



## February 2024

<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 free newsletters.

### Our Club

Peninsula Tramping Club (PTC) 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.

**Tue 13 February**



#### Members' Photos

Rummage through your best tramping photos and take them along to share on our first club night of the year. They can tell the story of a trip you've done recently or be just a miscellany of tramping trips.

**Tue 12 March**



#### PTC AGM followed by Tramping Food Ideas

After the AGM you can SPILL THE BEANS on the tramping food you take on trips—not main course recipes such as we have on our website. Take a few minutes to tell us about your favourites. It could be what you have for lunch on a day trip, or how you wrap it so it doesn't get crushed, or what you make for lunch on the third day. Or the special treat you add to breakfast, or supper. We would love to know any little morsels of inspiration. Email Merv before the club night to offer your culinary tip.

[glendamervm@orcon.net.nz](mailto:glendamervm@orcon.net.nz)

## Notice of 2024 AGM

The **PTC 92nd Annual General Meeting** is to be held in the Oxford Terrace Baptist Church Hall on **Tuesday 12th March 2024** 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.

### 2. Notified motions

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 **13th February Club night**.

The complete AGM agenda, including any Notices of Motion received, will be circulated by email in late February.

**Merv Meredith**

secretary@ptc.nz

## SOCIAL EVENTS

### Tuesday 20 February Sign of the Bellbird walk and picnic

Take a BYO picnic dinner and rug or chair to the Sign of the Bellbird. There's a new car-park over the road and a toilet near the shelter. Gather at the shelter at 6.15pm for a short walk with superb views or just relax and chat. Regroup for dinner at 7pm. Maureen will take a gas cooker and ingredients for hot chocolate or coffee and marshmallows. BYO mug. Moon-rise 6.30pm and sunset 8.30pm.

Contact Maureen Thompson 021 266 5778, [mothompson1212@gmail.com](mailto:mothompson1212@gmail.com)

If the weather is bad we could do it later in the week.

## TRIPS

10-12 Feb

Sat-Mon

●●●

### [Redcliffe Track--Black Hill](#)

**Names to Diane Mellish 027 413 6468 or [mellishdiane@gmail.com](mailto:mellishdiane@gmail.com)**

A moderate tramp following a good track up Redcliffe Stream and over the saddle to camp near Cookies Hut. Next day, climb the Turton Tops ridge to camp by tarns behind Shingle Hill. Day 3, climb Black Hill 2067m and return via farm tracks and the quarry road.

**Book by 4 Feb**

11 Feb

Sun

●

### [Ashley Gorge](#)

**Kerry Moore 359 5069**

This is the classic splash down-stream along the Ashley from Middle Bridge out to the domain. It's an easy-moderate, fun trip on a fine day, but can be more challenging if the river flow is not low. If there has been recent rain check the flow on the ECAN website at <https://www.ecan.govt.nz/data/riverflow/sitedetails/66210>

Be sure to take a full change of clothes for afterwards.

**Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St**

Feb or Mar

●●●●●

### [Hollyford Track and other local walks](#)

**Diane Mellish 027 413 6468 or [mellishdiane@gmail.com](mailto:mellishdiane@gmail.com)**

2 nights on the Hollyford Track, then base camping and day walks.

