



## June 2023

<b>PTC</b>	Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc.)
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Committee					
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<b>Secretary</b>	Merv Meredith	322 7239	<b>Committee</b>	Graeme Nicholas	027 504 7726

**New Member Enquiries:** Contact Derek Gane, ph 03 337 8264, or Irene, 021 166 3586, to request an info pack. You will also get three printed newsletters.

### Our Club

Peninsula TC caters for people of all ages who tramp for recreation. We run trips regularly, ranging from 'easy' to 'hard', day trips to long weekends. In addition to the monthly club meeting, a variety of social events are held every month.

### Club Nights

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

**Tuesday 13 June**



#### Members' Photos

Show a 10-minute collection of your tramping photos. Let Kerry Moore, [moorekj@xtra.co.nz](mailto:moorekj@xtra.co.nz) know if you are an exhibitor and put the photos on a USB drive for club night.

**Tuesday 11 July**



#### PTC 2023 Alpine Trip - Olivine Ice Plateau

The PTC Alpine Trip traversed the **Olivine Ice Plateau**, entering from the north at **Pic d'Argent Col** and exiting south at **Blockade Stream**. The trip continued along the **Barrier Range** over **Desperation Pass** to descend to the Dart River. Weather on the Plateau was brilliant, leading to some impressive photographic opportunities.

## SOCIAL EVENTS

### Tuesday 20th June – Crazy Whist and Pot Luck Evening

6pm pot luck meal. Tea, coffee plates, cutlery and drinking vessels provided.

About 7pm start **Crazy Whist**, a card game with a few twists. It's best if you understand what tricks and trumps are. Please let **Brian and Mary Jane** know by **13th June** if you are aiming to go by emailing [bonsell@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bonsell@xtra.co.nz)

Please also let them know if you can take a portable table suitable for playing cards on.

Venue: **289 Avonhead Road, Avonhead**. It's a back section.

## NOTES

**Membership and Newsletter distribution:** You will see on the front page that after many years of conscientiously enveloping newsletters and handling new member enquiries **Stan Wilder** has passed the baton to **Derek and Irene**. We thank Stan for his sterling service and greatly appreciate Derek and Irene's offer to take the task on.

This month we welcome new member, **Mike O'Neill**

**Brian Smith Commemorative Tree Planting:** Merv reports that he has 24 names for the planting day. Saturday 10 June at Linda Woods Reserve so won't be asking for more helpers.

**Annual Trip Plan:** Di and Sonja have been beavering away, scheduling the trips for the year to come. We hope to include the plan with this newsletter. You will notice that it covers 14 months this time. The extended period will allow us to devise the next plan later in the year to move it away from the busy autumn tramping season. Many thanks to Di and Sonja and all who contributed trip ideas.

**Wilding Pines:** Ray Goldring of WELRA reports that pine control funding for the Castle Hill Basin and surrounds has been drastically cut. This means that control will rely more heavily on tramping clubs and other volunteers. Ray has been encouraged by the amount of voluntary help in the past year and assures us an end is in sight.

**Recuperation:** Send your thoughts, prayers and commiserations to Dan Pryce for a rapid recovery of his achilles tendon tear. His planned trip to the Outer Hebrides is in doubt.

## TRIPS

### 14-18 Jun [Mataketake Hut](#)

Wed-Sun **Sonja Risa 028 8517 3969 or [sonja.risa@gmail.com](mailto:sonja.risa@gmail.com)**

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A moderate trip to a comfortable new hut (must be booked) on the range above the Haast-Paringa cattle track. Tussocky tops with great views. For those interested, we'll combine the Mataketake trip with the Welcome Flat Hut trip, refer below.

