



# PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

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

March 1994 Edition

Gear Custodian

Newsletter Editor & Newsletter Distribution

President	: Tricia Eder	357-0122
Membership Enquiries	: Pauline Coy	356-8782
	: Nigel Barrett	356-1568
	: Mick Leyland	358-3183
	: Peter Wiles	358-6894

## ENQUIRES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

Mick Leyland	: Ph. 358-3183
Daryl & Linda Rowan	: Ph. 356-4655
Sue & Lawson Pither	: Ph. 357-3033

TRIPS OFTEN LEAVE FROM THE FOODTOWN CAR PARK IN FERGUSSON STREET UNLESS THE LEADER ARRANGES OTHERWISE.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN GOING 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.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A DAY TRIP MID-WEEK SEE DETAILS BELOW, OR RING Lawson and Sue Pither (357-3033), or Monica (354-3834), Nancy (358-8241), John (358-3513).

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.

## THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME

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

Club 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 otherwise notified in the newsletter.

The PNTMC committee meets on the first Thursday of each month.

## SCHEDULED EVENT LIST

### MARCH

Club Nights: Thursdays 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> (AGM).

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
<b>MARCH 13</b>	Takapari Rd.	Mtn. Bike	Aaron Panchaud	354-8422
(This will be a casual mountain bike ride to A-frame Hut leaving town at 9.30 am. Take food, drink and warm clothing.)				
<b>MARCH 13</b>	A-Frame (Takapari)	E/M	Tricia Eder	356-0122
(This day tramp will be run in conjunction with the bike trip and will leave at 8.30 am.) Leader required.				
<b>MARCH 12-13</b>	Maungamahue	M	Chris Saunders	358-4899

(Chris intends to explore the topography beyond Rangī, and ?? ... this trip replaces the advertised Waterfall Creek trip which will be rescheduled for a later date.)

**MARCH 12/13**            Crevasse/Glacier                            Tech                            Peter Wiles                            358-6894  
 (We will explore the outer and perhaps the inner mysteries of the Manganua Glacier on the Tukino side of Ruapehu. If the weather prognosis looks settled we will camp at the foot of the glacier.) Note that this trip has been moved forward one week.

**MARCH 17**                            Club Night:  
 (Slides taken over the summer - Arrowsmiths by Derek Sharp and Mt Aspiring by Peter Wiles and slides of other trips?)

**MARCH 20**                            Te Atuaoparapara                            M                            Tricia Eder                            357-0122  
 (If the weather looks okay, this will be a round day trip which should meet up with Perry's trip. A leader will be required on the day.)

**MARCH 19-20**                            Waikamaka Hut                            E/M                            Perry Hicks                            355-1393  
 (This trip - leaving at 7.30 am - will be suitable for first time weekend trampers and will head into the central Ruahines via North Block Road and wend its way up the Waipawa River and over Waipawa Saddle.)

Sorry folks - Kapiti Island has had to be rescheduled to April.

**MARCH 26-27**                            Sparrowhawk/Maropea                            FE                            Nigel Barrett                            356-1568  
 (Nigel plans to leave PN at 5.00 am for this trip.  
 Day 1. Makaroro Road to Sparrowhawk Biv, and then south to Armstrong Saddle, Top Maropea Hut and down to Maropea Forks Hut.  
 Day 2. Climb from the hut up to Te Atuma Mahuru and then back to Sparrowhawk Biv and the road end.)

**MARCH 31**                            Club Night: AGM and will be enlivened with a wine and cheese! Start time will be 7.30 pm.

