



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - September 2004

CLUB NIGHTS

Club nights are on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, at 7:45pm **sharp**. All welcome!

At the club night: Please sign the visitor's book. A 50c door fee includes supper.

Aug 26 Philippines (see August newsletter)

Sept 1 (Wed) SC2 Evening for Participants

Sept 9 Footsteps of Colenso
Peter van Essen

Peter van Essen is a local botanist and keen trumper whose slide presentation will reveal how much the Ruahine Ranges have changed in the last 155 years.

Sept 15 SC3 Evening for Participants

Sept 21 Interclub Photo Competition
PNTMC, MTSC, and MUAC will battle it out on Tues night at the Manawatu Aero Club rooms, Airport Drive, 7:30. See notices for details.

Sept 23 Committee Meeting at Mick's

Sept 30 Noble Climbing
Alisdair Noble

Alisdair Noble will give a slide presentation on some of his climbing experiences in the mountains of Scotland, Europe and the South Island.

For lots more photos & trips, check out www.pntmc.org.nz

TRIPS

Please contact the leader at least three days in advance. Trips leave from Countdown carpark. A reasonably proficient trumper can be expected to do the trips in the following times:

Easy (E): 3-4 hrs Technical skills reqd (T)
Medium (M): 5-6 hrs Instructional (I)
Fit (F): about 8 hrs
Fitness Essential (FE): >8 hrs

Aug 28-29 Sawtooth (see Aug newsletter)
Aug 29 Beach Walk

Sept 4-5 Snowcraft 2 M,I
Terry Crippen 356 3588

Applications closed. A course for persons who have previously done Snowcraft 1 or equivalent. (For details, see Notices in August newsletter.)

Sept 4-5 Kiritaki Hut M
Richard Lockett 323 0948

In to Kiritaki Hut via Coppermine, Mangaatua, and Rapaapawai streams, with wet feet to boot. Dine at the hut, then head out to the Kumeti roadend via the Maharahara Track. Start time: 7:30am

Sept 5 Roaring Stag M/F
Malcolm Parker 357 5203

Heading up the Putara roadend track to the hut (rumoured to be on the table for an extreme makeover) for lunch. Coming back the same way. It's around three and a half hours in each direction. Leaving at seven o'clock in the morning.

trips continue overleaf

E-mail articles to doug.strachan@xtra.co.nz or post to 1 Worsfold Lane, Palm. North (by 20th of month)

TRIPS contd...

Sept 9 Clubnight (see page 1)

Sept 11-12 **Totara Flats** **E**
Elaine Hervé **354 2499**

An easy overnight to this new hut that has not yet been visited as a club trip. Come and join me to explore this area of the Tararua's in from Masterton. Dependent on interest [number of cars] will decide on route closer to the date. Planning on leaving town about 9:00am.

Sept 12 **Atene Skyline** **M/F**
Anja Scholz **356 6454**

Come for a walk in the most accessible part of the Whanganui National Park. A short climb will see us on the pleasant track overlooking the river with some good views. Due to the big slip from the February floods not being cleared yet, we will be going in and out from the Southern entry point. 7:00 am start from Countdown.

Sept 15 **SC3 Evening for Participants**

Sept 18-19 **Snowcraft 3** **M,I**
Terry Crippen **356 3588**

Applications closed. A course for persons who have previously done Snowcraft 1 and 2 or equivalent. (For details, see Notices in August newsletter.)

Sept 18-19 **Pouakai Hut** **M**
Harley Betts **357 0132**

(Harley's travelling independently as he's staying on in Taranaki for the week following the weekend trip). We plan to meet at the Mangorei Road end near New Plymouth on Saturday morning at a sociable 11am for the pleasant 2 to 2.5 hour climb up (about 800 metres) to the spacious Pouakai Hut. The track is well-graded and climbs through some lovely rainforest and subalpine scrub en route. The hut, a fab spot for chilling out and enjoying large quantities of food and beverages next to the fire, is also handy to the Pouakai Circuit and some magnificent views over Mt Taranaki just a few minutes away. Overnight at the hut and back out the same way on Sunday.

Sept (18?)19 **Duck Pond**
Mick Leyland **358 3183**

An eastern Ruahine tramp, going past Stanfield and Cattle Creek huts, and then dropping down to the west to a nameless stream and a nameless hut by the "Duck Pond." Mick says this is really an overnight medium trip, and doing a medium day trip, perhaps to Cattle Creek Hut, is an option. Let Mick know your preference.

