climbing up the St James Glacier into the clouds to find a suitable campsite was not compelling. The decision was made to go to the Lyell Hut to await better weather. This involved back-tracking across the swingbridge and up over the top of Meins Knob, a climb of around 370 metres, to drop down to the hut. The track up was fine and well-marked; the track down had disappeared and a gnarly shrub bash and rough boulder descent ensued. It was hard going! But watch this space to learn of the ascent.

The Lyell Hut was under construction – floor, walls and roof intact but no roof flashing or sleeping platforms. Fortunately, mattresses were present. Tony and Aarn pitched their tents to avoid overcrowding the hut.

The next day dawned brighter with the tops clearer, and 7 of us decided to go up and explore our proposed route. The other 2 had chosen to do a shorter walk above Lyell Lake. The route took us up the Lyell Valley, around the terminal lake and moraine terraces, across the bottom of the Lyell Glacier then up the Cockayne Glacier. Travel up the Cockayne was more straightforward than we expected, and we reached the col linking to the St James Glacier neve. Dropping our daypacks, the group explored part of our original intended route from the St James, across the Clarke Neve to the divide, from where we glimpsed our planned exit route to the West Coast.

Descending the St James Glacier down steep snow slopes was enjoyable, but the rocky moraine below the glacier was more taxing. Arriving back at our first Ramsay Lake campsite was a relief after the demands of the route – we had come full circle, but we still had to get back to the Lyell Hut. This involved crossing the Lyell River to avoid the swingbridge and the big climb over Meins Knob. However, the river was flowing fast & furiously with the afternoon snow melt. We kept moving up stream looking for a suitable crossing. Only near the lake outlet did the river gradient reduce. The seven of us linked up to cross a smooth-looking section of the river. To our surprise, the bottom had large boulders and deep holes, making for a tricky crossing. We could not see what was coming! Even Tony and Raymond, the tall ones, got wet up to their armpits. But we made it intact after an exciting and challenging crossing.

The sun was still shining on us, as we walked back downstream on the true right to the hut, allowing us to dry out. A long and tiring 12-hour day!



Figure 3. Working on the Meins Knob track. Photo courtesy of Raymond Ford.

Day 4 brought continued good weather. Jane and Geoff wanted to clear the track to Meins Knob from the hut so the whole PTC gang got to work with some saws from the hut, Geoff's loppers, Jane's fold-up handsaw and a good dollop of brawn. The whole route was completely transformed with rock cairns showing the easiest route up the boulder-strewn lower section and a beautiful clearly marked track up to the saddle. We admittedly had an ulterior motive.

With bad weather coming, the plans had to be changed to exit east over the Butler Sadler instead of the west coast, via the Lawrence to Erewhon Station. Therefore, we would have to ascend Meins Knob to exit east. That night the predicted rain finally arrived causing some major rearrangements of hut sleeping positions due to the absence of window flashing. The tent dwellers were happily unaware of the hut drama.

Next morning, the storm had passed and we easily made our way up Meins Knob. We then progressed up the slopes above the Knob to arrive mid-afternoon at a rock basin with a lovely grassy area below Pt 1966, overlooking the following panorama: the Rakaia Valley downstream on the right, the Whitcombe Pass Valley across the Rakaia, the Ramsay Glacier and towering cliffs of Mt Whitcombe to the left and, to the far left, the Lyell Lake & Glacier and surrounding peaks. Not often are you in the centre of four major valleys radiating from your viewpoint!

The strong and energetic decided to climb up the basin to the ridge and walk along to the first of the two Jollie Sisters. The lazy relaxed in the sunshine and prepared the evening meal. Two hours later, the group reappeared on the skyline and seemed to be held up in one spot for quite a while. We wondered what was going on. It turned out that Geoff had had a tumble, which resulted in a bang on the head and various cuts to forehead and wrist. When the crew arrived back at the campsite, Jane Liddle, our party's medic, went to work with 'SteriStrips' and patched Geoff up rather well!

As we were enjoying an unusual, but rather tasty, blackbean pasta creation from 'Chef Aarn', dark clouds were looming over the ridge and it began hailing as the light faded. We all scrambled into our tents. During the night, we had heavy snowfall requiring banging the tent roofs periodically to remove the accumulated snow.

The morning dawned cold with a freezing breeze and an exquisite powder snow coating over everything from the mountain tops down to our first campsite by the Ramsay Lake. It was spectacularly breathtaking with the surroundings around the campsite completely transformed into an out-of-season winter wonderland.