**APRIL**

Committee meeting 7<sup>th</sup>  
 Club Nights: Thursdays 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
<b>APRIL 1-4</b>	(Easter) Day trips or (overnight or longer - ideas to suit.			
<b>APRIL 1-4</b>	Manson-Rockshead	M/F	Mick Leyland	358-3183
<b>APRIL 10</b>	Atene Skyline	M	Richard Lockett	323-6489
<b>APRIL 9-10</b>	Titahi Bay Rock	All	Trevor Meyle	356-8782
<b>APRIL 14</b>	Club Night:			
<b>APRIL 16</b>	Ohau-Tarauaras	E/M	Perry Hicks	355-1393
<b>APRIL 16-17</b>	Tama Lakes	M	Patrick Janssen	356-3116
<b>APRIL 23-25 (ANZAC)</b>				
<b>APRIL 24</b>	Kapiti Island	All	Tricia Eder	357-0122
(First in first served, as numbers are limited to 13 on this popular trip.) Cost - \$25 / adult + \$3 reservation fee + mileage.				
<b>APRIL 25</b>	Pohongina-Centre Creek	E/M	Daryl Rowan	356-4655
<b>APRIL 23-25</b>	Tararua Middle Crossing	M	Trevor Meyle	356-8782
<b>APRIL 28</b>	Club Night:			
<b>APRIL 30</b>	Haukura Ridge	M/F	Derek Sharp	326-8178

**THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME**

Later in year: Graham Langton on some aspect of the history of New Zealand mountaineering and much more.

## EDITORIAL

At the AGM it is proposed to alter and to bring up to date the Club's constitution to better reflect current circumstances and to give us greater flexibility. This is an important matter and members should consider carefully the proposed changes set out in the attached copy of the constitution. Members can compare the existing text with the proposed changes and formulate their views accordingly. At the same time, it is intended to reword sections to make them gender neutral. I have not highlighted the gender changes as they are fairly self evident and these changes make no change to the intent of the document.

## NOTICES

### **AGM**

Notice is hereby given of the annual general meeting and wine and cheese to be held at the Society of Friends hall at 7.30 pm on 31 March. Note the earlier start time.

### **NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING**

If you are unable to make it or expect to be late, please ensure that your apology is forwarded to the Secretary in advance. Next meeting at place Tricia's place 57 Fiars Road.

### **MAP ORDERS & HUT PASSES**

We have sent away an order, for about 30 maps. Budget for an average charge of \$9/map.

### **DOC BUSINESS**

DOC advise that Atiwhakatu Hut will be closed from the following intervals: 21 Feb-2 March; 7 March-16 March; 21 March-30 March; 11 April-20 April.

### **POISON OPERATIONS IN THE RUAHINE RANGES**

DOC and Hawkes Bay Regional Council are proposing to carry out large scale aerial possum poison operations in the Ruahines and Kawekas during May 1994. This is principally to protect farm stock against the likelihood of the spread of bovine Tuberculosis from wild possums. 1080 pellets will be dropped on approximately 50,000 hectares, stretching 144 kilometres from the Tukituki River up to the Ngaruroro, over both DOC and private land. There is also a sizeable chunk of the Lake Colenso- Ruahine Corner area to be poisoned. Beware of the little green pellets!

There are arguments both for and against this type of blanket coverage operation, and disputes as to the effects on other forest fauna, namely deer, but there is no doubting that the possum population needs to be reduced. Hopefully this will do it for the time being.

Also rumoured is a large scale poison drop into the Tararua ranges. We will try to keep you informed.

### **TRIP REPORTS**

Don't forget (leaders) please get your trip reports in or use your short lived powers to delegate to an unsuspecting team member. How about a letter to the editor, perhaps, or some good gossip or a poem or what ever.

### **USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT THE RUAHINES**

For information about access to the Ruahine Forest Park, check out the recently published "Ruahine Forest Park: A Guide to Family Walks, Tramping Tracks and Routes" by Kathy Ombler (\$14.95). Sounds like an overdue publication and should be useful for the club to have a copy or two.

### **BOOK REVIEWS** By Tony Gates

Books are a societal obsession. Everyone reads them, everyone has them, everyone appreciates them. Good books are essential to us, be they descriptive guide books or pretty pickie books. Here are some recently published books that may interest trampers and mountaineers.

"RUAHINE FOREST PARK" by Kathy Ombler (1993) is published by Craig Pot ton Publishing, Nelson. This is a glossy little book, suitable for field use as well as at home. The sub-title, "A guide to family walks, tramping tracks, and routes", says it all, but there is also useful information for more rugged tramps and other activities.