Sept 21 **Interclub Photo Comp. (see notices)**

Sept 25-26 **Mitre Peak** **M/F**
Warren Wheeler **356 1998**

Depart 7.30am for the Pines carpark and a 4-5hr easy walk along the Waingawa River track to the Mitre Flats Hut. The rest of the afternoon we could just relax or go exploring. On Sunday we climb about 3hrs up onto Mitre (expect snow and ice), then return to pick up our gear from the hut and back out to the Pines. Anyone wanting an easy trip is welcome to just come in as far as the hut.

Sept 26 **Mangahou Manoeuvres** **M**
Richard Lockett **323 0948**

Investigate the Puketurua track at the No.1 Dam. Up to the tops, and back the same way. 8am start

Sept 30 Clubnight (see page 1)

Oct 2-3 **Tapuaeunaku** **F/T**
Alasdair Noble **356 1094**

This will be a three and a half day trip leaving Friday pm for an evening ferry. Saturday morning walk in to Hodder hut. Sunday climb Tapuaeunaku and return to the hut. Monday walk out and return to Palmy. Hopefully there will still be snow so ice axes and crampons will be needed. There is a chance of some staying on for some other South Island experiences. We have had to cancel this trip for the last three years due to weather and/or snow conditions so don't hold your breath. Transport will be arranged nearer the time.

Oct 3 **Kapakapanui** **M**
Doug Strachan **353 6526**

Meet at Countdown at 8am. There will be a compulsory Mohnut stop at Oz's bakery in Otaki on the way to Waikanai, where we turn inland. It takes about 3hrs tramping to get to the top of Kapakapanui (1102m), just in time for lunch. In good weather, there are excellent views of the main range to the east, and Kapiti to the west. The loop track back involves about 2 and a half hours actual tramping, with the hut providing a rest station after the first hour. We're doing the loop anti-clockwise, going up the steep end, which should spare a few knees on the way out.

Trip participants:

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips leave from Countdown carpark. A charge for transport will be collected on the day. Leaders should be able to give an estimate in advance. For general info, or any suggestions for future tramps, please contact Terry Crippen (356-3588), Janet Wilson (329-4722) or Tony Gates (357-7439).

Trip leaders:

Please advise a trip coordinator, as soon as possible, if you will be unable to run your trip as scheduled. This is so that alternatives can be arranged, put in the newsletter, or passed on at club night.

*** OVERDUE TRIPS ***

Enquiries to: Mick Leyland (358 3183), Terry Crippen (356 3588), or Janet Wilson (329 4722)

NOTICES

Changes on the Committee, Correction, Photo Competitions, For Sale, Ed to Wed

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES can be e-mailed to doug.strachan@xtra.co.nz or delivered to 1 Worsfold Lane, PN

CHANGES ON THE COMMITTEE By Terry

President Warren is away at the moment on one of his semi-regular Scandinavian excursions so it beholds me as my role as VP to keep members up to date of what's been happening in the running of the club. As you are aware (if you have been reading your newsletters that is) Peter Wiles has resigned from the position of Club Treasurer. As a result it was a good time to redistribute some of the workload in the running of the club. (For a listing of the official job positions see the box on the back of the newsletter.)

Peter has been a mainstay on club organization and running since 1981, and still is. He was treasurer from about 1983 till this change over. Besides balancing the books, doing all the banking etc, this has involved Peter being up the back of the hall at most club nights collecting moneys and issuing receipts. He has also been newsletter printer and/or editor, using the Gesetner machine (remember them?), from 1981 to halfway though 1997 when we changed over to commercial printing. This must have involved Peter turning the Gesetner handle many tens of thousands (or millions?) of times. And getting covered in ink or oil with periodic maintenance of the beast. After the editor role passed out of Peter's hands, he continued to collate (until that was done commercially with the printing) and distribute the newsletter.

Peter continues as Web Master for the club site. This site (www.pntmc.org.nz) is one of the best of any club that I know of. One of the most important features of it is that trips and events fall off the listings as that weekend passes, so you don't start getting excited over trips that are listed for taking place next month (next month last year!). I'm sure the whole undertaking with the site has, and continues to be, an excellent learning process for Peter.

