



# PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

**P.O. BOX 1217  
PALMERSTON NORTH  
NEWSLETTER**

February 1992 Edition

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ALL TRIPS LEAVE FROM THE FOODTOWN CAR PARK IN FERGUSON STREET. IF YOU WANT TO GO ON A TRIP, PLEASE ADVISE THE LEADER AT LEAST THREE DAYS IN ADVANCE. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN AN ALTERNATIVE DAY OR WEEKEND TRIP, CONTACT THE LEADER OF THE SCHEDULED TRIP.

Members are reminded that a charge for transport will be collected on the day of the trip, the amount depending on the distance traveled and vehicles used. Leaders should be able to give an estimate in advance.

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### THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME

Please sign your name in the visitors book. There is a door fee of 30c which includes supper.

The PNTMC committee meets on the first Thursday of each month, at 436 College Street. Meetings are held for all Club (and intending) members on the last Thursday of each month and the Thursday two weeks prior to that evening. The venue is the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North, at 7:45 pm.

### TRIP LIST

#### FEBRUARY

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
<u>February 15-16</u>	Kawhatau-Hikurangi	Med	Perry Hicks	355-1393
<u>February 22</u>	Track Work Party	Pair of Hands	Monica Cantwell	354-3834
<u>February 22-23</u>	Tama Lakes	Med/Fit	Peter Wiles	358-6894
<u>February 29</u>	Rimutaka Walkway	Easy	Sue & Lawson	357-3033
<u>February 29-1</u>	Lake Colenso	Fit	Mike Hewett	354-6853

Club Nights 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>

#### MARCH

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
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<b><u>March 1</u></b>	Sunday	Day trip opportunity?		
<b><u>March 7</u></b>	Mangaweka	Med		Chris Saunders 358-4899
<b><u>March 7-8</u></b>	Mitre	Easy/Med	Mike Johns	355-2162
<b><u>March 7-8</u></b>	Ruapehu	Technical	Tony Gates	357-0990
<b><u>March 14</u></b>	Atene Walkway	Med	John Barkla	06343-6022
<b><u>March 14-15</u></b>	Cattle Creek-Pohongina	Med/Fit	Paul Scheyvens	357-4138
<b><u>March 29</u></b>	Stanfield Hut	Easy	Mike Johns	355-2162
<b><u>March 28-29</u></b>	Parks Peak	Med	Mary Crow	329-0749

Club Nights 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>

### **EDITORIAL**

It's been a long time since the last newsletter or Club evening. But the December newsletter was a real bumper edition, including photos. Enjoy it, and please consider assisting your editor by submitting an article for the future issues.

The last talk of 1991 was given by Dave Barker, who told tales of travelling and mountaineering on Mts Kenya and Kilimanjaro. He got to the summits despite problems with bureaucracy. It was brilliant stuff - a taste of future talks? And don't forget the photo competition - your big chance.

This Club has been active over the summer months, and members have tramped and climbed in several areas. This issue lists a few activities of the past few months, and advertises trips for the next few months. And there is no shortage of good trips coming up, just keep in touch, and contact the trip leader. Enjoy your tramping over the summer - long may it last.

Well, Mt Cook is a little (a lot?) lower now, and Alp Sports is no more. Annalise Coberger is doing wonders for New Zealand's name as a skiers' destination, so maybe we will see more Europeans on NZ's slopes. Skiing is a popular sport for members, some just can't wait for the first snows on the hills behind Rangitikeia.

Club evenings are a great place to get to know your fellow trampers. They are essential for assisting with organisation of tramps, and the Club in general. 1991 saw us entertained many times in a variety of ways, and 1992 promises more excellent Club evenings. Don't miss out.

P.N.T.M.C. is in the unenviable and unique position of having no shortage of Club Evenings for 1992. There will be some routine Club competitions and instructional evenings, and more at the ever popular slide shows (and plenty of tea, coffee, and bikkies). Don't forget the small supper fee, paid at the door. Club evenings for February and March are already organised, the others are tentatively organised, and are subject to modification closer to their due date. Keep this list for your reference. Oh, and also don't forget, if you have or know of any possible Club presentations for Club evenings don't hesitate to contact a committee member.

### **THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME**

#### **FEBRUARY**

13<sup>th</sup> Tony Gates: Skiing, climbing and travelling in Argentina. Tony will be presenting the first slide show of 1992, on recent escapades to the mountains of South America. He skied in the Andes last year, and climbed three easy mountains. Not to be missed.