**Trip list now closed**

### 18-20 Jun [Welcome Flat Hot Pools](#)

Sun-Mon **Sonja Risa 028 8517 3969 or [sonja.risa@gmail.com](mailto:sonja.risa@gmail.com)**

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An easy-moderate walk to this popular large hut in Westland beside the famous hot pools

**Trip list now closed**

- 18 Jun**  
**Sun**  
● **[Mt Somers Crossover](#)**  
**Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
A moderate crossover between Sharplin Falls and Woolshed Creek via the South Face and Rhyolite tracks. Takes in Hookey Knob and Staveley Hill.  
**Meet 6:50am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd**
- 25 Jun**  
**Sun**  
● **[Estuary Marshes Sector, Christchurch 360](#)**  
**Helen Harkness 384 2890**  
This easy-moderate 19.8 km sector of the Christchurch 360 Trail commences at Sumner, follows the ChCh Coastal pathway, then the Heathcote and Avon estuaries, finishing at the corner of Pages & Wairoa Road, by Pages Road bridge into New Brighton.  
**Meet 9 am at the Sumner clock tower**
- 2 Jul**  
**Sun**  
● **[Akaroa--Childrens Bay](#)**  
**Awaiting leader**  
A short track starts at the car park on Childrens Bay Road and heads up through farmland to spectacular views of Akaroa Harbour. It's steep in parts and possibly muddy, with intriguing large animal sculptures in unexpected places adding a fun element. A quick descent to the beach at Takamatua gives some good lunch-spot options. Easy moderate grade.  
**Meet 9am Cashmere Rd, opposite Princess Margaret Hospital, Hackthorne Road end**
- 9 Jul**  
**Sun**  
● **[Mt Wall](#)**  
**Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
A moderate climb of this 1874m peak starting well up the Broken River ski road. There are a few tricky bits near Mt Wall. We descend via a handy scree.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd**
- 15-17 Jul**  
**Sat-Mon**  
●●● **[Kaikoura Base](#)**  
**Awaiting leader**  
Keen people will do a moderate climb of Mt Fyffe while others can do more relaxed local walks such as the Kaikoura Peninsula. Comfortable accommodation, some shared meals and games in the evening should make this a sociable and fun weekend.  
**Book by 2 July**
- 16 Jul**  
**Sun**  
● **[Tiromoana Bush](#)**  
**Evelien Baas 358 5521**  
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**
- 22 Jul**  
**Sat**  
● **[Lyttelton Torpedo Boat Museum - Pony Point](#)**  
**Mary McKeown 358 7717**  
An easy scenic walk along coastal tracks from Lyttelton marina, past Corsair and Cass Bays to a promontory overlooking Rapaki beach. Lovely harbour views all the way.  
**9am start. Meet in the carpark near The Woolstore shopping precinct accessed from Godley Quay in Lyttelton, close to the new marina.**
- 22-23 Jul**  
**Sat-Sun**  
●● **[Casey Stream--Binser Saddle](#)**  
**Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
An easy-moderate circuit up Andrews Stream to the new Casey Hut. Day 2 goes down the Poulter River and over Binser Saddle  
**Book by 16 July**

- 29 Jul**      **Taylors Mistake-Godley Head**  
**Saturday**   **Graeme Nicholas 027 504 7726**  
 ●      An easy-moderate walk with coastal views. Starting up the Captain Thomas Track to Evans Pass, before continuing along the ridge to Godley Head and returning to Sumner through Taylors Mistake  
**9am start from the Sumner clocktower.**
- 30 Jul**      **Red Hill circuit**  
**Sun**      **Diane Mellish 027 413 6468**  
 ●      Moderate trip to this 1641m peak near Lake Lyndon. We'll go from the Porter Heights ski road towards Coleridge Pass and up the spur. Snow likely higher up. The club has 4 ice-axes available for hire for \$2 per day.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd**
- 6 Aug**      **Foggy Peak - Castle Hill**  
**Sun**      **Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
 ●      A popular moderate pilgrimage to 1741m Foggy Peak and on to 1998m Castle Hill Peak. Beautiful views and a great trip for those learning to use crampons and ice-axes. The club has 4 ice-axes available for hire for \$2 per day.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd**
- 5-7 Aug**      **Abel Tasman Track**  
**Sat-Mon**      **Raymond Ford fordrm@snap.net.nz or 022 318 0872**  
 ●●●      An easy-moderate tramp from Marahau to Totaranui along the beautiful coastline of this national Park. It will not be too crowded at this time of year.  
**Book by 15 July**