Alasdair Noble, from the committee, has taken on the role of Treasurer - so all your money to him. This will be Alasdair's first time as a treasurer - so good learning Alasdair.

Anja Scholz, committee member, takes on the role of newsletter folder and distributor. No doubt continuing the tradition of partially on foot or bike.

But as before, the RED BAG continues to be passed round between a select few on committee.

CORRECTION FOR MEMBERSHIP LIST

Craig Allerby 323-7913
Mary Craw 327-4556

PHOTO COMPETITION RESULTS

Once again Murray Woodcock of Extraeye Photography scrutinised entries and selected 3 winning shots in each category. Club members then voted to determine the ranking. A big thanks to Murray from all the shutterbugs who feasted on his expert advice.

The winners in each category (slides):

NZ Topical

- 1st: Improvised Sunglasses (Terry Crippen)
- 2nd: Platinum Mine (Doug Strachan)
- 3rd equal: Nude (Tony Gates)
- 3rd equal: Barbara in bag (Neil Campbell)

NZ Natural History

- 1st: Fern (Tony Gates)
- 2nd: Raging Evans River (Terry Crippen)
- 3rd: Ice on tree (Neil Campbell)

NZ Alpine

- 1st: Head of Evans (Terry Crippen)
- 2nd: Whitcolm from West (Terry Crippen)
- 3rd: There were only 2 entries!

NZ Scenic

- 1st: Mt Sommers (Terry Crippen)
- 2nd: Lake Rotokura (Tony Gates)
- 3rd: Tasman Valley Blizzard (Tony Gates)

Overseas Alpine & Scenic

- 1st: Patagonian Granite (Tony Gates);
- 2nd: Dent de Lanfon1 (Terry Crippen)
- 3rd: Dent de Lanfon2 (Terry Crippen)

The winners in each category (prints):

Topical NZ

- 1st: Malcolm Resting (Edith Leary)
- 2nd: Mick in Snow (Elaine Hervé)
- 3rd: High Tea (Warren Wheeler)

NZ Natural History

- 1st: Rata Flowers (Elaine Hervé)
 2nd: Icy Tussock (Elaine Hervé)
 3rd: Kea (Heather Purdie)

Scenic NZ

- 1st: Nydia Track (Warren Wheeler)
 2nd: Fanthoms Peak (Warren Wheeler)
 3rd: Lake Ada (Malcolm Leary)

NZ Alpine

- 1st: Tama Lake (Tony Gates)
 2nd: Mingha Valley (Warren Wheeler)
 3rd: Fanthoms Peak (Elaine Hervé)

Overseas People

- 1st: Rest Stop (Terry Crippen)
 2nd: Six Against One (Terry Crippen)
 3rd: Water Collecting (Terry Crippen)

Overseas Alpine/Scenic

- 1st: Valley of 10 Peaks (Malcolm Leary)
 2nd: Alpine Fence (Terry Crippen)
 3rd: Dolomite Mist (Terry Crippen)

INTERCLUB PHOTO COMPETITION

This year MTSC will host the inter-club photo-competition. It will be held at 7:30pm on Tues, Sept 21 at the Manawatu Aero Clubs rooms, Airport Drive. We will view the best shots that each club has to offer, so this is a must-see event.

- Entries must not have been previously entered in an inter-club competition. If your pic was a place-getter in our recent PNTMC club competition, **DO** enter it in the inter-club event. In principle, only these previous place-getters will be entered.
- All entries must be related to tramping, climbing, or the natural environment.
- All slides must have a cross on the bottom left-hand corner of the mount (ie. top right-hand corner when loaded into the carousel).
- Slides and photos labelled with photographers name and entry category.
- Limit of 3 slides per person per category.

Categories:

1. **Alpine (NZ)** Predominantly alpine scenery in NZ (ie. Above the bushline)
2. **Scenic (NZ)** Pictorial interest in NZ hills etc. (ie. predominantly below the bushline)

3. **Natural History (NZ)** NZ flora & fauna or detail, eg. geology, ice formations, etc.
4. **Topical (NZ)** People in tramping, climbing, or skiing related activities in NZ.
5. **Overseas: Open** Alpine or Scenic. People met while tramping or climbing overseas.