27<sup>th</sup> Don French, and the N.Z.A.C. 1991 Kulu Expedition, India, Don is an ex P.N.T.M.C. member remembered by many, who now resides in Wellington. We have the great honour of a slide show of his recent expedition to India, hopefully assisted by Peter Barnes and Darryl Steel. They climbed some worthy peaks, and suffered the tragedy of Roger Redmayne, also an ex P.N.T.M.C. member, falling to his death.

#### **MARCH**

12<sup>th</sup> P.N.T.M.C., members own talks, featuring slides of the Christmas tramp - canoe trip to Lake Waikaremoana, Canoeing the Wanganui River by Sally Hewsen, and a talk by Derek Sharp on Mountaineering in our very own Southern Alps. Have you any slides to show or tales to tell?

**26<sup>th</sup> A. G. Presidents shout** How else can you be attracted to this auspicious occasion? It's really not boring, in fact the A.G.M. can be entertaining. Think about supporting your Club, and assisting if you can. Supper to be served.

## APRIL

9<sup>th</sup> Dave Crawford and Peter Gates "The Olivines". Dave recently led a trans-alpine trip to this remote corner of the Southern Alps, climbing most of the peaks around the Olivine Ice Plateau. They traversed several of the most rugged valleys of North West Otago, exiting at the Matukituki. Some continued, to climb Mt Aspiring.

28<sup>th</sup> Dennis Moore "Chinwag evening" Dennis is a foundation member of P.N.T.M.C., and has many stories to tell of Club activities in the early days. He has to be heard to be believed!

## MAY

14<sup>th</sup> M. Hollenstein, on Cattle farming on North Island high country in fact on the foothills of our favourite Ruahine Ranges. Should be a good talk.

28<sup>th</sup> P.N.T.M.C. slides, of Easter trips and others. Your opportunity to show the best you have (or save them for the Photo Competition next month)

## JUNE

11<sup>th</sup> Photo Competition, judged by John Clelland in his usual democratic manner, i.e. you, the members and participants, do part of the judging. Start considering your contributions early. Sections and rules to be published later.

25<sup>th</sup> Mike Hewett, Skiing in North America. Just to get you in the mood for winter. Bit different to skiing at Rangitikei!

Also, we will try to arrange some re-runs of previous well received speakers, and there is the annual Debate and Quiz to consider. Other speakers that may be presenting talks;

- Snowcraft lecture
- Vaughn Keesing
- Trevor Meyle
- Karen Thomason

## NOTICES

The Annual General Meeting will be held on the Club night of 26<sup>th</sup> March. Please focus your thoughts towards how you want the Club to be run and what activities you want from it. Please make an effort to attend.

A welcome for Lyndon Badcoe who returns to the Club after a spell of a couple of years.

Lyndon's address is 19A Morris Street  
Palmerston North  
Phone 358-1476

March 21- 29 is national "Walk-a-K-a-day" week. It's not too early to start thinking about plans for this week. So dust off your boots, shoes or whatever and think about going for a walk with a friend or a group. Hope the weather is conducive for a good walk this week.

## TRIP REPORTS

**LAKE WAIKAREMOANA** by all the trip members

### CHAPTER ONE; THE LAZY PART

We drove up via Napier on a hot summers day and on nearly empty roads. It was a doodle from the Hoporuahine car park to our first camp, a heavy pack though, and humid conditions.

Day two, and the pack was still heavy! The sandflies were numerous, but the beauty of the area more than compensates for the presence of those horrible little insects. The lake really is beautiful, with good tracks, and the most delightful, forest, clean water, native bird life, and campsites. And our second camp was a beauty. We could relax in luxury, and swim only 10 metres from the tent. Tony's swims were more like five second dashes.

Next day, brandied apricots and xmas cake for breakfast! Tony saw his first trout, one of several that was to prove too elusive to our spinners. Went for a walk to Maruiti Hut (about half an hour from our camp), and spied a nude sunbather. No, he was a caver, our friend Steve from Pahiataua, looking to join us. Then we shortly spotted

canoeists Julian and Brad, also looking to join us. Our afternoon was rather lazy, but we all had some exercise in the canoe, a neat way to go. Some tried to imitate an outboard motor (canoeing can be pretty fast, much faster in fact than tramping). Copious quantities of wine were drunk that evening, to lighten the packs of course.