**Trip list now closed**

- 25 Feb**  
**Sun**  
● [Washpen Falls--Upper Selwyn River](#)  
**Diane Mellish 027 413 6468, mellishdiane@gmail.com (if not away leading the Hollyford trip)**  
In the morning a 2-hour guided tourist walk in the Windwhistle area, \$10 per adult, \$5 for children. Then picnic at Glentunnel and explore public access areas along the upper Selwyn River near Glentunnel and Coalgate.  
**Please book 1 week in advance for this day-trip**
- 3 Mar**  
**Sun**  
● [Ghost Gully Tracks, Hanmer](#)  
**Awaiting leader**  
Explore these easy to moderate tracks designed and marked by the Mt Isobel Tramping Group over the last 5 years.  
**Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St**
- 9-11 Mar**  
**Sat-Mon**  
●●● [Boanerges Huxley Traverse](#)  
**Sonja Risa sonja.risa@gmail.com**  
Situated near the confluence of the Huxley and Hopkins rivers is the 2254m peak Boanerges. A moderate-hard trip via the south-east ridge from Huxley Forks. Alpine skills required.  
**Book by 3 Mar**
- 9-10 Mar**  
**Sat-Sun**  
●● [Jolliebrook--Gabriel](#)  
**Graeme Nicholas 027 504 7726**  
Easy-moderate round-trip in lake Sumner Forest Park. Taking in the open river flat of the Hurunui, the beech forest of Gabriel Stream, going over a very low bush saddle to Jollie Brook and to Jollie Brook Hut. Downstream from the hut the valley becomes a bit more open and there are a few stream (brook) crossings.  
**Book by 3 Mar**
- 10 or 17 Mar**  
**Sun**  
● [Akaroa walk](#)  
**Maureen Thompson 021 266 5778**  
A very easy walk in Akaroa up Woodills Track then down a track called Alpaca's Bedroom.  
**Meet 9am Cashmere Rd, opp Princess Margaret Hospital**
- 9-10 Mar**  
**Sat-Sun**  
●● [Rocky Creek--Griffin Creek](#)  
**Honora Renwick 942 8368**  
A moderate-hard circuit with a variety of terrain—along streams, through forests and a short section above the bushline. Staying at the newly improved Griffin Creek Hut, surrounded by mountain cedar. Whio are often seen on this trip.  
**Book by 3 Mar**
- 10 Mar**  
**Sun**  
● [The Pyramid](#)  
**Awaiting leader**  
A moderate ridge climb of The Pyramid in Arthurs Pass NP, starting on a track up through bush, with a scree descent to the Hawdon River.  
**Meet 7am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd**
- 16-17 Mar**  
**Sat-Sun**  
●● [Mount Tekoa](#)  
**Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
A moderate trip to climb this 1615m peak in Big Island Hills, inland from Culverden. We can go via TeKooti or take an untried route via Island Hills and the Glencoe River.  
**Book by 10 Mar**

- 16-19 Mar**      [Gillespie Pass Circuit](#)  
**Sat-Tue**      **Awaiting leader**  
 ●●●● Popular moderate circuit over Gillespie Pass with a bonus side trip to Crucible Lake.  
**Book by 3 Mar**
- 23 Mar**      [Pigeon Bay Walkway](#)  
**Sun**      **Awaiting leader**  
 ● An easy, flat walk along the coastline with beautiful views. Pigeon Bay Reserve is a worthwhile side-trip.  
**Meet 8am Cashmere Rd, opposite Princess Margaret Hospital, Hackthorne Road end**
- 23-25 Mar**      [Edwards Rr--Stanley Rr--Fowler Pass](#)  
**Sat-Mon**      **Chris Leaver 322 6445**  
 ●●● Moderate tramp north of Hanmer Springs between the Clarence and Waiau rivers. Up the Edwards River, north of the Amuri skifield road, to Charlies Saddle. Travel up the Waiau via The Racecourse, to the Stanley River to the hut at Glenrae Flat. Returning via Fowler Pass.  
**Book by 17 Mar**
- 29 Mar-2 Apr**      [Nardoo Biv Circuit](#)  
**Fri-Tue**      **sonja.risa@gmail.com**  
 ●●●● High-level circuit for the fit and experienced that incorporates Nardoo Biv, Burn Creek Hut, Burn Creek and the Matakita River.  
**Easter**      **Book by 23 Mar**
- 29 Mar-1 Apr**      [Hopkins Valley](#)  
**Fri-Mon**      **Diane Mellish 027 413 6468 or mellishdiane@gmail.com**  
 ●●●● Day trips from a tent-camp base several hours walk up the Hopkins Valley. Possibilities include exploring the upper Hopkins Valley, visit Dasler Pinnacles, explore north Huxley Valley, Brodrick Pass, a day trip to Paradise Valley or visit to Glen Mary Glacier.  
**Easter**      **Book by 23 Mar**
- 30 Mar**      [Mount Lyndon--Cloudy Hill](#)  
**Sat**      **Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
 ● A moderate circuit above Lake Lyndon to 1449m Mt Lyndon, drops down a nice scree to a saddle at about 1270m then along and up to 1442m Cloudy Hill. Spurs take us to either the Porter Heights Road or Highway 73.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd**
- 6-7 Apr**      [Sylvia Tops](#)  
**Sat-Sun**      **Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
 ●● Moderate tramp over this 1500-1600m range between Nina and Doubtful valleys in the Lewis Pass area. Camping beside Devils Den Biv on Devilskin Saddle.  
**Book by 31 Mar**
- 7 Apr**      [Virginia Peak](#)  
**Sun**      **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
 ● An easy-moderate circuit in foothills west of Hawarden from Mt Virginia Station to 986m Virginia Peak, then down a track to the end of the Virginia Road.  
**Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St**