FOR SALE

BRAND NEW FAIRYDOWN "TREKKER" PACK:

FABRIC: 600D Nylon

HARNESS: React

SIZE: Standard

CAPACITY: (including daypack) 80Lt

COLOUR: Chilli/Black

* New React Harness to reduce weight.

* Trilogy lock and zipper lock.

* Big capacity extendable lid, combines traditional top opening and zippered front opening.

* Generous capacity day bag incorporating easy clip-on system.

* Separate sleeping bag compartment.

* Side and front compression straps.

* S-shaped shoulder pads.

* Contoured lumber pad.

* Pre-shaped hip belt.

* Full harness cover.

* Suitcase style carry handle.

RRP: \$499, OUR PRICE: \$330ono

Contact: Anna Clark

A.I.Clark@massey.ac.nz tel 350-5830

ED TO WED

I am now engaged to Maho Nishijo. She's so warm-hearted that after she boarded the Japan-bound plane, there was a wee nip in the air. Ed.

WEDNESDAY TRAMPING GROUP

We go out every second Wednesday on easy tramps. Come and join us. For more information, please phone Bev 325 8879; Judy 537 0192, or Monica 326 9691.

THURSDAY TRAMPERS

We go for a tramp every Thursday. If you wish to join us, contact Merv Matthews 357 2858, or Liz Flint 356 7654.

TRIP REPORTS

Sunrise Hut, Caving, Tama Lakes, Iron Gates, Ruapehu Climbing, E. Holdsworth

Sunrise Hut, 12-13 June By Liz Morrison

Nathalie Moreitz, Warren Wheeler, Yuko Watanabe, Heather Bewick, Jennifer Lopez, Grant Verhoeven, Brent Dawson, Liz Morrison.

We left Palmi just after 7:15am to make the most of the weekend – and secure a bunk each at Sunrise before the hoards arrived. Mist in the Wairarapa obscured the ranges till just after Ongaonga when we had the odd glimpse, then a full view, of our destination 700m above us.

Although the Ruahines look quite wild, the track is well-benched. Over the paddocks, past Triplex Hut, and up...and up. With a non-mislayable route, we spread out to go our own speed. *As always, I "lead" from the rear.* I knew where everyone was by a progress report from a guy descending, who was considering whether or not to bring 25 youth group kids up to Sunrise. Grant and I suggested it might be rather a crowd in a 12 bunk facility! (Luckily, they stayed at Triplex).

The track got quite snowy half an hour before the hut, which had plenty of snow round it. Having each appropriated a bunk, we discovered why the guys' packs were so heavy – a TV to watch the rugby! As there were eventually 19 occupants, this did not go down too well with everyone!

After lunch, Heather, Jenny, and I took it easy, while the rest explored Armstrong Saddle and above. More and more people kept arriving, the last 3 well after dark. I slept through the game, waking briefly to cheers at the end.

For once, "Sunrise" lived up to its name. Avoiding the bodies on the floor, I crept out at 6:15am to see a glorious red glow on the horizon. Couldn't let anyone miss that, so soon the whole hut was awake to watch the light hit the snowy peaks. A few enthusiasts even went back along to Armstrong Saddle.

Trotting down the hill later, we met the youth group running or straggling up for a day trip.

Heather's car went straight back to Palmi, while we had lunch in Ongaonga and investigated the historical buildings. Brilliant weather and good company made a great weekend.

Intro Caving, 10-11 July By Doug Strachan

On this trip to northern Taranaki were: Warren Wheeler, Craig Allerby, Doug Strachan, Yuko Watanabe, and Heather Bewick all of the PNTMC; our leader Graham Peters, and Janet Wilson (both belong to PNTMC and MSG), Shaun Ong (friend of Heather's from Singapore), Nigel Stern (MSG), Jane Furkert (WCG), Aaron De Malmanche (MSG and WCG). For Craig, Yuko, Heather and Shaun, it was their first time caving. (Note: MSG & WCG are caving clubs).

The only previous caving I ever did was some intro stuff back in about 1985. In those days the PNTMC contained a Swiss contingent (Urs Schupbach and co.) who were keen cavers. They were into making cave maps, and walked around wearing T-shirts with "Cavers do it in the dark" printed on them. I now know that "it" means "get all banged up."