## TRIP REPORTS

### Old Ghost Road    30 April - 4 May 2023

On the Sunday I was up at 4am, had a quick breakfast, then off to meet Alison and Derek in Halswell at 5:40am only to be slowed by thick fog on the other side of Gebbies Pass, so was minutes late. The Harewood BP was our next meeting point, then we were on the road to Lyell. We were denied an energy snack when we stopped at Springs Junction as the café is no longer operating, though the village now has two petrol stations. Murchison provided coffee and snacks, then it was back down the road through the Buller Gorge to Lyell and the start of the Old Ghost Track.

Car keys were placed in a transfer box, club gear divided among the group, and we were on the track just after 11am. Raymond led the way at a grand pace, with Darcy and me at the back with Sonja. I was wondering if this was the speed we would be maintaining, could I keep up, and where do I fit in in the line of walkers. My start is always slow, allowing my body to get into the rhythm. It was a lovely, wide benched track, soft under foot and with a steady 5° slope, with little deterioration since its construction in the 1860's by gold miners, which is one of the reasons for the restoration of the track in the 2000's.

At the start Darcy wondered aloud how far it was to the first hut. Without the benefit of reading-glasses when I read the map board, I suggested it was 13km but when we stopped at the Big Slips for a 2pm lunch, rather than a few km to go, Raymond informed me that it was actually 18km to the hut, so we had 7km to go. The slips were caused by the 1929 and 1968 earthquakes.

The track has distance markers every couple of kilometres to let track users know where they are. The terrain flattens out after the 12km mark, making the walking easier for the last bit. A couple of bikers going downhill

passed us on our walk up. We arrived at Lyell Saddle Hut just after 4pm. The view from there looks north and towards the top of the south branch of the Mokihinui River. We had the hut to ourselves. The toilets at these huts are very posh.

Fire-lighting consisted of cutting a very large quantity of very small pieces of wood and burning those before the medium-sized wood even thought of going. But once going, the fire threw out a lot of heat. Darcy wanted us to have dinner early, before it got dark, so we were all finished for the day by 6.30pm.

**Day 2** was the usual scenario—up just before dawn and away by 8am for the day's 12km walk. The first part, uphill in bush, then onto the tops halfway between Bald Hill and Mt Montgomery. At 10am we stopped for a snack and a photo-shoot at the shelter, just out of the bush, near the track's 25km mark. A group of Chinese there wanted their photo taken with us. We had about four groups of people pass us up to this point, going the other way, and then for the rest of the time we had the OGR to ourselves. From the shelter the track was crushed gravel, built for the bikes. It went along the side of the ridgeline, downhill to Ghost Lake Hut. We arrived just before noon.

A helicopter arrived at the hut at the same time. It came in a couple of times to drop off a few workers and gear for a new track to bypass the steep wooden Skyline Step section. The hut is above a cliff-face, with the small Ghost Lake below, to the north. We could see about 3km of our next day's walk along the ridge-line and at night the lights of Murchison were visible. We had the hut to ourselves up till about 5pm, when two mountain-bike groups came in. They were going the same way as us. Up till this point we had good weather, but rain started near the end of the day.

**Day 3** began with the usual 8am departure and the threat of rain. This was another short leg of 13km. Up to this point we had been travelling through mainly greywacke country but from Stern Valley and Goat Creek it became limestone country. We managed to get to the steps section and past the best part for taking photos, before constant rain set in for the rest of the day. With nowhere to shelter and a downhill track, it was just a steady walk on hard gravel to Stern Valley Hut beside Stern Creek. We arrived at the hut, about 11:30, wet through but warmish. This was another day where we spent half the day in and around the hut, drying out. Darcy told us more very descriptive stories of past happenings and finished off whistling a little tune. He did well on this walk for the grand old age of 83 years. He had already done the OGR twice before. One time each way.