Sat 28<sup>th</sup> was another glorious morning, calm, sunny, and sandfly-ish. We went paddling, found some lovely sandy beaches, and pottered about reading and eating. Brad and Julian departed at lunchtime and Steve left to complete the lake circuit, so Tony and Yvonne could "siesta" in peace.

## **CHAPTER TWO "PROPER" TRAMPING**

There were 200 Hiko Maori walking the lake track. Tony and Yvonne bypassed these crowds, then sweated north on the track over to the magnificent Mangariuihu Valley. The forest was a combination of punga - podocarp - kamahi - beech - tawa, and was very impressive. Parts had a "park" like appearance, with wide open understorey (no grovelling here!), but one could easily get lost. Hunter Tony shot one little pig. Seemed like we were many miles away from civilisation when only two hours from the lake. Big stodge for dinner.

We had some dispute with the track tramping times stated by DOC. Tracks apparently suffered from lack of maintenance, but we found them no problem, in fact thought they were pretty good. You couldn't fail though, with such great weather, and once again wide open forest. We tramped North East along Pukehou Ridge to Whakatakaa Hut, suffering somewhat from dehydration. But water wasn't far away, and we were mighty glad for a good drink. Dry tramping is not pleasant. Arrived at the hut very relieved and tired, but disappointed that it was full of idiots.

Poor weather (and the idiots) drove us out, so we returned to the car, the lake, and a swim by lunchtime.

## **CHAPTER THREE CANOEING**

I understand that Brad is writing this chapter - so we will have to wait for the next newsletter - watch this space (ed.).

### **ORONGORONGO ACTIVITIES** By Tony Gates .

The Orongorongo Valley is unique in New Zealand. It provides a delightful blend of scenery, tramping, hunting, 4 w driving, and general bush activities only half an hour's drive and an hour's easy walk from Wellington. The hut's are luxurious, and many of the "residents" real characters. Hundreds of people can blend into the valley with a by-passer hardly knowing.

We walked and swam our way into "Shalimar" hut on a fine Saturday in January. The lawn outside on a sunny day makes it very attractive. At a neighbour's hut across the valley, I had a round of golf at the annual valley tournament, putting the ball past (and through) mud puddles, shrubs, and tree stumps. Most of the people there were more interested in drinking and partying up large though, but I guess that wouldn't affect the golf ball's rather circuitous course. Back at Shalimar, we had the serious business of large volumes of food to consume, including some genuine Ruahine venison steaks. Plenty of bunks in Shalimar, but some preferred to sleep out under a brilliant moon and the fresh air.

Sunday promised hot weather, so we went visiting up valley. A friend with the technological wonder of a water wheel kept us entertained, and we inspected the penstock stretching way up the hill side. A unique piece of machinery, generating adequate electricity for several appliances. A Scottish lady at another hut amused us with her heavy accent by comparing the stone floor there to that of a Scottish Castle, and it was "as dark as the inside of a cow" at night in the forest until the moon came up! The sun vanished before we got home, and torrential rain washed some of the sweat of us. Thunder and lightning later on.

Monday morning featured breakfast in bed, slightly burnt toast, (slightly) lumpy porridge, and how many cups of tea? After photo's, we followed the well worn Orongorongo track to the Catchpool, a place for every person and their dog.

Trampers, sometimes by sound resembling a menagerie, were; Sally-pig, Tony-goat, Fred-dog, and Yvonne~dear, and a few friends.

### **Rock Climbing: Bearing Head / Titahi Bay**

I've had Tony in here hassling me about trip reports so here goes ... I can't even remember which week end it was & looking at my diary I had at least 4 weekends on the rock! There was a large crowd of us (at last PNTMC is coming to it's senses!) that set off at a respectable time from PN. The group included a woman who had lost a leg and part of her pelvis through cancer. I thought it was great that she was coming but a bit apprehensive about how she would get on.

Bearing Head is about a half hour walk from where you park the cars. There is a stream/river that has to be crossed. Today it was a river and two guys went in up to their necks - super dangerous as if you lose your footing and get swept out to sea you can kiss your butt goodbye! Phew they got to the other side ... The rest of us looked for an alternative crossing which meant walking half way back to the cars. We had fun transporting Marie across - she couldn't get her artificial leg wet. At last we were there. Those who knew what they were doing went off and did their own thing while the others got some instruction (or sat round drinking cups of tea! we've discovered the army don't operate unless they have regular smoko breaks). I climbed with Marie and her friend and Sarah looked after the rest of the troops. Marie blew me right off planet earth! My eyes were dangling out and my jaw dragging on the ground as I followed her up climbs that fully able people struggle on - just amazing! It was a real joy to be climbing with someone so gutsy and determined ... who did their best to get the most out of life ... words fail me ... it makes my excuses for not doing things look pathetic ...