Nearly 20yrs on, I decided to sign up for another intro caving trip. We left Feilding at 4.45pm on Friday and drove about 300km to our base (up towards Te Kuiti), a dilapidated house in Taumatamaire Rd, where you can crash for \$4 a night. It has possums in the roof and, according to the hut book, has been plagued by fleas and rats in the past. It's fine now, just has possums that fight above the ceiling, producing lots of insulfluff to keep the house warm.

We got up at 7am and man was it cold. The water was frozen in the pipes, and we had to flush the loo using water bucketed in from a tank outside.

After a short drive through karst country, we arrived at the place where you start looking for the cave entrance. The entrances are so secret that even bonafide cavers have trouble finding them. We followed Graham's nose until we found the Skyline Cave entrance.

Outside the cave, we filled the top half of our generators with water, and adjusted the rate at which the water dripped onto the calcium carbide in the bottom compartment. Acetylene gas is produced when the carbide and water react. A tube carries the gas to a lamp on one's helmet, where you turn a flint to light it. The whole system was different from the one I used 20yrs ago, but the principle was the same.

Warren distinguished (and extinguished) himself early on when attempting self-immolation. He was standing there with his helmet in his hands and the flame set his borrowed overalls on fire.

We entered Skyline Cave, and it wasn't far to "The Gallery," where we admired the speleothems. We continued on past rimstone pools and cascade formations until the cave did a sharp turn at "The Crocodile." Just before The Crocodile were some bones, probably Moa. We also encountered glowworms, and turned off our lights to see the glow. In the dark, I recited a little mantra I once heard: "I wish I was a glowworm; glowworms are never glum; how can you be grumpy, when the sun shines out your bum?!"

When we reached Moa Cavern, we stopped for lunch. It was good to have a chance to cool down. Clouds of steam were coming off everyone, making photography problematic. However, photographers persevered and delighted in blackmailing Yuko by threatening to send a caving photo to her mother.

Turning off our lights again it was total darkness. This led to discussions about sensory deprivation, and how one's mind could compensate by seeing and hearing things that aren't actually there. At least, I think we had such a discussion.

After lunch, we saw the "Ogre's Mouth," which had terrific little stalactites and stalagmites resembling fangs.

Now, following a stream, we had to crawl for a bit, then we could stand again. We marvelled at an encrustation of gypsum (calcium sulphate), cave pearls, and the "Pumpkin Patch."

At some point Graham asked, "Do Warren and Doug, who have some caving experience, want to go off with me and do something more sporting?" I informed Graham that my experience had expired, while Warren wanted a definition of "sporting." In the end we decided to stay in this "easy" cave.

As much as we loved being underground, it was great to finally get back out into the open and sunshine.

How was the caving? "Romantic" said Yuko. Shaun, also a first-timer, and doing his compulsory military service in Singapore, said, ***"You do this for fun? The army does this sort of thing to punish us."***

Back at the house, we got a good fire going. It had a wetback, and there was enough hot water for everyone to have a shower. We had a big feed, and the talk turned to climbing. "In Kathmandu they show a lot of climbing films," said Jane. Graham looked a bit puzzled and said, "But Kathmandu's just a clothes shop." We explained to him about the other Kathmandu.

Things got worse after dinner. It was cavers' games time. It started with people trying to squeeze through gaps around 20cm wide between the seat and back of some chairs. Some people got stuck, even to the point of having to go off to another room to pull pants down to get the chair past bum.

Another odd caver's custom is to see who can stretch to place a can the furthest across the floor, while only having one non-foot point of contact with the ground. The winners had a technique of lying down on one hand. Was Graham's belly touching the ground, or was there truth in his claim: "it's just my jersey hanging down"? I was amused to hear spectators giving advice like: "Move your left back leg out." Back leg?

Then came the broom traverse. Aaron can do things with his body and a broom that made me wince. Janet said that Graham would only be able to do the traverse with a piece of alkathane pipe because he's not familiar with brooms.

Next morning we got up at about 8am, an hour later than we should have. Tsk tsk. Jane and Aaron left, while the rest of us went caving again.

We entered Rimu Cave via the Stream Entrance. We walked, squeezed, crawled, and climbed. Straws and flowstones impressed us again. We sidled around pools, then came to the deep pool marked on the map. We were able to walk rather than swim across it, but the cold water was a bit of a shock. The cave was quite warm, so we didn't mind being wet.