Raymond found a book in the hut for me. At first glance it looked very Mills and Boon, but it was in fact a book of short stories by [Sheridan Keith](#)—a really good kiwi-life read. I had to take it to the next hut to finish it. It was *Shallow are the Smiles at the Supermarket*. I will have to find more of her books.

**Day 4** was our longest walking day—25km with a short uphill section to the Soleman Saddle at the Boneyard section, where there had been a massive landslide from an earthquake. The rain started at the top of the saddle and stopped just before we arrived at Goat Creek Hut, where we had lunch and a brew, around noon. The walk to Mokihinui Forks was in reasonably dry, warm weather but we copped more heavy rain about 30 minutes before arriving at Specimen Hut—3.30pm. We stopped at Forks Hut for a snack, around 2:30. This area used to be farmland for the goldminers before the 1929 quake, when a major slip dammed the Mokihinui River, forming a lake for many years.

**Day 5** was a 17km walk beside the Mokihinui River, with a climb just before the end. The Suicide Slip got its name from when, in days past, you had to hang onto a wire rope, to get across the slip, with next to nothing below you. We saw a few goldmining relics along the track at Seatonville, where most of the gold extracted was alluvial. Part of the old iron road bridge which once spanned the Mokihinui River remains in the river. The road, built in the 1880's, went up Rough and Tumble Creek to Karamea. Mining ceased at Seatonville in the early 1900s and the bridge was damaged by the 1929 earthquake, collapsing a few weeks after the earthquake.

At the Seddonville pub, chatting to a couple of locals and the publican, we caught up with the local gossip. A wall of historic photos of the area included a lot of railway photos of Ww class locomotives, taking out coal



and timber from the area, and also the river flood in July 1929 after the “Big Quake”—the Murchison earthquake of 1929.

So now when people ask me if I’ve done the Old Ghost Road track, I can say, “Yep”.

A very enjoyable trip with a great group: **Sonja Risa (trip leader), Alison Maccoll, Raymond Ford, Darcy Mawson, Derek Gane and Mike O’Neill** 🌲 MO



*Approaching the shelter*



*Ghost Lake Hut*





*Early on Day 3*



*Boneyard Lakes*

## Hawdon Hut 13-14 May 2023

On arrival at the Hawdon Shelter, we were horrified to see so many cars parked. It looked like we needed to take two tents in case the hut was full. Eight people shouldered packs and headed to the Hawdon River, climbing down the end of a rock wall flood barrier. We crossed upstream where the river flow was flatter and wider. The track on the opposite bank started at a fence so we climbed over the stile and were soon crossing Sudden Valley Stream. The track followed easily through attractive bush, and the sun started to push through the cloud, though the wind blew cold most of the day. We noticed a pole slightly downstream on the opposite side of the river, so Sonya and Mary headed there whilst the rest of us stayed on the uneven true right. We regrouped only to find another river crossing inevitable, then suddenly there was the track emerging from the bush. We should have crossed to it on the true left, well before the East Hawdon flow in, where Mary and Sonya had crossed.

Back on the true right we had lunch, trying to shelter from the worst of the wind, then made a final push on to the hut. It was great to be welcomed by Honora and Frank who had changed their plans due to the weather and slips in the East Hawdon. Our tents weren't needed as the hut occupancy reached a mere 12. It was a slow trip in, so everyone was happy to relax with hot drinks, a warm fire and nibbles provided by Sonya, rather than climbing to the clag on Walker Pass. Dinner was lamb or lentil curry, chicken and potato, Christmas pud, custard and cream thanks to Norman.

Later in the evening a DoC scientist stopped in after spending her day checking kākāriki karaka (orange-fronted parakeets) in the valley. Predator control and captive breeding have aided the return of these birds in the Hawdon, Poulter and Andrews valleys, Arthurs Pass and South Hurunui Lake Sumner Forest Park. [See birds online](#).

Our return to the cars on the track only took 3 hours, so we had plenty of time for refreshments at Springfield; then home mid-afternoon on a glorious sunny Sunday.

