



*PTC Monthly  
Newsletter  
August 2019*

<b>PTC</b>	Affiliate of Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ (Inc)
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**Executive Committee**

President	Diane Mellish	337 5530	Editor	Raymond Ford	351 9496
Vice-President	Gary Huish	332 7020	Quartermaster	Brian Smith	355 9945
Vice-President	Kevin Hughes	332 6281	Social Events	Maureen Thompson	021 2665778
Treasurer	Mike Bourke	332 7097		Margot Bowden	332 7020
Trip Planner	Kerry Moore	359 5069	Committee	Keith McQuillan	384 6164
Secretary	Merv Meredith	322 7239			

<b>New Member Enquiries:</b>	Stan Wilder	260 2340	Contact Stan to request an info-pack. You will also receive three complimentary newsletters
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**Our Club**

The PTC consists of people of all ages who tramp for recreation. Regular trips are organised, ranging from 'easy' to 'hard', day trips to long weekends. In addition to the monthly club meeting, a variety of social events are also held every month.

**CLUB NIGHTS**

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

<p><b>Tuesday, 13 August</b></p> 	<p><b>Looking for Snow Leopards</b></p> <p>Carolyn Catt will talk about a citizen science expedition that she and Charlie went on in 2015, spending a month looking for the elusive snow leopard and its rather less elusive prey species.</p> <p><i>Supper duty: Graham Allely, Evelien Baas.</i></p>
<p><b>Tuesday, 10 September</b></p> 	<p><b>Braided River Science.</b></p> <p>Jo Hoyle, a NIWA scientist, outdoor enthusiast and expert kayaker, will tell us about the behaviour of braided rivers. This presentation will give us fascinating insights into the big Canterbury river valleys we so often spend hours trudging along.</p>

## SOCIAL EVENTS

<p><b>Tuesday, 20 August</b></p>	<p><b>City by Night walk then dinner at Hikari Sushi</b></p> <p>Meet at the corner of Durham St North and Gloucester St (opposite the damaged Provincial Chambers) at 6.00 pm to do a 4 km circuit of the inner city. Check out the new City Promenade along the Avon River, the African drum on the North Frame, and the bright lights on The Strip.</p> <p>Dinner will be at 7.15 pm back where we started, at Hikari Sushi, <a href="https://www.hikarisushi.co.nz/">https://www.hikarisushi.co.nz/</a>, 287 Durham St. Contemporary Japanese Meals \$16 to \$20.</p> <p>Parking is available under the Art Gallery or next to the old Law Courts on Durham St or the west side of Cranmer Square.</p> <p>There is no need to book for the walk, but for dinner please let Margot Bowden know before Sunday 19 August. Phone 332 7020 or email <a href="mailto:margot.bowden@gmail.com">margot.bowden@gmail.com</a></p>
<p><b>Tuesday, 4 September</b></p>	<p><b>New Brighton Dunes. Morning beach walk and coffee</b></p> <p>Enjoy a bracing short (approx. 2 hour) walk along the New Brighton dunes and beach, then catch up with friends over coffee. <b>Meet at 9.30 am</b> at the North New Brighton community centre, where there is plenty of parking opposite the end of Bowhill Road.</p> <p><u>Fine weather option:</u> Walk north along the beach for about an hour, then back along the dunes path and have a coffee at the coffee cart in the parking area for those who want to stay. On a fine day there are tables up on top of the dunes where you can sit and look out to sea as you have your coffee. The cart sells a few pastries and biscuits. Bring your own cup, otherwise you will be given a 'disposable'. The cart doesn't have facilities to do any dishes so they don't use china. You can buy keep cups at the cart from \$18 upwards.</p> <p><u>Not so fine weather option:</u> A walk south along the beach as far as wanted then loop back to Brighton to a cosy cafe. Take a different route back to the same parking area.</p> <p>Sue Piercey is leading the walk. If you intend to come, please contact her (Cell phone 027 639 0186) so she knows if anyone is going to turn up. Also confirm with her on the day if the weather is dodgy.</p>

## NOTES

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

Hi everyone,

Thanks to the members who are volunteering to lead trips, always much appreciated. Does anyone have, or know anyone who has, website skills and who would be willing to help with ongoing maintenance issues on our club website? Please email an Executive Committee member if you have any good ideas. Kevin has been webmaster for quite some time, but is too busy with work to continue. Many thanks Kevin for all that you have done over the years.