We stopped for lunch at an incredible spot where the cave opened out onto a cliff face with a view, and the stream cascaded down a sheer drop below. Everyone kept a respectful distance from the edge.

After lunch, we carried on to a point where we could either exit or go along the Togy branch to see some gypsum flowers. We opted to go on, which in hindsight made the day considerably longer (5hrs underground) and harder. We reached a chamber with fallen slabs littering the floor. We left our packs here while we went the

last bit to see the gypsum flowers. Moving along the passage I encountered a wide hole in the floor which I reckoned might be too wide and slippery for me to cross. I think I had my feet in slippery footholds on one side, and my back against the other side when I fell. I'm not sure, ask Heather, Craig or Graham who saw it happen (the others only heard the thud). In any case, I proved my point: it was slippery. I fell about 2m, landing on my back. Oddly, I wasn't hurt at all, not even winded. However, the fall shook my confidence a bit.

Now I was stuck in this hole wondering what was the best way to try and climb out. Perhaps future cavers would look down into the hole and ask if the bones were Moa bones. "No, No. Dougus Strachanii bones, became extinct in 2004." This catacomb was a prison for moas and me. I should have known when I saw the STALAGmites.

Then Graham jumped down and gave me a leg-up. He said he'd never seen anyone fall down there before. I'll have to revise my technique.

Warren and I carried on through a squeeze into the chamber with gypsum flowers. They were worth the trouble. Beautiful pure white curling crystals. We left the small chamber to make room for others.

Now I had to cross that damned hole again. Graham was still in the hole giving advice to people about where to place their feet. This time I made it across without falling - just.

Back in the big chamber, Janet was fixing Yuko's lamp. Then I watched Yuko cross the hole. As she was crossing the gap, I saw Graham's acetylene flame wasn't far from her backside. I told the others he was literally lighting a fire under her arse to get her across, which we all laughed at, although Janet did caution me that I was being a bit rude.

Yuko made it across and let out a yell. I think that was a victory shout because she made it, but it's possible it was due to slipping, or to the aforementioned flame.

After everyone had seen the gypsum, we turned around to head out. Shaun developed leg cramps, which made progress slower. We reached the Cliff Entrance, our exit. We had to climb up a slope, which was a bit steep and slippery, to get to the exit hole. Craig and Yuko were above me when I decided to stay put where I was in case a rock came tumbling down. No rocks came sliding down, but Craig did! Yuko and

I helped arrest his fall, and I was glad I hadn't yet moved from firm footing onto the slippery slope.

Shaun found the last part very tricky because of his cramp. Outside the cave, Nigel got Janet and me to hold his legs while he hung down through the small cave opening to help Shaun up. Warren held onto me, and Yuko held onto Janet. It would have made a great photo but we'd run out of film.

Finally, we were all above ground again. Now all we had to do was walk across farmland to the cars. We climbed a gate, and then Warren started playing the fence wires as though they were the strings of an acoustic guitar. When Craig arrived, he did the same, not realising that the second wire down was live. Zap! He soon gave up the electric guitar!

After packing, and tidying the house, we faced a long drive back to Palmerston North. Finally we were home, but not yet hosed.



Cave Pretties

Quote

"Bloody hell... I'm gonna die to Boney M."

Joe Simpson in the film "Touching the Void."



Skulling Beer After Caving

Tama Lakes , 25 July **By Chris Saunders**

We were Peter Wiles, Tony Gates, Terry Crippen, Yuko Watanabe, Heather Purdie, Martin Lawrence, Richard Lockett and Chris Saunders.

We were ready to depart from Countdown at 5.50 a.m. Tony had managed to get his skis into Martin's wagon after being defeated by Terry, who had put his tyre chains in the exact place to ensure that the skis wouldn't fit into his Pajero! In fact, Terry did not seem at all impressed by the presence of Tony's skis! We were ready – but where was Yuko? Tony began phoning her flat but we decided to drop in to her flat on our way out of town. Terry had just turned around to leave the carpark when a shadowy figure was spotted near the Countdown entrance. Yuko had sneaked in the other way and came within an ace of being left behind!

As the dawn showed its rosy fingers behind the Ruahines, as Homer would say, we realized that Peter had got the magnificent weather he had hoped for. Tony generously bought us chocolate éclairs at the famous Ohakune bakery. If part of

his plan was to placate Terry regarding the skis, it didn't succeed!