# TRIP REPORTS

## Beynons Break

**Sunday 10 December 2023**

The warm day and proximity to Christmas resulted in a mere three turning up, so instead of going to the scheduled Onepunga Falls we settled for this walk on the north side of the Waimakariri River. It's billed as a horse walking circuit but we saw no horses, though two horse floats were in the car park as we departed around noon. Efforts have been made to plant natives in a few places, with about 50% surviving. The area seems to favour hemlock, willows and other weeds. The saw Kerry took, intending to tame Bobby Stream vegetation, came in handy when we saw a weed pine tree, and with space in the car, it got carried away as a reasonably shaped Christmas tree. Beynons Break is not a scenic wonder but is close to Chch and is interesting enough. Keen gardeners could take a bucket and gather horse manure. Don't worry if no one wants to ride home in your car.

We were: **Wang, Hilaire and Kerry** 🏠 KM



*A view we seldom see--an expanse of the Waimakariri with the port hills in the background.  
What are the 4-petalled flowers growing at this location?*

## Griffin Creek Hut Work-days

**Mon-Wed, 15-17 January 2024**

The planned Back Country Trust maintenance work on Yeats Ridge Hut had to be postponed, last minute, because of a narrowing weather window ahead of a deluge forecast for Westland. Plan B was to finish off some work at Griffin Creek Hut that only required two days of good weather. So, the PTC group who had geared up for Yeats Ridge Hut hastily reorganised themselves and met with Ollie Clifton of Back Country Trust and builders Ben Norris and Aaron Gillespie at a farm where Harrington Creek meets the Taramakau River. Three short helicopter trips saw all eight of us, plus gear installed at Griffin Creek Hut ready to start work late in the afternoon of Monday 15 January.



During the next two days, everyone was busy with a variety of tasks—carting buckets of gravel up from the creek, mixing and pouring concrete around newly replaced piles, repainting the long-drop toilet and new woodshed, and track maintenance towards the saddle, while builders Ben and Aaron installed a new wood burner and flue unit into the open fireplace of the hut. Ollie used the remaining concrete to construct a step up to the hut entrance.



*Bill paints the woodshed*



*John hauls gravel from the stream*



*Human concrete mixers*



*Adjusting the toilet decor*

The days were hot and dry with a near frost on the first night and much warmer the next night. The small helicopter landing area in front of the hut was a collection of tents for the duration of our stay, and this was enlarged by trimming nearby vegetation once tents were packed away on our final day. Fletch Anderson flew us all back to the cars with three short trips and we all returned to Chch late on Wed 17<sup>th</sup> January.