Because of the low temperature, we waited until the sun hit the campsite to begin our pack up. A nice plod up to and along the ridge, led by Jane Morris, brought us to the top of Butler Saddle. The descent into the valley was arduous because snow covered the rocks and scree, making the footing unsure. There were some beautiful snow wave forms and cones sculptured over the underlying boulders. Finally, the snow disappeared around the creek and steps became more predictable. It took several hours to reach the valley floor and the Lawrence River.

That afternoon, we had a long plod down the gravel flats to a campsite below the Lawrence Hut. There we enjoyed our first campfire of the trip. The next day, we were hopeful that Gary, with a tracker to follow our progress, would realise that we were coming out on the east side rather than the west and a day earlier than planned. So, after a good plod down the Clyde valley and a straightforward nine-person linked final crossing of the Clyde River, we arrived at our familiar Erewhon parking spot. Time for lunch and to dry out tents and wet boots. When this was completed, Gary turned up in the van, having followed our progress meticulously during the week. Raymond kindly relieved Gary of his driving duty on the way home.

Much gratitude to Geoff for organising yet another amazing sortie into the glacial regions of the Southern Alps, to Jane Morris, Gaylene and Tony for wonderful leading and route-finding, to Gary for ferrying us there and back, to Jane Liddle for use of tracker and nursing skills and to everyone for the excellent company.

Trip participants were: **Raymond Ford, Geoff Spearpoint (leader) , Jane Morris, Tony Lawton, Gaylene Wilkinson, Peter Umbers, Doug Forster, Jane Liddle and Aarn Tate.... 🏔️ AT .**



Figure 4. Camp below Pt 1966, near the Butler Saddle. View of Mt Whitcombe and Ramsay Glacier. Photo courtesy of Geoff Spearpoint.

The Alpine Trip – an outsider’s perspective or welcome to the world of digital tramping!

Tramping became a spectator sport when Jane Liddle took a MAPprogress tracker on the PTC 2021 Alpine trip. This handy little device sends out position and speed details of the party every 10 minutes. When the party stops for the night, their location is shown by a tent icon. Jane didn’t take the fancier version that allows text messages, so us spectators only know where and when there is a change in route, but not WHY? Hence the following bird’s eye (mis)interpretation of the trip.

Day 1 looked good with the tracker working, watching afternoon tea at Reischek Hut through to camp at Ramsay Lake, so far so good. Day 2 started with no signal; not good. We can’t tell the party that it’s not working. Then a signal arrived about midday; they are still in the same place. The wind must still be too strong to ascend. Then movement at 2:30pm; backwards. Are they heading for Meins Knob and Lyell Hut? Yes, up they head and over but the signal stops 2km short of the hut. They wouldn’t stop that short of a hut after a windy night, so they must have reached the hut just before the next signal.

Day 3 starts at the previous position; they didn’t reach the hut. They reach the hut but move on. Are they going to try the Cockayne Glacier that Geoff had heard was very crevassed? Yes, they have turned, but look at the speed they are going up! They reach the top of the glacier about 1:30pm, only half a day behind now, and they are still going. Whoops; they have turned round after crossing most of the Cockayne Neve; weather must be packing in. A signal gap of two hours before the next one back down at Ramsay Lake. That night the PTC executive meeting gets delayed while we watch progress up the Lyell, way past the hut before crossing with again the signal stopping 2km before the hut.

Day 4 the tracker doesn’t move; it must be very wet. Day 5 starts back over Meins Knob; going a lot faster than descent; they are fresh after a hut day. They must be coming out; Plan B pick-up was in the Rakaia, but this is several days early. Hello; they have turned right at the top of Meins Knob. Where are they going now? Surely not along the Jollie Range? They must be heading for Butler Saddle and the Lawrence River. No, they have stopped about 2pm; that’s early.

Day 6 started over Butler Saddle and down, now what? I can’t see a route up the Lawrence River over the Arrowsmiths to the Rakaia. No, they are heading down the Lawrence valley. There are routes over onto the Potts and Ashburton, but they are motoring down the Lawrence. Right; past Hermitage Hut and still going towards Lawrence Hut; surely they are heading for Erewhon and the Rangitata tomorrow! I don’t want to hire a van tonight and head to the wrong road-end, so I wait for the morning and head off when they bypass the last possible route over to the Potts.