After lunch we set up ropes on some higher climbs. This meant going over knots and abseil techniques. Everyone had a go at abseiling even, if they didn't get up the climbs. As you will all be aware two legs are useful in abseiling! Even if only to get a harness on. While Marie was climbing she removed her artificial leg and used what was left of her pelvis bone to place on holds ... for abseiling she had to wear her leg so a standard harness would work. It was a frantic few minutes while she struggled down the cliff - it wasn't working and no one knew what advice to give ... then half way down everything clicked, Marie had found a method that worked. She had her good leg side facing down with her artificial leg flopping out the back to prevent being blown backwards. Hop hop hop and she was down -WOW~

The walk back was uneventful (thankfully - I'd definitely had enough adrenaline pumping through my veins for one day! We camped at the DOC Catchpool camp grounds, a great spot with a lovely swimming hole (ABSOLUTELY FREEZING - but when has that ever stopped me!). A few brave souls had a dip and felt refreshed for their efforts. Then we hoed into gourmet food and drink (the standard diet for rock climbers). The evening finished with juggling and horn blowing - a rather painful experience when a novice was on the end of it! Dieter did an excellent job filling the valley with music.

Sunday was miserable so after a short walk we headed home.

A great weekend was shared by Pauline Coy, Trevor, Leslie Ward, Sarah Leberman, Mark Tynan, Dieter, Phil, John Thomson, Marie Limsowtin and friend and Jenni Madgwick.

## **THE AHURIRI VALLEY** by Peter Wiles

It was not until we reached the Mackenzie Basin that we saw the first patch of blue ski and the first patch of snow - both very small. As we headed up the Ahuriri Valley road the showers gave way to patches of drizzle. It was 9.30 on New Year's morning when we stopped at the homestead to seek permission. After knocking on the door (open) twice and some delay an elderly woman arrived in her dressing gown. We explained that we wished to visit the Canyon Creek area and that we might visit one or other of the side valleys of the eastern side of the Ahuriri. That was no problem but she could not tell us exactly where the Canyon Creek bivy rock was located although she had visited it, but she did add "John Pascoe used it when he climbed Mt Barth". I said "That's interesting". I nearly said I happen to know his son in law, but John has been dead for nearly 20 years as far as I know and he might have stayed at the bivy 50 years ago.

We drove further up the road -starting to get rough in places now but persevered and eventually reaching the end at the bush edge at Little Canyon Creek.

We found the track but had to get our feet wet right at the start. The climb was fairly steep for 200 m before emerging at the top of the bluff overlooking the mouth of Canyon Creek, before descending to the initial flats in the valley. After about an hour and a half of good going we reached the edge of a huge heap of avalanche debris which completely filled the valley floor - we felt it was time for lunch.

After lunch and ascending into the midst of this huge snow heap, the route leaves the valley floor to avoid a 200 m band of bluffs that block the valley a short distance beyond. Moirs Guide clearly identifies the general direction of the route through these bluffs because it is fairly obvious - there is only one general area for a feasible route. We started climbing towards the required bluff looking hard for cairns. We didn't find anything. Once at the base of the bluff - big decision time - which way to go? We (I) decided round into gully to the right. Before long we decided that the next stage looks rather steep doesn't it? All the other options we can see look worse than this. John wasn't terribly phased by this and hauled himself up and soon disappeared. I figured this was time to get the rope out to belay this section. The whole 45 m was required to get up this rock section including some nasty sloping and rather wet slabs. Beyond this we were in the clear and started the sidle up towards a bench which leads back into the centre of the valley above the bluffs.

Once back in the centre of the valley the issue became where is this bivy? Once again Moir states "a large bivy rock is located in the middle of the valley". We continued to the point where we were essentially past all the rocks of any size (none which I define as large) and really began to wonder. However, just when all other options have been eliminated the solution must be the one remaining – not large (modest at most in my book) and definitely not in the middle of the valley either. In fact the bivy rock was not really a bivy rock at all - in wet weather it looked like it would provide only limited shelter at best. There was no one at home. Anyway the weather forecast was for 2 or 3 days fine then who cares - we can get out of this place if we need to.