Thanks to Ollie, Aaron and Ben for the technical work and to fellow PTC participants, **Bill Templeton, John Robinson, Mike Flaws, Peter Umlers** for their cheerful approach and hard work, despite the original plan to go into Yeats Ridge Hut being postponed. That remains to be completed with a likely rescheduling for late February, subject to weather. 🏠 **Mike Bourke**





*A busy scene*

### **Kakapo Hut – Little Wanganui circuit 18 – 21 December 2023**

Clambering up the side-stream draining the Black Lakes, we came around a corner in the gorge to see Bill gazing up at a 40m waterfall. He turned, and laconically remarked “Now what’s the plan?” For those of us, who enjoy rambling around in the back country away from tracks, obstacles shouldn’t come as a surprise, but neither the topographic map had shown the waterfall, nor had another party, who had recently descended the side-stream, mentioned it! The small gorge didn’t appear to offer any easy way of bypassing it, so after some discussion, we decided to drop back down to the Kakapo River and look for the newly cut track over Kakapo Saddle.



*Kakapo Hut*

Kakapo Hut is tucked into the west side of Kahurangi National Park; one of those places that lies outside the club’s normal tramping and climbing haunts. On the map, its location looked intriguing. The catchment lies north of the Wangapeka Track, draining steep, rugged granite country. An outlier of younger Tertiary



sediments, between Stormy Ridge and Scarlett Range, forms more subdued topography, and provides the line for a recently cut track from the Little Wanganui River to the Kakapo River. The other motive for a multiday trip was to try to acquire some much-needed fitness for the upcoming February alpine trip.

At the early morning rendezvous at Peter's place, we managed to squeeze five chaps plus their gear into Mike's Toyota Camry for the long drive to Karamea, broken by an obligatory 'refueling' stop for coffee and food at the Reefton Bakery. The first obstacle we encountered, a fallen tree, about 500m from the start of the Wangapeka Track, blocked the road. It was too large for us to remove, so we parked the car on the roadside and ate a late lunch before heading up the road to the start of the track. During recent floods, the Little Wanganui River has encroached on the old track, and the new route meandered around scrubby flats and along the river bank before picking up the old road line to Gilmor Clearing. It was a hot, humid, afternoon plod into the new Belltown Manunui Hut. Signs of the recent heavy rain were evident with pools of water on the track and the river running high.



*Kakapo River. View towards Twenty-four Tarn Basin*

The new 10 bunk hut was constructed last year, a 20-minute walk downstream from the old hut site. It's on a sunny terrace above Lawrence Stream. <https://www.backcountrytrust.org.nz/kaimahi-blog/belltown-mananui-hut-relocation> A large area had been cleared of fallen trees and white granite boulders marked out the clearing and helicopter pad. A solitary Czech tramper was in residence, but he didn't have a lot to say.

Tuesday was another hot and very humid day. Bill was up, packing and organising a brew before the rest of the party started stirring, so we got another early start! Behind the old Belltown–Mananui hut site a white permolat marker indicates the start of the newly recut track. The track, which is not marked on topographic maps, climbs up Drain Creek, sidles around to Lawrence Saddle before dropping down to Bellbird Stream. This is followed by an open area, then a steep climb up to the locally named 'Unknown Saddle' above the Kakapo River. Once over the saddle, we started seeing signs of an earlier track—old blazes and rock work—as we scrambled down and up old screes, before sidling down to the Kakapo River. We stopped in the forest for lunch. Bill and Gary began an in-depth discussion on the Battle of Normandy, prompted by a book Bill had been reading recently and Gary and Margot's visit to the invasion beaches.

The Kakapo River is in a very attractive valley—a lively river flowing down granite boulders, surrounded by a mix of lush beech and flowering kamahi forest. With the aid of his newly acquired book on fungi Gary was able to identify lots of interesting fungi on logs and trees. The last section of the track to Kakapo Hut was



straightforward, following a DOC biosecurity line up the valley, marked with somewhat ostentatious, pink triangles.

Kakapo Hut is an old classic, 4-bunk New Zealand Forest Service hut. After decades of neglect, several work-parties have restored the hut, cleared away surrounding vegetation, and it is now in good condition. The valley doesn't get many visitors. The hut log book went back to March 2009 and the last entry was in October when a DOC team checked the trap lines. As we arrived mid-afternoon, there was plenty of time for brews, a chilly dip in the river and an opportunity to potter around the valley in the vicinity of the hut.