We quickly changed at the Chateau carpark. Tony realized he would be carrying his skis, as this side of the mountain had received much less snow than Turoa. He made some effort to get Terry to carry them for him, but without success.

It was a calm and relatively warm morning, and we coped well with the frozen track. Martin was particularly pleased at the lack of deep snow because he had forgotten his boots and only had trainers.

Shortly before the track junction to Lower Tama, Tony found a strip of snow sufficiently long enough for skiing. *Fortunately, the snow didn't melt while he was taking the time to get organized and put on his ski boots.*



Worth Bringing the Skis!

I have been to Tama Lakes several times before, but never had views like today. The variety of snow conditions made for interesting photography. We made good time and reached the view-point on the ridge between Upper and Lower Tama for lunch and taking photographs – brilliant views over to Eganaki (thanks, Bruce), across Lower Tama to Ruapehu, towards Ngaruhoe and also the Kaimanawas.

Rather than go back the way we came, we continued on down the ridge to the east of Lower Tama, with good views across the Desert Road to the Kaimanawas – and Tony found a better strip of snow for his skis, which really made bringing them worthwhile! The walk back to the Chateau was fast, and we were on our way home by 4 o'clock. An enjoyable meal at Taihape's Gumboot Café rounded off a perfect day.



Richard and Yuko, Tama Lakes

Iron Gates, Aug 1 By Duncan Hedderley

It was a bright and frosty morning with views of Taranaki and Ruapehu as we set out down the track to Heritage Lodge and the Oroua river. Craig assured us that the sign indicating five hours to Iron Gate hut was an overestimate. The day warmed up and the track climbed and dropped over various bluffs alongside the river. Judging our progress was difficult - the only clear landmark was the Tunupo stream, which we reached after about 2 hours. Beyond that we were into quiet sun-dappled bush with interminable ups and downs again, until we turned a corner and came across the hut just over an hour later.

We had lunch on the porch of the hut, eyeing a cloud which threatened to block our sun, but didn't. Then it was back to the undulations of the track. I began to wonder how much we were climbing on this superficially flat walk. Neil and Wara's legs obviously felt the same thing, although Craig and Yuko were advertisements for the benefits of getting out into the bush more regularly.

The warmth had gone out of the sun as we climbed the last rise to the carpark. Everyone thanked Craig for a good day out, though it may be a while before I do the trip again. We were Craig, Yuko, Neil, Wara and Duncan.

Ruapehu Climbing 6-7 August 2004 By Lance Gray

We were optimistically Terry Crippen, Tony Gates, Craig Allerby and Lance Gray.

"Whangaehu Hut – getting to it can be epic" said Terry over the phone. I didn't realise he was talking about the 4wd track to the Tukino Skifield. Terry and Tony performed heroic feats in securing the snowchains while Craig and I leaned on shovels, but to no avail. A pow-wow soon had us on an alternative cross country headlamp trip to Rangipo Hut on the Round the Mountain walkway instead. Tony was virtually on the front doorstep before we saw the hut it was so dark.

Navigating by poled route can be tricky if half of them are lying down in the snow! Trotting around in various directions from the last pole was fun for a while but became tiresome as we looked at the map and exclaimed "we must be right on top of it by now!"

Dinner was a veggie stir-fry, tomato pasta, and a brew. Pessimism reigned but a lull in the wind during breakfast had us talking beyond toilet humour, at Tony's expense, to inputting way-points to Whangaehu Hut.



Craig, Lance and Billy



Navigators Terry and Lance at Work

Our next cross-country effort was a lot of effort but much fun as we snow-plugged our way in and around bluffs. Given the state of the crater lake and the danger of lahar for the Whangaehu River our choice of terrain was possibly a bit risky. Climbing up to the Tukino Ski-field Carpark we encountered strong winds though Tony took the opportunity to take a number of excellent photos with us modelling various poses. Pushing onto Whangaehu Hut was not an option as we could not see the upper slopes. A quick bite and we turned for home back to Terry's limousine down the 4wd track and Taihape for a coffee. I went searching for a Sunday paper only to realise it was Saturday. That's what Friday lunch-time starts do to you.