I am in Austria and Germany, and very excited about a high altitude trek with my daughter in the Lechtaler Alps in Austria. Enjoy your winter tramping and I'll see you again in September. **Diane Mellish**

### ***The August night sky***

The only two planets easily visible this month are Jupiter and Saturn. Jupiter is high in the evening sky near the orange star Antares, which is the brightest star in the easily-recognised constellation Scorpius. Saturn is further east, near the 'teapot' - the shape made by the brightest stars of Sagittarius. In this direction, lies the centre of our own galaxy, so the Milky Way hereabouts is bright and wide.

Other bright stars in the evening sky, include orange Arcturus in the northwest, white Altair well north of Saturn, Vega just visible above the northern horizon, and bright Canopus in the far south. The Southern Cross with the two Pointers are visible in the southwest.

Looking south, and away from city lights, you can see two faint hazy light patches - the Large and Small Magellanic 'Clouds', which are actually dwarf satellite galaxies. They are among the most distant objects visible to the naked eye; on its journey to impact your eyeballs, their light set out about 160 000 and 200 000 ago respectively.

Graham Townsend

### ***Upcoming 2020 Club Alpine Trip***

The trip will run between the 25th January (Sat) to the 5th February (Wed). Most likely between the 25th Jan (Sat) and 2nd Feb (Sun), but the extra couple of days will give us a bit of contingency for weather, if that works out for those wanting to go. It will be a 7 or 8 day trip. Don't let the dates put you off if you have something clashing. Ring me up, or email me. It can all be varied a little bit at this stage. I need to be back and in Wellington on the 8th February.

I will need to limit numbers for this trip to 9 or 10 people.

There are two likely options.

1. Up the Franz and the Goatpath route to Almer Hut, across the Franz Neve via Centennial Hut, to the Fox Glacier then down to the Victoria Glacier, and then up onto the Victoria Range. Follow the Victoria Range out to Cooks Saddle on the main road. There are also other options there.
2. Up the Paringa River, up past the rock bivvy onto Mt McCullaugh and across the snow cap to Marks Flat. Cross Lower Otoko Pass then descend the Otoko Valley back to the road. From Marks Flat we can all go up onto the Hooker Glacier if we like, and some may climb Mt Hooker if everything goes well. But climbing Hooker isn't the object of the trip for me. I would love to climb Mt McCullaugh as we go past- it was the first peak I climbed in the Southern Alps, now over 50 years ago!

Contact me on 0273 184 727 or phone 03 329 0008 or email me [ggeeoffss@gmail.com](mailto:ggeeoffss@gmail.com).

***Members comings & goings*** The club welcomes new member Sacha Baldwin, plus rejoining member Malcolm Gollan. Many of you will have regularly tramped with a much younger Malcolm in the 1990's, and may recall that he was Club President in 1998.

***Deadline for the September newsletter:*** Friday, 30 August 2019 – please send items for the newsletter, e.g. trip reports, notices etc. to Raymond Ford: [fordrm@snap.net.nz](mailto:fordrm@snap.net.nz)

***Next Committee Meeting:*** Tuesday, 27 August 2019.

## FORTHCOMING TRIPS

### **Day Trips**

Depart from and return to a convenient point on the side of town nearest to the destination. Non-members are asked to phone the trip leader in advance. If you doubt your suitability for a day-trip, or if the weather is turning bad, contact the trip leader beforehand. A phone inquiry does not oblige you to go on the trip.

### **Weekend Trips**

May leave on a Friday night (usually for base camps) or Saturday morning. Please book with the trip leader by the closing date. Be certain you want to go on the trip when booking, as it is not fair on the leader to withdraw after the closing date (good excuses accepted). Numbers on some weekend trips are limited, so book promptly.

### **Bike Trips**

The Club has a mountain biking section –'Fat Tyre Fanatics', who head out on casual day trips throughout the year. For details about club biking trips, contact Chris Leaver 03 322 6445, or [newptc75@gmail.com](mailto:newptc75@gmail.com).