The cloud began to lift as the day progressed and we organised ourselves in our new home. More and more of Mt Barth came into view directly in front of the bivy - 1 to 2 km away at the head of the valley. A fabulous view. Even so, with the south easter still fairly brisk, the top 150 m remained shrouded in cloud.

We got going at about 6.30 the following morning and headed out in misty conditions to attempt Barth by the eastern side of the valley. In the first hour we had gained 400 m, and we figured at this rate this will take us 2 or 3 more hours (1100 m to gain). Once we reached the snow it was superb - beautifully frozen. The cloud was rapidly breaking up or melting away. After a long sidle of zig-zag cramponing, we reached the ridge crest at about 2150 m. The view immediately became very much more extensive with Cook dominating the vista to the north. Next came another rock buttress with a narrow and steep couloir of snow up it. At the top I threw the rope down to Derek and brought him up, with John under his own steam a short distance behind. Here we had a choice and struck our first problem - a rock buttress continued the ridge above us, on the south side was a steep snow face cut by a substantial scrund while a snow slope led around the northern side. The latter seemed the easiest prospect. At the top of the snow slope there was a problem; the sun had melted out a metre wide gap between the snow and the rock face with a drop of 3 m or more downwards. We cut our losses and tackled the south side face and scrund. On closer inspection there was a good bridge across it and we regained the ridge. After a section of rock scrambling, we gained the upper snow field at about 2300 m. We anticipated good progress along the ridge but were very soon confronted with a deep rock notch in the ridge. We belayed to the bottom of this (nearly the whole rope length), where once we were all down, John found that he had left his belay anchor slings and crab at the top. He had to reascend the pitch replacing all the protection he had just taken out. The climb up the other side of the notch was almost as steep and certainly as exposed. The north face of rock fell away at 70°+ for at least 200 m while the south face of snow dropped off at near to 60° for 200 m or more. Be that as it may, we continued without belaying but avoided looking down. Then followed a snow field with a succession of rock towers. Which one was the summit - it was not easy to tell. The snow slope became much steeper and we were forced onto the ridge again and down into another notch which we belayed down. The route out this time took us out onto a ledge overlooking the northern face. To regain the ridge we belayed up a short rock pitch. Finally we arrived at the summit (about 1.30 pm) (Derek's first in the South Island) where we felt it was about time for lunch and a drink. We could identify a number of peaks, the most obvious of which was Mt Brewster not far away near Haast Pass which we were in fact a few km south of, and only about 20 km to the east of.

While we were having our lunch, taking photos and generally fumbling with gear, Derek found a narrow aluminium tube amongst the summit cairn. It contained a piece of paper (in very good condition) which read; "John and Dorathy Pascoe and Ian Gilmour, Ascent via West Ridge June 1969". (Ian used to lecture me at Canterbury.) This must have been one of Pascoe's last trips. We wrote a record on the back and replaced the paper and its container.

While we could have spent the rest of the day sitting in the sun on a marvellous day but we had to think about getting down. The western ridge is must shorter than the eastern ridge so we continued along it. Very soon it became very narrow again, forcing us into some awkward moves trying to hold onto to some overhanging rock while tottering on the upper edge of the snow slope. Then we were forced down a snow section on the south face to gain a rock ledge (which were we not sure where it was going to lead us). Back on the ridge again our initial assessment was that we would have to abseil down the bluff we were confronted with. However, John spotted a narrow couloir – almost vertical at first for 3 or 4 metres which required another belay. Back on the ridge – again - we considered climbing down a portion of the southerly face to gain a snow ramp - which appeared to by-pass some of the ridge problems. We eventually abandoned this route as we were not sure whether there was in fact a continuous route through and most if not all the ground was at least 45° with acute exposure and every likelihood of unsatisfactory belay anchors. That left the ridge option. The problem was we could not see as far as we would have liked to know what the conditions / options were like and we had to reascend some height. At the end of the snow ridge we made a critical decision - we either climb down the snow face or get tangled up with another rock section with the great unknown beyond. We estimated the snow face was going to take 2 rope lengths to belay down before the angle reduced to a comfortable level and the run out improved from straight over a bluff to a slight lip before the drop. The first belay, from a large rock on the ridge, was bomb-proof. John went down the slope first - angle about 50° and at the end of the 45 m anchored with his snowstake. Then I pulled up the rope and sent Derek on his way. He went down taking care with John's footsteps. I had just dismantled the belay when I was startled with a strange swissshh sound - since I could not see down the face my first reaction was something had started sliding. For a moment my alarm increased as suddenly a dark object caught the corner of my eye. Then in flash I could see it was a glider riding the ridge wave over our heads and he could probably see us as he turned for another loop over us before continuing on his way.