I'm sure we know it all already, however, this guide book fills a gap not covered by other books. It discusses general tramping stuff, then region by region tracks and routes, huts, bridges etc. It starts at Kawhata Base area., then describes areas on the western side, then up the eastern side of the range. Each area has approximately six day walks described, then there are longer crossings and overnight walks discussed. Extra interesting information is boxed in. Simple line drawing maps show the routes, and there are plenty of John Barkla's lovely photos. Actually, I thought that the photos were the best part, as the writing seemed to me rather unpolished.

Another fine book, which incidentally is my pick of the guide books for easy tramps, is by (the late) Sheila Cunningham and family. A review of their book "HAMKES BAY FOR THE HAPPY WANDERER" will unfortunately have to wait 'till I can find it in the library (or a copy is donated to the club!

Next on the list is one of my favourite Christmas pressies, "A LIVING NEW ZEALAND FOREST" "A Community of Plants and Animals" by Robert Brockie (1992) (Bateman, Ak).

This is a glossy, professional/ technical book that is interesting for the lay person as well as the scientist. It is an excellent book on the work DSIR Ecology Division carried out over a period of 25 years in the Orongorongo Valley, near Wellington. I know this area well. This is destined to be a university text and a standard reference text. It is natural history and ecology at its best.

Plant and animal communities of the valley are discussed in detail, yet with candid, easy to read style. The Orongorongo Valley provides excellent representation of many New Zealand vegetation types. Plenty of good photos, diagrams, tables, and maps are there (some diagrams may appear a little complex). There is emphasis on historical and seasonal change in the forest and animal communities, and the influence of "the pervasive possum" as well as goats, deer, pigs, rats, ferrets, cats, rabbits, and many birds over the native inhabitants. Animal behaviour, breeding, and feeding are all studied, leading to some important new discoveries about "The Bush". Field work included tracking specimens tagged with radio transmitter, so workers would tramp about carrying and large "TV" type aerials in the bush!

Derek Sharp's dream book comes next. "BARRON SADDLE TO MT BREWSTER" by Ross Cullen (1993) (NZAC) is the latest guide book to mountains of the Southern Alps. It fills the gap north of what is covered by Moir, and south of Mt Cook N. P. This is designed as a field book, small in size, brief, nevertheless important as an outline for mountains of the area. There is the usual general stuff, then valley by valley descriptions of the area, with a paragraph or two on each known route of each mountain. And did you know, Derek, that there are still some unclimbed routes? Sketch maps are, of course included, and black and white photos and, the area it covers must surely be one of the most delightful tramping and mountaineering areas in the country.

## TRIP REPORTS

### FEET UP IN THE ARROWSMITHS by Peter Wiles

We arrived at the road end near Lake Heron just after 6 pm. By half past we were under way, loaded up to the gunnels in hot fine conditions, up the Cameron Valley. Before we had gone 15 minutes we were soaked with sweat. After about 2½ hours of good progress (covering a little over half the distance up the valley to the Cameron Hut) we selected a spot amongst some lacebark trees and scrub to bivvy out for the night. (The weather forecast sounded as though it should be fine and the conditions seemed okay). Anyway, about midnight it started raining and we had to arrange some crude coverings. Fortunately, it stopped about 3 am and it was fine when we packed up shortly after 5 am.

Almost immediately after starting off up the valley, I tripped over and pulled a muscle in my leg. This reversed conditions and now I was struggling to keep up with Derek. Be that as it may, we arrived at the hut before 9 am in fine conditions, - a little to the surprise of the occupants of the hut. Soon showers resumed and the rest of the day was spent in the pit.

The following morning's weather was not much different, however, by lunchtime it seemed reasonably fine. About 1 pm, we took off for a reconnaissance up the Cameron Glacier whose terminal is about 2 km beyond the hut. An hour later we had climbed above the terminal moraine and were on the ice. After cramponing up, we headed up the north branch and decided (considering the reasonably fine conditions) to climb Prop Peak at the head of the glacier. (By coincidence, or was it, we had most of our climbing gear with us.)