- 9-12 Aug**      **Ski Touring**      **Calum McIntosh 376 6133**  
<https://alpineclub.org.nz/skiing-touring/courses/intro-to-backcountry-skiing>  
**\*\*\*\***      Cross country skiing originated in Scandinavia thousands of years ago. It's the great-great-grandfather of all ski sports. If you are an intermediate down-hill skier with moderate tramping fitness you will enjoy cross-country skiing. Dates flexible according to snow conditions. Ph Calum to discuss.  
**List closed 21 July**
- 10-11 Aug**      **Track Maintenance**      **Liz Stephenson 027 633 2038**  
<http://remotehuts.co.nz/tracks>  
**\*\***      Your chance to give something back for all your years of walking our tracks. Join Liz on a re-cut of a Permolat-maintained track. Leaving Friday night, we'll work on Yeats Ridge Track while based at Cedar Flats for hot dips after work.  
**List closes 28 July**
- 11 Aug**      **Quail Island, Planting**      **Stan Wilder 260 2340**  
**Sunday**      <http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz30181>  
**\***      Book with Stan for a short day of planting. Tools and transport provided. Take garden gloves if you have them. Meet on the Lyttelton--Diamond Harbour jetty at 0855.  
Launch leaves Quail Island at 3.30pm.  
**Names to Stan by 8pm Friday**
- 17-18 Aug**      **Sudden Valley--Discovery Stream**      **Peter Umbers 359 9118**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz33642>  
**\*\***      A moderate-hard tramp that connects the Hawdon River with Sudden Valley Stream. We'll camp in a basin above a waterfall then walk along the Polar Range to find the backdoor into Sudden Valley and back to the Hawdon.  
**List closes 11 August**
- 18 Aug**      **Mt Alford**      **Keith McQuillan 384 6164**  
**Sunday**      <http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz28631>  
**\***      Easy-moderate climb starting in Alford Reserve, then into tussockland to climb this 1171m foothill inland from Methven.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd**      **Approx cost \$16**
- 24-25 Aug**      **Mt Taylor**      **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz28570>  
**\*\***      Starting at Lake Heron we'll go to Double Hut for a 1400m Sunday climb to 2333m Mt Taylor. Moderate-hard.  
**List closes 18 August**
- 24 Aug**      **Stan Helms—Major Hornbrook**      **Helen Harkness 384 2890**  
**Saturday**      <http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz30181>  
**\***      From Lyttelton we go up the Stan Helms Track to the crater rim, then follow along it to the top of Major Hornbrook Track. Before we go down this track to our starting point, we will do a short loop into John Britten Reserve. The no. 28 bus will take you there. Go early for market day. Easy-moderate.  
**Meet 9am Cnr Canterbury & London Streets, Lyttelton.**
- 31-01 Sept**      **Nina Hut**      **Chris Leaver 322 6445**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz35468>  
**\*\***      An easy, flat walk in beautiful Nina Valley forest to this modern hut.  
**List closes 25 August**

- 1 Sept Sunday \*** **Black Hill, Rakaia** **Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz31183>  
 A moderate-hard climb from Double Hill Run Road to this 2067m peak in the Black Hill Range.  
**Meet 7am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$18**
- 7-9 Sept \*\*\*** **Poulter Rr, Lake Minchin, Taramakau Rr** **Angela Grigg 027 578 9743**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz33715>  
 A moderate tramp running from the south of Arthurs Pass National Park to the north. It passes Lake Minchin and crosses the low Minchin Pass.  
**List closes 1 September.**
- 7-8 Sept \*\*** **Otehake Hot Spring** **Dan Pryce 356 1962**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32291>  
 We go a little way up the Taramakau, in to Lake Kaurapataka, then a little way up the Otehake River to find the hot spring.  
**List closes 1 September.**
- 8 Sept Sunday \*** **Kowai Hut–The Gap** **Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32624>  
 From the big pines we walk up to Kowai Hut then climb to the very conspicuous gap in the Torlesse Range. Moderate or harder if snow conditions slow us.  
**Meet 7.30am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$12**
- 14-16 Sept \*\*\*\*** **Thousand Acre Plateau** **Names to Kerry M 359 5069**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz36806>  
 A moderate tramp visiting this fascinating 50 million year old limestone plateau near Murchison. If we can extend it to 4 days we'll be able to visit the Needle and the Haystack which give spectacular views.  
**List closes 8 September**
- 15 Sept Sunday \*** **Mandamus River, Island Hills** **Evelien Baas 027 557 5521**  
<https://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz34326>  
 An easy-moderate circuit on Island Hills Station.  
**Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St** **Approx cost \$18**
- 21-22 Sept \*\*** **Mt Valiant** **Diane Mellish 337 5530**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz33663>  
 1847m Mt Valiant gives splendid views all-around. A moderate-hard climb from the East Hawdon River.  
**List closes 15 September.**
- 22 Sept Sunday \*** **Mt Wall** **Merv Meredith 322 7239**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz31534>  
 A moderate climb of this 1874m peak starting well up the Broken River ski road. We descend via a handy scree.  
**Meet 7.30 am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$17**
- 28-29 Sept \*\*** **Avalanche Peak - Crow Hut** **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32110>  
 A popular crossing from Arthurs Pass P to the Crow River via 1833m Avalanche Peak.  
**List closes 22 September.**