*Waterfall Stream draining Black Lakes*

Despite the setback to our planned route over to Little Wanganui Saddle and the prospect of a long day, we headed up the true left of the Kakapo River, clambering through the riverbank scrub and bush for about a kilometre or so until we picked up markers indicating the start of the Kakapo Saddle Track. Like the Lawrence Saddle Track, the track is not shown on topographic maps. Fortunately, the track has been recently recut and marked up to the saddle and down the true left of Herbert Creek. After a very pleasant lunch-break on the saddle, we dropped down the Herbert Creek Track to the Wangapeka Track and headed up the valley through the beech forest to Taipo Hut for a brief stop, before the final 400m slog up to Stag Flat Bivvy and Little Wanganui Saddle. Taipo Hut is an interesting design with the main living area orientated to capture the views of the upper Taipo Valley, Mt Zetland and the Zetland Basin.

Surprisingly, for such a well-known walk, we encountered very few people on the track. Before Taipo Hut, a woman runner passed us, pausing briefly to say that she was doing a circuit of Kahurangi National Park. Apart from meeting people on the first and last day, we saw no other people on the track.

On the last night we camped on Little Wanganui Saddle in the tussock by Saddle Lakes. A superb spot with great views down the Little Wanganui and Taipo valleys, the surrounding peaks, and later, a stunning night sky. During the night, the wind picked up and rustled the tents for a while, but fortunately for us, camping in such an exposed spot, it didn't blow any harder.

We made another very early start on our final day, as we intended to drive back to Christchurch. The track drops quite steeply down through subalpine scrub and beech forest to Wangapeka Bivvy—another emergency bolt hole in case the saddle was impassable. Below Tangent Creek, numerous slips, wet logs and upended tree-stumps testified to damage caused by the series of cyclones in recent years. The track has been repaired, with support from the Kaimahi for Nature Fund, and is now in a reasonable state, although it no

longer follows the old line of the pack track. After a lunch stop at the new Belltown Manunui Hut, it was another very warm three hour walk back through Gilmor Clearing to the car.

Many thanks to the lads for an enjoyable trip, and to Andrew Barker and his team for all their hard work on the Kakapo circuit tracks. We were: **Raymond Ford, Gary Huish, Peter Umbers, Bill Templeton and Mike Bourke.** 🏔️ RF



*Gary at Little Wanganui Saddle camp*

## **Serpentine Range      15-18 January 2024**

Traversing the Serpentine Range had been on my bucket list for many years and recently a weather window of three days provided the opportunity to finally complete the trip. Last year I realised traversing the tops is generally more difficult than one assumes and the fact that traversing the Serpentine Range was difficult, proved this to be so, although it was highly rewarding. Because of the glaciated rock outcrops and numerous small bluffs it is not a range to traverse during inclement conditions and poor visibility.

Around midday, Raymond, Linda and me set off from the Routeburn Shelter towards Harris Saddle. We passed numerous groups of trampers, many with guides, stopping at the Routeburn Falls Hut for a breather after the seven hundred plus metres of steady climb. Above the hut the landscape was all new to me. When I walked the track in 2014 this section of the track had been covered in murk. The track sidles around wetlands and looking back from the saddle we admired the Route Burn meandering through the flats within high, vertical rock walls. Above Lake Harris we were treated to great views up to the 'Valley of the Trolls'.

At Harris Saddle we left the main track. A muddy track indicated the route was a popular choice for trampers, many camping by the outlet of Lake Wilson. We sidled around Lake Harris into the Valley of the Trolls. Finding a dry campsite was tricky on the boggy flats and our party wasn't keen to climb the two hundred metres up the steep gully to camp with the crowd at Lake Wilson. Fortunately we found, what must be, the only dry spot in the valley. To top off a wonderful day and delightful evening, Raymond cooked up a delicious gourmet dinner of laksa with salmon, prawns and tofu. After a cold, clear evening, we woke the next morning to frost.