We had a split decision over which route to take, however, we eventually tackled the interconnecting snow leads up the southern face to the west of the summit. This proved to be quite steep and we belayed the final 3 pitches to the ridge top. On the top we were very close the cloud layer (about 2,400 m) however, we got a reasonable view down into Jagged Stream and the mid Rakaia River and noticed in particular the north ridge of Tent Peak across the neve from us.

It was after 5.30 pm and now we had to get down. For some reason we decided not to take the easy route down via Jagged Col but chose to traverse the summit with the intention of reaching one of the snow leads that dropped back in the Cameron neve. The ridge down proved to be rather tricky climbing on appalling rock. Be belayed a series of short pitches down the ridge with me leading the way and Derek following. Time started to motor on, and we began to wonder if we were going to get back in daylight. We also began to wonder about the weather - fortunately there was no wind.

After reaching the bottom of the 100 m high arête, we followed a narrow level section of shattered vertically orientated argillite – all loose and like grabbing a handful of razor blades. I was taking in the rope at the end of this and discovered that quite close to Derek the rope was almost ¾ sliced through! Fortunately, we no longer needed it for remainder of the day, as the ridge relented to easy scrambling. It was now 7 pm and we still had to find a way down onto the snow. This proved a little tricky as we had to climb down a short (but steep) band of ice about 0.5 m wide to reach the snow. Then it was finally chocks away with Derek in perfect bum slide mode. We were able to follow our tracks back

through the crevasses without difficulty, reaching the hut before 9 pm. (Arrowsmith peak number 1 for Derek, plus one I had not climbed before.)

The weather the next day was showery, but in the afternoon we decided to do a reconnaissance up the Carriageway (the huge lateral moraine on the southern side of the end of the glacier) which provides the initial route to Arrowsmith. (When I climbed Arrowsmith in 1981, this route was straight forward. Since then a critical part of it around a bluff has collapsed.) We thought it would be good idea to check the revised route out, rather than waste time on the actual climb. We had a field day pushing huge rocks off the edge of the moraine. At the bluff, the problem was very evident - the common problem these days of moraine collapse - just leaving the bluff. There was a route round it on a narrow and exposed ledge. Having got round it, it then started to rain, and in the wet conditions and without any gear, neither of us had any inclination to return by it. Was there another (better) way? We examined the options and found a sloping ramp, which although not nearly as exposed, required more rock climbing. We managed to get down okay in the rain.

Next day was reasonably fine so we decided to tackle the north ridge of Tent. An English climber (Dave) asked us if he might join us. That was no problem. (He and his wife (Victoria) were hoping (like us) to climb Arrowsmith (her name was Arrowsmith), however, they were low on supplies and his wife walked out to get more supplies giving Dave the option to join us.) This proved to be very rewarding.

We set off back up the glacier shortly before 8 am. (Derek and I figured from our observations from Prop, it should be fairly easy scrambling up the ridge and I had climbed Tent via another route in 1981, so I was familiar with the descent down the gully directly opposite the hut. No problems ... late start, early finish.) That was the strategy. Things turned out rather differently.

We got up the glacier okay but to our amazement - halfway up, a huge section of the hanging glacier about 500 m above the lower glacier had collapsed in the intervening 40 hours and had swept more than halfway across the Cameron, completely obliterating our previous tracks. We estimated a block of ice amounting to about 50,000 m<sup>3</sup> had broken off and our earlier track went through the middle of the debris. (I digress.) We reached the north ridge shortly before 11 am and very soon it became obvious that this was serious rock climbing. The rock was generally good but the ridge was narrow and composed of an almost endless series of towers. We belayed the whole way with Derek and Dave taking alternate leads and muggins was in the middle. (The rope was now 4 m shorter as a result of the previous climb.) The weather was not ideal. When we were forced onto the eastern side, it was sheltered from the wind and warm with some sun. On the western side we were exposed to the wind, the occasional shower and later in the day snow showers. We made slow but steady progress with Dave directing proceedings. (He had done heaps of rock climbing in the UK and the Continent). We finally reached the summit at 6 pm (about 2,450 m). Then we had to tackle the problem of the descent!