**We were: Mary McKeown, Sonya Donaldson, Norman Burden, Reza Remati, Mike O'Neill, Valerie Saxton, Graham Townsend and Chris Leaver 🏠 CL**



*From birdsonline.org.nz*

## Milford Track 11-15 May 2023

Three cars with eleven trampers departed from Rolleston Z service station shortly after 7.30am and it was not long before we had left the pouring rain in Christchurch behind us. A long journey was broken with an early pie for most of us at Fairlie and then lunch at Cromwell. A light snow covering was a bonus through the Lindis Pass and the further south we went into Otago the more we were in a completely white landscape until not long before Te Anau. We were thinking it had been wise to throw in some ice-axes and crampons at the last minute. Our accommodation in single rooms at Te Anau's Lakeview Holiday Park before and after the tramp for \$42 per night per person (less for couples) was excellent value, with shared bathrooms and kitchen facilities.

We were picked up at 8am the next morning with some other track walkers and transported to the boat at Te Anau Downs. It was on the bus that we first met a visitor to New Zealand—German John—to distinguish him from John R. He became like another member of our party over the next few days. After an hour or so on the boat, enjoying the snow-covered peaks coming and going in cloud and the mist rising from the lake, we



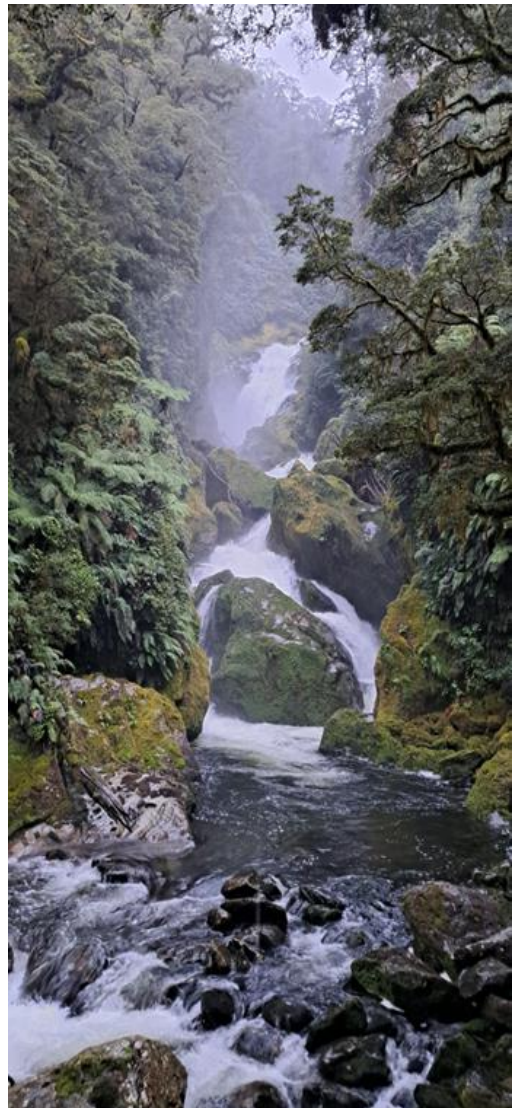
arrived at Glade Wharf. After a short walk along a wide track through beech forest we arrived at Glade House, a private lodge, where Diane gave us a briefing.



*The group at Glade House.*



*Bill and Wendy in the Upper Clinton Valley, Day 1*



*MacKay Falls, Day 3*



A swing-bridge took us across the Clinton River and we walked through forest beside the river to Clinton Hut. The river was very clear and an unusual emerald green in deeper pools. We saw whio and a tuna/longfin eel. From Clinton Hut we had 18km to walk to Mintaro Hut but it is a gradual climb for most of the way on a very good track, so there was plenty of time to enjoy the journey. As we walked up the valley the relatively close, sheer snowcapped mountains either side and the first waterfalls spilling from the tops had many of us stopping often to take photographs.