The gut on the true left of the waterfall seems to offer a daunting two hundred metre, steep climb to Lake Wilson, however it was relatively easy and quick. The only tricky bit was a climb over a rock that slopes downwards with limited holds. There is good camping by the lake. A large boulder above the lake outlet provides excellent views back over the Valley of the Trolls to Harris Saddle plus the vast expanse of the Lake Wilson basin and the surrounding mountains.



We were keen on mountain views so decided to traverse the tops to the south and west of the lake, up to point 1561, over to points 1680 and 1772. Most trampers seem to take the eastern route below Mt Erebus. Once on the tops everywhere we looked there were mountains and we enjoyed spectacular views of the lake back to the Routeburn as far away as Lake McKellar, the Hollyford Valley, Darran Mountains to Martins Bay and the Humbolt Mountains.

Several times during our traverse we became bluffed and searched for an alternative route that required either descending or ascending. Point 1680 appeared to be an obstacle until we found a straightforward route on the west side of the peak, about 20 to 30m below the summit. At the western end of the basin stands point 1807. The summit is a jumble of boulders. On top were three trampers, who recently completed a pack-rafting trip round the Pyke and Hollyford. They knew of the Peninsula Tramping Club and were impressed by the trips offered and mentioned they'd considered joining.

We continued along the glaciated tops for another three kilometres to our intended campsite at the tarn below point 1550, ascending and descending rocky outcrops, then sidling through tussock, snow-grass and boulder scree slopes. At one point we discussed whether to push through to point 1550 or camp on the flatter areas around points 1489 and 1410. We decided, however, to carry on in case the forecasted weather came earlier than predicted, to avoid being caught in murk.

By late afternoon a westerly wind started to pick up and by chance, just north of point 1697 we happened upon small tarns nestled among rock outcrops that offered a small but relatively sheltered campsite. We dropped packs and wandered along the tops to the large tarn, looking for better campsites and were surprised to find a point 1550 tarn around a hundred metres below us. With not a lot of choice, the former campsite was the unanimous preference. Shortly after dinner the stiff breeze chased us into our tents and kept us awake for most of the night.

Despite our fears of inclement weather we awoke to a clear morning. Cloud, however, began to roll in from the west and shrouded the tops, obscuring our views. The large tarn below point 1550 had a number of good, well-used campsites, including one with a rock wall shelter. The south-west spur provided the easiest route up the large slabs of rock to the top of point 1550. Just north of 1550 we encountered a large bluff. This feature doesn't show on the topographic map, and is recorded only as a contour line. There didn't appear to be many options for descent. We spent a bit of time looking for a way down and managed to scramble safely down a steep, rocky gut, then ascend around point 1555.

Cloud was beginning to cover the range. As we approached North Col, we picked our way towards a rocky bench, about 1600m on the east side of point 1796. Occasional cairns began to increase in frequency,



*Linda climbing from the Valley of the Trolls to Lake Wilson*



reassuring us we were on the right route as we approached and descended to North Col. A large boulder offered some respite from the wind and entertainment arrived in the form of a cheeky and very inquisitive juvenile kea that willingly posed for the camera.

The descent from North Col was straightforward as the snow banks had diminished and weren't an obstacle. Travel down the valley was a bit slower than we had expected. Cairns in or on the banks often led nowhere, and much of the former track was overgrown. In many places the river offered easier travel. With the cloud and the wind left behind at the Col, the afternoon became sunny and hot and we were enticed into the river for a dip to cool down. We carried on down the north branch and camped in a lovely spot beside the beech forest, next to the river until sandflies chased us into our tents after dinner.

Next morning, we were greeted by a cloudy sky and rain. The rain began to set in as we arrived back on the RouteBurn Track. Within a few hours we'd walked to the car and headed off to 'civilisation'—Fergburgers in Queenstown. We were: **Raymond Ford (Leader), Linda Lilburne and Sonja Risa.** 🏔️ SR



*Views of Lake Wilson basin*



*Linda descending the bluffs north of point 1550*