- 29 Sept Sunday \*** **Mt Bealey—Avalanche Peak** **Calum McIntosh 376 6133**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32110>  
 A moderate-hard climb to 1836m Mt Bealey, along to Lyell Peak and on to 1833m Avalanche Peak.  
**Call Calum for details** **Approx cost \$23**
- 5-7 Oct \*\*\*** **South Ashburton River** **Peter Umbers 359 9118**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz28194>  
 Moderate trip at the foot of the Arrowsmiths. Possible climb to 2401m Pito Peak or walk up to Ashburton Glacier.  
**List closes 29 September.**
- 6 Oct Sunday \*** **Doctors Hills** **Jillian Fulcher 351 4189/Jill Fenner 980 6228**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz33577>  
 So-named because a local doctor used to wander there. This easy trip inland from Waikari gives views of Pyramid Valley and Moa Swamp.  
**Meet 8am Placemakers, 319 Cranford St** **Approx cost \$14**
- 12-13 Oct \*\*** **Mounts Tekoa & Te Kooti** **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz34398>  
 Two for the price of one - Mt Tekoa 1615m and TeKooti 1459m. Saturday to get close enough, Sunday to climb.  
**List closes 6 October.**
- 13 Oct Sunday \*** **Helicopter Hill Circuit** **Norman Burden 358 5115**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32864>  
 An easy-moderate 5-6hr circuit from Craigieburn Campsite shelter and take the Mistletoe Track to Lyndon Saddle with a side trip to Helicopter Hill. We then return to the saddle and go to the Craigieburn Edge Track which leads to the ski-field road where it joins with the Sidle track and back to the cars.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$16**
- 19-20 Oct \*\*** **Avoca Homestead + Torlesse Traverse** **Awaiting leader**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32628>  
 Staying at historic Avoca Homestead with the option of walking the length of the Torlesse Range to be picked up at Porters Pass.  
**List closes 13 October**
- 20 Oct Sunday \*** **Foggy Peak—Castle Hill Peak** **Norman Burden 358 5115/Raymond Ford 351 9496**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32617>  
 A popular pilgrimage to 1741m Foggy Peak and on to 1998m Castle Hill Peak if you feel energetic. Easy-moderate. Moderate if you go up Castle Hill Peak.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd** **Approx cost \$12**
- 26-28 Oct \*\*\*** **Carrington Hut** **Kerry Moore 359 5069**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz32098/Carrington-Hut/Canterbury>  
 Day 1 to go up the Waimak and a middle day to go to Barker Hut or Waimak Falls Hut. Day 3 out. Moderate  
**List closes 20 October**

- 26-28 Oct**      **Manakau**      **Peter Umbers 359 9118**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz38243>  
**\*\*\***      Moderate-hard ascent of this 2608m peak in the Seaward Kaikouras.  
**List closes 20 October**
- 26-29 Oct**      **St James Walkway**      **Names to Jill Fenner 980 6228**  
<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz35700>  
**\*\*\*\***      Easy-moderate circuit amid splendid scenery, through beech forest and along river flats. Well-spaced huts to stay in. Snow-capped Gloriana and Faerie Queene peaks of the Spenser Range to admire.  
**List closes 20 October**
- 27 Oct**      **Bus Stop—Woolshed Creek**      **Norman Burden 358 5115**  
**Sunday**      <http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/trck129509>  
**\***      A moderate circuit starting at Woolshed Creek, up to the hut via the coal-mine for lunch, to the bus stop and down the Rhyolite Track to the car.  
**Meet 8am Church Corner, 20 Yaldhurst Rd**      **Approx cost \$19**

## TRIP REPORTS

### Williams Saddle, 29 - 30 June 2019

Always a classic trip for PTC, which we last did in October 2013. The main memory from that trip was crossing the flooded Bealey and Mingha rivers at the start! The lead up to this trip was just the opposite. Dry conditions, little snow and therefore low rivers.