East Holdsworth Loop, Aug 8 By Nigel Gregory

There were five of us that went down to Holdsworth carpark. Heather Purdie, Maho Nishijou, Doug Strachan, Yuko Watanabe and Nigel Gregory.

Four of us met up at the Countdown carpark at 7:30 am on a rainy grey morning. The plan was to pick Heather up on the way to Masterton.

As we drove into the Holdsworth parking lot somebody commented on all the cars around. It really did look busy. As it turned out there was a S.A.R on the go for a diabetic trumper missing somewhere on the way to Totara flats hut, we could hear the helo flying around up the valley. I later read in the Standard that the man was found alive, although in rough shape.

The tramp up to mountain house was pretty uneventful, with a steady drizzle/rain falling, although it wasn't too cold.

Once we got up above Mountain house there was a decided chill to the air and Doug commented that he hoped for snow, I think more for the benefit of Maho than anything else, as she was trying to cram all the tramping she could into two weeks.

There was a little snow sitting on the ground on the way up to Powell hut, mostly it was wet though.

We had planned to have a first lunch at Powell since the weather was pretty crappy for lunch on the tops. The hut was like a fridge inside, incredibly damp, as the windows are the modern airtight kind. I wonder about sealing up an unheated building like that. It can't do the structure any good. At any rate we had a pleasant lunch with both Doug and myself trying desperately to unload our bags of cookies onto the others.

There was another tramping party at the hut that had come over from Jumbo. They were telling us how bad the weather was on the tops; so on went over pants and an extra fleece etc. As we headed up to Holdsworth trig we found the weather not that bad, a bit of wind and sleet, but nothing like earlier in the day.

The snow was around 5-10 cm deep and quite picturesque. Heather dug out her camera for a couple of group shots at the trig.

The view was kind of non-existent so off we went in search of the East Holdsworth track down. The track down is a well-worn one and also well marked. We stopped to chat and snack etc on the way down and it was a pleasant trip with the rain stopping as well.

The East Holdsworth comes out on the Atiwhakatu river track and from there it's a really easy walk back to the car. One thing I did notice though is that the slips on the track seem to be getting worse. With a new big one that wasn't there earlier in the year.

All in all I think it was a nice day out, about 7 hrs all told in time.

Heather got to try out her new Oringi raincoat (yes it works!) and ***Doug got to impress Maho sufficiently enough for her to agree to marry him*** later that week. Good Work Doug!! Congratulations!!

Portal to the Past

Sue and Lawson Pither dug out the newspaper article featured below. For those of you who weren't in the club in the 80s, you can now put a face to the legendary Trevor Bissell, who met his fate on Mt Cook. Urs is mentioned in the caving trip report.

Ask Charles Montgomery

Q. Dear Charles, How does one avoid being volunteered to write the trip report?? Lance Wood. (OK, so it's my question – Ed.)

A. Dear Lance, Offer to write the report. In the report, be sure to point out any embarrassing incidents that occurred on the trip, in particular those involving the trip leader. Pretty soon nobody will ask you to write reports. I think you're already on the right track.
Regards, Charles.

Note: Send any questions you have to the Editor, who will forward them to Charles.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

14 — No. 12

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SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1986

TRAMPER'S TRIUMPH

A gruelling orienteering event was run by the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing

Club earlier this month. Starting at midday on Saturday on rugged farmland

east of Pahiatua, covered more than 40 km, walking most of the day and night to find

as many markers as possible.

Others took a more leisurely approach

and had "loads of fun" learning how to use a map and compass.

The course consist-

ed of eight separate routes, taking anything from 2 to 6 hours to complete. On each route there were about 13 markers for the teams to find. After completing a route the tired, hungry teams came back to the base, had some food and went out for more. Organisers say the event was enjoyed by all and was a great success.

The winning team was Trevor Bissell, Mary Rowland and Urs Schupbach of the Palmerston North Tramping and Mountaineering Club.

Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club is holding a Mt Egmont event this weekend; they plan to 'do' the Wanganui River, canoeing and tramping at Easter; Mt Ruapehu, climbing and tramping April 5-6 "and many more for keen, social or family trampers." The club meets in the Jaycee Hall in Lombard Street every second Tuesday, (they next meet March 25). Phone Peter Shelton on 87-503 or Dave Baker on 78-762



The winning team, Trevor Bissell, Mary Rowland and Urs Schupbach of the Tramping and Mountaineering Club

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