Near the end of the first rope length we began to notice that our ice axes would only penetrate about 40 cm into the slope before hitting very hard material. A considerable number of substantial blows with the hammer on the snowstake only gained another 1 or 2 cm into it resulting in a practically hopeless belay anchor. We were obviously on an area of water ice covered with snow. This raised the worry; how well was the snow bonded to the ice? We were still on an angle of 50°. Still this was no place to worry about such issues. We soon began to realise the slope was far longer than our initial estimate suggested - more like 4 lengths. There were no places for suitable anchors on some handy rocks, so we stuck with the snow stakes for the third belay – at least we were off the ice. Finally, after the fourth pitch we decided to move together on a sidle towards a ramp which took us onto another snow slope - at last the run-out now was good. We were soon on easy ground although the time was now 6.30 pm and we were still at 2,200 m with some distance to go before home.

A long snow plod along a ridge ensued, then down another rather steep snow slope (taking care to avoid some partly hidden crevasses). Slowly we reached the edge of the snow. Now we had to tackle a new difficulty - to find a route down through 300 m of bluffs and the time was already 8 pm. Luck, however, was with us. By chance I happened to spot a rock some distance to our left and off our intended route which was silhouetted against a small patch of snow on the other side of the valley. We thought it might just be worth checking this as a cairn. John reached it first and confirmed its significance. We reached the bivy at 9 pm and immediately began a thirst recovery programme before going to bed.

Next morning saw little action. We had dinner at lunch before deciding to go for a walk up to a high level tarn shown on the map. We headed down valley then up the side of a scree slide followed by steep grass and rocks before gaining an old moraine ridge. Gradually we gained the basin where the lake was located. We were surprised to find the lake completely frozen over and surrounded by snow (1650 m). We also disturbed 2 adult and 2 young chamois in the basin. To make a round trip, we headed back on a long sidle just on the snow line at about 1600 m to regain the route we had used down through the bluffs the previous evening. We got back to our abode in time for another well earned dinner.

Next morning it was still fine, so we headed back up our favourite bluffs to climb Mt Heim (2200 m). This was an easy walk in comparison to the previous days. We were sitting on the summit at 8.15 am. We had thoughts of attempting a long rock ridge scramble around the back of the lake we had visited the previous day. A chilling westerly wind, coupled with the prospect of afternoon cloud rolling in persuaded us to abandon the idea. After sitting on the summit for 2 hours, we descended back to the bivy. After lunch we headed down the valley, this time finding the correct route around the bluff. Once back at the car we set up our tents and had a cup of coffee with some campers whose holiday thrill was firing their .22's at the rabbit population along the bush edge.

Next morning we reorganised our gear and headed off over to the northern side of the Ahuriri Valley. After crossing the river and a long sidle gaining about 200 m of height we arrived at the start of Watson Stream. This proved to be a delightful valley with patches of beech interspersed with grassy flats and the clear blue noisy stream. By late morning we were beyond the bush and at the forks where the valley divides. From here we planned to climb (walk up) Mt Maitland (2200 m). We had a lazy afternoon. John and I did a walk up and around the eastern branch of the valley to find out what the route offered. Derek after waking up and finding us gone, went for a walk up the hill side behind our campsite.

The weather looked so settled that evening that we did not bother to erect the tent. At 5 am there was no need to use the alarm because I thought I noticed something touch my face. On opening my eyes I noticed it had clouded over and that we were being warned with the odd drop of rain. We were not impressed, so we decided not to bother with Maitland (perhaps we should have been more energetic the previous day?), so after breakfast we packed up and headed down to the road. The first shower of rain greeted us as we arrived at the car.

Another summer trip - great company, marvellous scenery and good weather.

Team: John Thomson, Derek Sharp and Peter Wiles  
(Ask Derek sometime about his expedition to the bridge and engine room on the ferry.)