Gary Huish

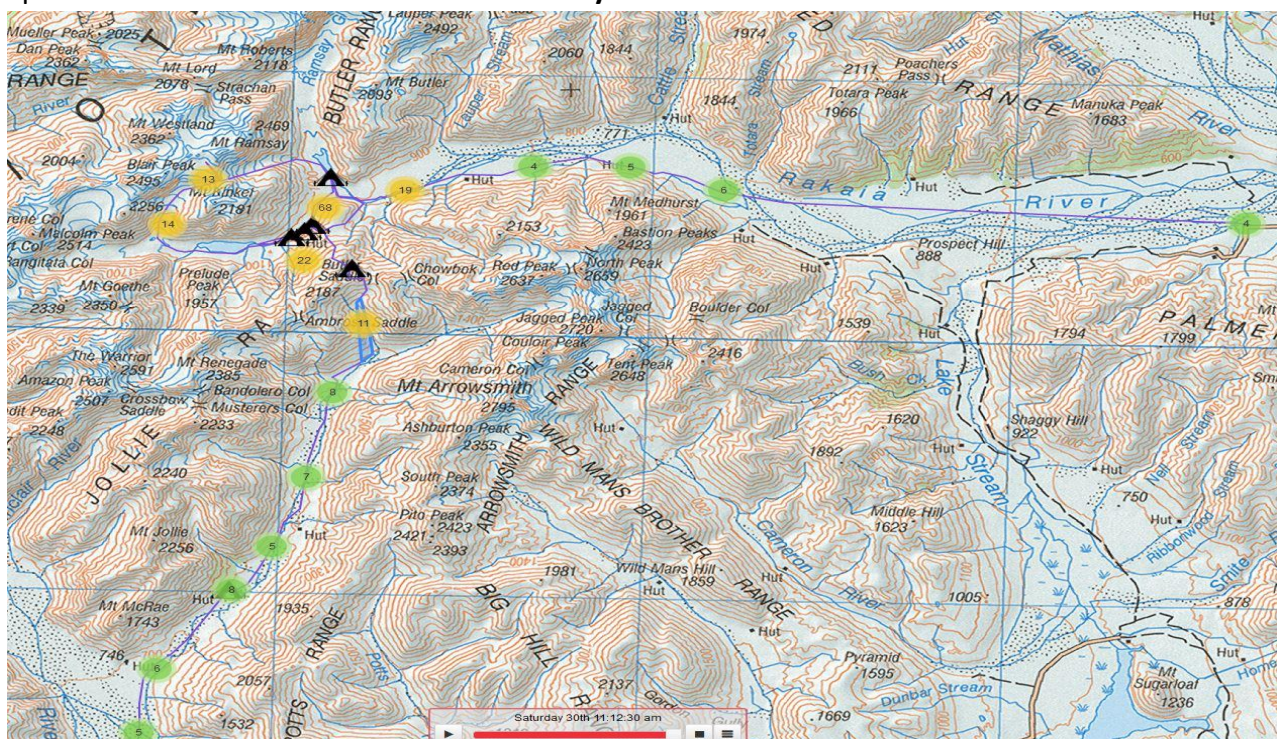


Figure 5. Screen shot of the MAPprogress Tracker showing the route of the alpine trip

St Arnaud Range Traverse – Waitangi Weekend

Five of us had a wonderful holiday weekend traversing the St Arnaud range in Nelson Lakes National Park. We climbed up a good track for 4 hours above the village of St Arnaud to reach the ridge. The first section is a long gentle zigzag through beautiful regenerating forest. As we climbed higher a group of noisy kaka chattering in the canopy high above attracted our attention. We lunched at Parachute Rock, just beyond the bushline, with expansive views over the lake and surrounding valleys. A determined final grunt up an unrelentingly steep tussock and scree face was rewarded with gorgeous alpine vistas as we crested the ridge.

This ridge gives easy access to extensive tarny basins and there is a track along it all the way to Rainbow skifield.....with stoat traps all the way! Idyllic camping by the tarns made for a relaxed time in the evenings. We were very careful to make as little impact as possible on this precious environment. Day 2 was much easier. With light day packs and we explored along towards the Rainbow end in beautiful summer weather, stopping often to enjoy the experience of just being there. A refreshing dip in the surprisingly warm tarn and a quiet read by the tent completed a superb day in the hills. Next morning we made an early start to avoid building winds, retracing our route back to the village. All agreed this had been a marvellous tramp, exploring new territory and feeling lucky everything was in our favour.

We were: **Diane Mellish (leader), Sue Piercey, Peter Umbers, Norman Burden, Alison Maccoll.** 🏠 DM



Figure 6. Along the St Arnaud Range. Photo courtesy of Diane Mellish