It was sunny and warm in the open but once in shade further up the valley it got rather chilly. Near Mintaro Hut there was snow on the ground and the boardwalk out to the helicopter pad by Lake Mintaro was quite icy. Looking up to snow-covered Omanui/Mackinnon Pass, Mackinnon Shelter was visible. At the replacement Mintaro Hut which was opened in 2021 there were beautifully carved pouwhenua which were created specially to tell the part of the Ngai Tahu creation story that is most relevant to this place. See [Mintaro Hut reimagined](#).



Mintaro Hut

The hut sleeps at least 40 and must have been nearly full. In the dark the DoC warden was having a hard time counting the people. The big dining, kitchen area was a hive of activity with many nationalities present. There were other New Zealanders, including a couple from Kaikoura and a family group with a young man walking in slip-on scuffs to prove a point to his mother who had told him he needed boots. He succeeded in walking the whole track in scuffs but did add plastic bags over them in the snow. A downside was that during the off-season there was only one outside toilet at each hut for everyone to use.

**Day 2** was another fine day. We headed back to the main track and up the zigzag to the memorial to Quintin McKinnon. As we climbed up the zig-zag track, we observed two helicopters flying to Mintaro Hut. We later learned that one of the family had damaged his achilles tendon the day before and was unable to walk by morning, so had to be flown out.

The snow was soft and had melted on the track, so we didn't need to use our ice axes or crampons. At the memorial there were three keas looking for mischief. Unfortunately, the cloud was down and most of us didn't get views from the top. One group at the viewpoint near the memorial were able to glimpse Quinton Shelter a long way, straight down below. There were several tarns in the area. From the memorial we had a short climb to the sign for the pass and then to Mackinnon Shelter where we had lunch.



Not far on from the shelter the normal track was closed due to ice and avalanche risk, and we took the steeper, shorter, emergency track which had been freshly cut, down to near Moraine Falls where we rejoined the main track.



*John and Ann near the memorial*

The next section down to Quintin Shelter was a fantastic series of steep wooden steps with handrails beside the Roaring Burn River with its series of beautiful waterfalls. At Quintin Shelter some of the group left their packs and walked to Sutherland Falls. The rest of us continued to Dumpling Hut, getting a good view back up the valley to the falls.

At Dumpling Hut the sleeping quarters and kitchen/dining areas are separate buildings. During the night there was torrential rain but by the time we left in the dark the next morning it had eased somewhat. The first hour or so was by torchlight. I walked behind a young man who was doing the trip without a torch, and he was behind Raymond and Sonja. When it was light enough to turn off our torches, we could enjoy the bush. Particularly striking were the orange-coloured trunks of some large tree fuschias. The rain was a blessing as it made waterfalls down the steep sides of the Arthur Valley and the Mackay Falls spectacular. Diane and I became the tailenders as we took numerous photographs.



*Diane at the pass*





*Falls aplenty, Arthur Valley*

Some of us stopped at the Giant Gate Falls Shelter beside the Arthur River for lunch but others made it very brief as they were keen to get to Sandfly Point Shelter and change out of wet clothes. The man-made rock cuttings of the track alongside the Arthur River and Lake Ada were one of the few parts of the track I had remembered from 25 years ago. The last 3km to Sandfly Point was a wide track made by prison labour between 1890-1892.

At Sandfly Point the sandflies were mostly kept at bay by the rain. It was just as well we had arrived by 1pm as there was only one boat to ferry 4 people at a time over to Milford, the other boat having broken down.



*Waiting for the boat*

However, all our party were ferried in plenty of time to warm up and enjoy coffee and food at the café before our 2.30 bus to Te Anau. After hot showers at Te Anau, we had a meal together at a local pub. We farewelled Diane in the morning as she was staying on for a few more days and the rest of us drove back to Christchurch.

This was a fantastic trip on what is truly one of the greatest walks in New Zealand and probably the world. Thanks to Diane for the great planning, and timing the weather just right. A final note: Diane and Sonja were out biking in Christchurch after the trip and who did they come across? German John! The group was: **Diane Mellish, Raymond Ford, Sonja Risa, Ann Schofield, Clare & Cary van Vorsellen, Wendy & Bill Templeton, Gavin Chalk, John Robinson and Sue Piercey.** 🌲 SP.