## **SUCCESS AT LAST** - 2 February 92

This was my second attempt leading a Tunipo - Toka loop on the Ngamoko Range - also the largest group of loopy's I have had the pleasure to follow. Showers with a blustery wind greeted us at the car park and talk of the Apity pub was banded about. Being from the PNTMC and not that "other crowd", we pressed on up Tunipo well buried in cloud. After travelling south along the range a short time the weather cleared and wind dropped a little and Trevor put on a brew of coffee. Good things come in three's. After lunch we headed to Toka in clear cool conditions. Great for tramping, with a run down Knight's Track to the stream for another brew up. Thanks Trevor; having been lucky enough to have walked the length of the Ngamoko Range (it being achieved in bits and pieces). I think this section is by far the most interesting, and would recommend it as a good medium tramp. Our intrepid troupe

comprised: David Ross, Judy and Peter Stockdale, Tricia Eder, Mike Johns (with CB radio) , Lou and Jenny Prichard, Trevor Meyle, Pauline Coy, Monica Cantwell, Paul Lysaght with Mick Leyland following.

### **OTAKI FORKS - KIME** January 25<sup>th</sup> 1992

The weather had not been too great on Friday night, so it was a good spirited team of 5 that left at 7 am on Saturday in fine weather. We were walking by 8.30 am. and passed the slip that has closed the road down to the camping area by the river. (Don't park your car past it if you want to get out.) Then it was across the Waiotauru foot bridge and up the steep farmland track. The track has had a lot of work on it over the last couple of years and is now well metalled most of its length to Field's hut, which we reached in 1h 50min (I had forgotten what a fit trip was like!) The track to Table Top is how I remember it, passing through leatherwood and stunted bush. It has many muddy patches that DOC has promised to attend to in their latest hand out. Walking along Table Top in mist was an enjoyable respite between the steep climbs. The weather chewed out track to Denna high point was scaled while I watched shadowy figures appear and disappear ahead of me. The grunt up Bridge Peak didn't seem too bad. We were soon following the poled route to Kime Hut, where we were made welcome by 2 volunteer hut wardens from DOC. David dutifully filled out the survey forms on offer while the rest of us consumed lunch. The weather had deteriorated by the time we started our return journey so raincoats were the order of the afternoon. Except for Gavin who was travelling light (in training). On the way down we met 7 other hardy souls on their way up to Kime - and it rained lots. We were back at Otaki Forks in 3 hours (sorry legs) and just as Mike and I approached the new slip rocks started falling. I decided running was the best course of action - Dave and Mike had just got to a safe spot when a large slide came down (one rock half a metre square). Back at the car it was good to be on our way home by 4 pm after a fun day. We were Mike Johns, Gavin Redpath, Dave Hodges, Perry Hicks and leader Mary Crow.

### **DAPHNE HUT** - Day Trip

On a sunny Sunday morning we set off on a day trip to meet up with Tony's group at Daphne Hut, in the Tukituki Valley. At the woolshed, the start of the usual route to Daphne, a rather unfriendly group of shooters were playing target shooting. We decided to take the upstream route to Daphne marked on the map.

After a short walk up the road, we descended and crossed the Makeretu River. From the river, there was a steep climb in the hot sunshine; we were pleased to get into the shade of the bush. Where the track emerged onto a high rocky knoll Dieter sounded his hunting horn. On the next knoll the track returns to the bush, and descends to the Tukituki River. Dieter was introduced to using the river as a track, and ten minutes later we met Tony's group just leaving Daphne Hut.

After lunch at Daphne hut, we returned to the cars via the same track, but with a short-cut over the farmland at the end. The trip to Palmerston North was interrupted by a stop to remove stones jammed in the disk brakes on Pauline's car. We were: Arthur, Lis, Pauline, Richard, Monica & Dieter.

### **ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND AT KURIPAPANGO**

Kuripapango is the site of a historic settlement on the banks of the Ngaruroro River, on the Taihape-Napier Road. It has a comfortable camping area, and a lodge complete with generator which can be hired from DOC. (Contact Phil Mohi at the DOC base at Puketitiri for bookings.)

Kuripapango is a good base for a wide range of day and overnight trips for people of modest fitness. The more rugged parts of the Kaweka Range are a challenge to more experienced trampers. The weather in this area is often more settled than in the Ruahine Range. Fishing, swimming, gentle walks over old forest roads, and rock-climbing are also possibilities.

We ran day trips to Mt Kohinga, Kuripapango Hill, the Comet Range, and also visits to the lakes and Lowry Bush Reserve. An enjoyable time was had by all, and a return visit is certain.

We were: Arthur, Lis, and 12 Forest & Bird members.