Compared to 2013, we experienced the new highway setup at Greyney's bend for the first time. Parking our vehicle at Greyney's Shelter, walking by 10.00am through the rail underpass and up the stopbank to the corner.

Then the uneventful crossing of both rivers. Continuing to the true left of the Mingha we climbed up along the Edwards Flood Track and dropped into the Edwards.



This section of the river heads east, shaded to the north by 'The Spike', so days/weeks of fine weather had taken their effect; hoar frost that was indeed a beauty to behold and the subject of many photos.

At the Edwards Hut, a bit after 3.00pm, conditions by then were getting decidedly cooler. Cleaning up the mess around the wood burner and then struggling with plentiful but mainly wet firewood took some time, but eventually who took charge in front of the burner? Of course, no one else but our camp fire supremo, Yvette. No problem.

*Figure 1. Yvette and Vesna starting up the Edwards River. Photo courtesy of Merv Meredith*

Then to add to the ambience, before dark three young blokes turned up from the Tarn Col – Walker Pass through route.

Sunday morning and away by 9.00am. My memory of the route to the saddle was to go straight up the stream until it tightens up significantly and then sidle left to above the saddle. There is now a slip face on the true right that conveniently marks the spot and had I sidled horizontally from there, it would have taken us easily around the corner at saddle height. Instead, Vesna and I went a little higher from the slip, and climbed to a point looking down to the saddle. Meanwhile, Kerry had not followed us and led Peter and Yvette up the face heading for ???? After a wait, they eventually came back down and joined us for the walk down to the saddle in lovely weather.

The next trick is the sidle down through the bush on the Mingha side, ie., travel left above the bush, pick an entry spot, line up the stream on the far side of the Mingha below the gorge and follow the compass bearing down. The first bit staying high went well, stopping at a clear spot with a view up to Goat Pass for lunch, then continued on avoiding dropping into the big basin and making a 'hook turn' beyond it. Travelling ever down we were pleased to drop into the Mingha bang on the end of the Mingha Track at 3.30pm. Then a straightforward walk out and back to the car by 5.00pm.



Figure 2. Vesna on Williams Saddle. Photo courtesy of Merv Meredith

We were: **Merv Meredith(leader), Vesna Mojsilovic, Kerry Moore, Yvette So, and Peter Umbers. MM**

### **Hanmer mid-winter base – 6 -7 July 2019**

We had all arrived at the double storeyed Holiday House by late Friday afternoon. Just off the road up to Conical Hill, it was an ideal place for a base camp with the dining / lounge area focused around a large woodburner that was kept fed with logs from the amply stacked woodshed behind the house.

After sorting out our sleeping arrangements, John, Wendy, Shane and Jill went to a pub and joined in karaoke while the rest of us had a cuppa at the house. I was the only one who walked down to the town for a disappointing hamburger as everyone else had brought something to have for dinner.

Saturday was a bit overcast as we piled into two cars and drove out to the Jollies Pass carpark to climb up Mt Isobel. We steadily gained height as we walked up the Jollies Pass road to 800 metres past the pass where the track heads off towards Mt Isobel. Not far up this track, Glenda turned around and headed back to take one car back to the house. She planned to have a relaxing day enjoying the delights of the Hanmer shops and the pools.



With a light snow cover we were in a winter wonderland as we climbed through mountain beech and sub-alpine scrub before joining the east ridge to the summit. We had our ice axes but it wasn't icy although it could be slippery if you were the last one on the track in steeper parts. As we climbed higher it was cool and windy so most of the party didn't stop for morning tea. We were at the trig (1324m) by lunchtime, but it was cold and windy and we were in cloud so there was no view. There were other people at the summit, who had ascended by other routes, including a couple with an enthusiastic dog with a bright orange harness.

Figure 3. On the Mt Isobel Track. Photo courtesy of Shane Wright

Descending from the top required a little more care; poles or ice-axes were useful in a few places. Once we had dropped down to tree level we had enough shelter to enjoy our late lunch. Walking back down through the bush we were struck by the birdsong and at one spot had at least 3 bellbirds calling at once.