### **MAKARORO BASE TO MOKAI BASE VIA COLENZO** - December 14/15 by Graham Fletcher

It was with in trepidation that I agreed to go on the tramp that Mick had organised. First we had been hunting with Mick for years and I knew what his? sense of direction was like. (We weren't to be disappointed) and also we were worried about the fitness of the tramping club members (could they leave us for dead).

I met the other members of the tramp at Mick's house (Llew, Tricia, Pauline and Trevor) and off we went in two vehicles picking up Mike (the other non-member) on the way.

We arrived at Makaroro Base without mishap (no pubs open at that time of the morning). Wishing someone owned a four wheel drive vehicle Mick's wife didn't look happy when we suggested taking his car). We set off up the wide Makaroro River. Mick and I managed to leap in and were feeling fairly good. Arriving at the commemorative cairn after an hour we were surprised to find that they had stopped for a brew up (cruisey trips these trampers have). After drinking a cup of Mick's legendary coffee (2 teaspoons of water to one cup of beans) we set off up Colenso Spur with Llew leading the way (for a guy who doesn't look fit he does well). A hill really sorts the real people from the wimps and we staggered up the hill in one's and two's. We all met up about 100 m from the top (Te Atwa Mahuru) and proceeded up to the trig (no longer there) and then down to some tarns to have lunch. Looking back we realised that we didn't need to have climbed to the top to get to the tarns but we blindly followed Mick (a warning of things to come).

Lunch was peaceful and beautiful with the views of both coasts making the climb all worthwhile. No one wanted to leave but we dragged our tired bodies up and headed down for an easy descent to the river and then on to Colenso Hut (dreams are free). The track wasn't clear but Mick found one on the ridge and we thought we were right.

Halfway down Mick veered off the ridge down a small scree slope which looked like an easy way to the bottom. Like sheep we followed. Two hours later we staggered back to the exact spot we left. We all had skinned knees and hands with boots full of stones and bowels definitely empty. The easy scree slope turned into a nightmare with a waterfall at the bottom and dangerous falls on all sides. Being stupid we all tried different directions to get off the slope and ended up spread out all over the place. After many aborted attempts to get off the slope we all staggered back to the spot we had left the ridge.

Gaining our breath back so that we could abuse Mick was a waste of time as Mick fearing the worst did a runner down the ridge to the creek. This left Mick and I to lead the rest of the party down. Being good deerstalkers we deliberately left the track half way down and bush bashed to the bottom. Apart from the odd bit of bush lawyer and steep bits we made it. Heading off down the creek we found Mick sitting down (on his third smoke) at the foot of the track. Unprintable words were said at this stage and we carried on, turning left into the main creek and heading towards Colenso Hut. Unfortunately night fall was beating us so we decided to bivvy out for the night. Finding a suitable area to camp, we paid the man our fees but realised we had been done when we had to shift a tonne of rocks to pitch the tents.

After a huge tea (3 or 4 courses) in which everyone had an input, we spent the rest of the evening around a huge fire telling lies and drinking Ouzo. It was a pleasant evening and pleasant company.

Breakfast was soon over and we set off at a slow pace down the creek to find the elusive Colenso Hut. We found the hut after an hour and realised we could have reached it that night - real people sleep outside.

A look at the lake and some photos (looked like the lagoon), we then headed off along the track to Iron Bark Hut for lunch. Following the trampers motto "Let's all split up" we arrived at Iron Bark in dribs and drabs with the fittest first (Mick and Tricia). (Why were they in such a hurry? Trevor arrived last with Pauline and promptly fell through a hole in the veranda nearly breaking his leg. We think he wanted a helicopter ride - (he had one on his last tramp I believe.)

Lunch was different with everything that was left thrown into a billy and heated. I think we should have thrown out the food and eaten the billy. After lunch we headed off on the last section of the trip. Arriving at the farmland, the track promptly disappeared and we wandered aimlessly around the farmland trying to lead in the right direction. Arriving at the point where we could see the way home, Mick had this crazy idea of going via Mokai Hut (shorter he said). We all agreed (a touch of sun) but we proved that this way is definitely not shorter and it was a tired bunch of trampers that arrived at the car park. Waiting for our transport we relaxed thinking the ordeal was over; how wrong we were, but that is another storey and for fear of being beaten up I won't go into the trip home. Just a word of warning that if Mick's wife offers to take you home from a trip, walk no matter how far...

A good trip had by all and a really good bunch to tramp with.

Team: Mick (leader) Leyland, Llew Pritchard, Pauline Coy, Trevor Meyle, Tricia Eder, Graham Fletcher and Mike Burt.

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