Down further where the track goes close to mid-way up Jack's Pass, conifers have been harvested and recently replanted, we had a choice of routes to return to the house. It was still relatively early in the day and we headed off on a path that eventually led us to what used to be the DOC information centre. From there we walked beside the road back to the town and up to our accommodation.

Here we had a bit of drama as to how to get inside the house as Glenda was not there. Merv had some instructions as to where Glenda was going to leave the key, but he was not aware of the finer details. We hunted and hunted but to no avail. Luckily a window had been left open downstairs and Penny, as the lightest member of the party, was hoisted inside. John took Caroline back to retrieve her car only to find her vehicle totally covered in large blobs of mud sprayed up from some vehicle doing wheelies near hers. Luckily,



Figure 4. On route to Dumblane. Photo courtesy of Shane Wright

there was a hose at the back of our house and she was able to wash it all off relatively easily.

Some of us headed for the pools for a lovely hot soak. The pot luck for dinner was the usual overcatered for feast of nibbles and liquid refreshments followed by a great selection of mains and several decadent desserts. Shane entertained us showing the photographs he had taken during the day on the TV where for some reason faces appeared rather orange. The rugby diehards stayed up into the late hours to watch the Crusaders win while the rest of us had a better night's sleep than the first night by changing mattresses and heating arrangements.



Sunday we woke to a clear day and minus 8 degrees. It didn't take us long to pack up and clean the house and we were soon up at Jack's Pass where it was extremely windy when we got out of the cars. The plan was to head up Dumblane (1,303m) which is only a 433m climb from Jack's Pass. We set off along the unmarked track westward away from Mt Isobel and then onto a poled route through low scrub. It was pleasant out of the wind, but when we got up higher and rounded a rocky bit we were in the wind again. It was at this point that the majority of the party decided to head back to the cars.

Four of us climbed up a rising spur and along the relatively flat ridge to the rounded top. It was easy walking in the light covering of snow and we were very fortunate as it wasn't as windy as it had been down below by the time we were heading to the top. There were spectacular views of the snow covered peaks beyond Jack's Pass. We dropped down off the top out of the wind and enjoyed the views out over Hanmer Basin as we ate our lunch. Then we strolled back to the two remaining cars, taking plenty of photographs, before driving back to Christchurch.

Figure 5. Descending Dumblane. Photo courtesy of Jillian Fulcher

Thanks to Merv and Glenda for organising a very enjoyable mid-winter base.

We were: **Merv and Glenda Meredith (leaders), Carolyn Catt, Penny Coffey, Jill Fulcher, Wendy McCaughan, John Robinson, Shane Wright and Sue Piercey** 🏔️ SP.

### **Mt Bradley Circuit – Sunday, 7 July 2019**

We left Cashmere Road at 7:30am on a crisp morning bound for Orton Bradley Park. The short forest track led us to the western boundary of the farm park. This was a good place to remove a layer or two and have morning tea. We continued, over the fence and followed a boggy track to Packhorse Hut. It was hard-going at times due to the previous day's rain. We decided to stop for an early lunch, then set off on part of the Te Ara Pataka Track, up the zig-zag to the bluffs.

On a high part of the track we noticed a sign indicating a way to 855m Mt Bradley. With time on our side and perfect blue skies Sasha, Jane and I took the opportunity for a short side-trip to the summit. The view from the top was well-worth the visit and we were soon back on the main track. I'm told we have Merv Meredith to thank for this path through gorse to Mt Bradley.

From the Mt Herbert Saddle we made our descent on the Mt Herbert walkway, through mud and slush, to arrive back at the car-park at 4 45pm. A good day out.

We were: **Helen Harkness, Sasha Baldwin, Jane (a visitor), Norman Burden (leader)** 🏔️ NB



Figure 6. View across Lyttleton Harbour and Quail Island from Orton Bradley Park. Photo courtesy of Norman Burden

## Old Ghost Road – 13-17 July 2019

Ten trampers in two fully loaded cars headed away at noon on the Friday for a Saturday start. All stayed the night at Reefton and in the morning drove to Lyell, walking by 9:30am. The wide track in luxuriant forest winds gently up, past former mining settlements such as Gibbstown and Eight Mile. The signs boards along the way tell of the early history. One tells of more recent—1929 and 1968--earthquake destruction and the enormous task of restoring a track across the resulting slips. Along the whole track, steel wire fences guard the narrow sections and steep drop-offs.

The predicted rain held-off and by mid-afternoon all our team was at Lyell Saddle Hut. Its eleven bunks matched our numbers, as a lone Auckland trumper was also along for the trek. The front runners had got the fire going, and cups of tea and soup cooked on hut gas burners kept us happy till dinner time when various groupings— 4 +2 +2 +1 +1— started cooking dinner. That night the rain fell and the wind blew, shaking the hut on its exposed ridge-top perch.

**Sunday:** The weather forecast promised rain, easing by noon, so we sat around having a late breakfast and early lunch and setting off for Ghost Lake Hut at noon. In forest the cold wind was subdued and when we reached the open tops at about 1300m we scurried along a rocky track in light rain and on to a new shelter for a quick snack-stop. The large Ghost Lake Hut was a welcome sight, surrounded by snow. The picnic table on the sun-deck had an even, 10cm layer of snow. Nearby Ghost Lake was hidden in the mist.

**Monday:** It snowed over-night so there was up to 20cm of snow in places. The morning was clear enough for us to see Ghost Lake. The track to Stern Valley Hut drops 800m. It starts in forest, then passes Ghost Lake and descends using zig-zags in low forest. In a rare photo-opportunity we all gathered at a super viewpoint for a group photo with snow all around and a good down-valley view. Snow on the trees made for a magical scene and there was more to come as light flurries fell as we walked onto a ridge, then down a very impressive, steep stairway. Stern Creek rises in limestone country and has many tributaries so it's no surprise that it was quite a sizeable course of brown water. If it was in Canterbury, you'd call it a river. The day's leg was a short one. so we had most of the afternoon to kill. Reading the Old Ghost Road creation story described in the book, *Spirit to the Stone*, placed in all the huts, was one activity. Monday, hair-wash-day was a task that Wendy took on. Bill went for a walk on the almost-sunny afternoon. Kerry charged his phone. John, Vesna and Milomir had brought reading matter with them. Our few rainless hours were replaced by steady rain, late afternoon and all night. To read the book and support the Old Ghost Road, go to [OGR book](#)

**Tuesday:** All were away by 8am for this 25km, mostly downhill, leg; even the slow-starting Morrie Thousand. This was our wettest day and we crossed some serious side-streams feeding into the mighty Mokihinui River. We passed small lakes and then walked the zig-zag through a bouldery rubble heap called the 'Boneyard', left by the Murchison quake. The 'Boneyard' was once part of the western end of the Matiri Range. Signs suggest you don't linger amongst these big blocks. The track runs alongside the Mokihinui South Branch for a way and then crosses at the big bridge with a door in the middle. Another 6km got us to the Forks where the two Mokihinui branches merge and head down a gorge, this day, looking brown and awesome as it belted along. Another 3km and we were at Specimen Point Hut, glad to have a large hut to dry our clothes and spread out in.

**Wednesday:** Rain and wind persisted overnight and the day was showery. This was a 17km leg to the road-end so we were away before 8am for a scheduled pickup at 2:15. The rain and keenness pushed us along to match the river's speed, so we arrived around noon, giving us plenty of time to have lunch and take our boots off. Along the way we passed the site of the town of Seatonville with only a sign indicating where it stood. Lack of cellular reception prevented us from calling the shuttle, but we managed to get a message to the shuttle business and got away at 1:15. A good shower of rain arrived at the same time as we scurried out from the shelter. We made a stop at Waimangaroa to try their highly recommended pies, but this Wednesday was not a pie day in the off-season. Back at Lyell by 3:15, we packed our cars in light rain and headed east.

The 83km Old Ghost Road, even in bad weather is a great adventure, with impressive forest, interesting rock outcrops, super scenery, very well-engineered tracks, bridges and retaining fences, and the huts and signboards are a cut above the usual. The Old Ghost Road is steeped in history. We were impressed by the masterful design and planning of this great Westland asset, and many of us are likely to do it again in better weather to get the views we missed. For Vesna, this trip was a repeat.

We were: **Dorota Giejsztowt, Milomir & Vesna Mojsilovic, Bill & Wendy Templeton, Norman Burden, John Robinson. Yvette So, Chris Leaver, Kerry Moore.** 🏔️ KM



Figure 7 Break in the cloud between Ghost Lake and Stern Valley. Photo courtesy of Kerry Moore.