Even though I had been on the summit previously, I had no recollection of it - I could only recall problems in the top of the gully on the way down. First we had to get to the top of the gully. More rocks towers to traverse or to get around. Then the ridge started to drop away at a worrying gradient. It was not obvious to the others, even where that start of the gully was. The ridge split and we negotiated a level but very narrow section heading to the west. It was after 7 pm when we were all at the top of the gully - still at about 2,400 m. Fortunately, the wind had died and there was much more snow in the gully than in 1981 - it now reached right to the ridgetop. The initial slope was appallingly steep (50°) for the first 100 m before relenting to a respectable 45°. Dave asked if we were going to belay down this. I responded in the negative. Somewhere lurking about 200 m down is a scrund, and I was aware that a few years ago, someone fell while descending this section and hit the scrund and eventually died from their injuries. With crampons and double axes we set off. I led the way followed by Dave and finally Derek on rather soft aerated snow. If the Brits had a clear advantage on the rock, the Kiwi's had the upper hand on the snow.

Sure enough about 200 m down lay the scrund - one clean break right across the gully, about 3-4 m wide and 10 m straight down to bedrock and 30-40 m long. This was much larger than I remember last time. I had some time while the others reached me, which I used to get the rope and snowstake out and considered the options before placing a belay. The best and obvious option was to jump it. Fortunately, at one point a heap of snow had partly built up the lower lip. That was the target point. Dave jumped first, followed by Derek, and me. After this the gully opened out and the angle eased off. After another 200 m we could walk outwards and Derek used the bumslide option. It was after 9 pm when the three of us reached the bottom of the snow. In the fading light we descended heaps of serees and then the moraine ridges of the Cameron at the bottom. Dave declared he was not going to cross the Cameron River ("too dangerous") but was going to head up stream to where it almost peters out near the glacier. He had a torch: we did not. I had an advantage of having crossed the river on previous occasions, although not after rain. In any event we could not keep up with Dave over the rocks. When we reached the river, we could see his torch a considerable distance up river. We opted for the widest spot and made it okay, but did get a little wetter than expected. We reached the hut in almost darkness at 10.15 pm. Dave was about 15 minutes behind. We were too tired to bother with cooking dinner or to eat it, and after a drink crashed into bed. It had been a memorable and successful New Years day.

It rained and blew on and off for the next three days. We were confined to the hut. Dave and Victoria left; having run out of time. We were on our own. The hut was getting boring. The forecast for the next day was for south of Arthur's Pass (and we were certainly that) showers clearing overnight. We set the alarm for 4 am in anticipation. When it went off, it was all happening, wind, rain hail thunder and lightning. Back to bed. It was not until late morning that the rain stopped. After lunch we opted to go for a walk up the Carriageway and then up the gully toward the peaks immediately behind the

hut. Once we got to the snow, it was not long before we realised that quite a bit had fallen high up in recent days. It was soft and knee deep. We reached a ridgetop at 2,400 m adjacent East Horn where we got some excellent views. Here we were in another dilemma. It was 4 pm, we had all our gear, should we tackle East Horn (2,600 m)? The snow was going to get waist deep before we got to the rocks. The rockface looked 'rather steep and plastered with bands of snow. Should we try the gully round the corner? Would the wind gusts resume? How long would it take? We returned to the hut via a different route and inspected an impressive high level tarn on the way.

It was a superb evening and again in anticipation, we set the alarm with the intention next day of going back to East Horn and then walking out afterwards. Again the wind was blowing when the alarm went off, the sky looked overcast. When we finally got up it was calm and sunny. Again we wondered whether we had done the right thing? We packed up and headed down the valley, reaching the car in just under 4 hours in increasing heat. We passed 9 people in 3 parties struggling up valley in the terrible heat. (The hut has 9 bunks.)

We headed to ChCh to crash at some friends of mine. In the evening, I thought it just as well to check the ferry tickets to confirm what sailing we were on - day after tomorrow. I was a little shocked to discover that we should have got off the boat a couple of hours ago!

Clearly a day of leisure and a little shopping in town was not going to happen. There was no knowing how long we might be sitting in the unbooked queue at Picton.

Team: Derek Sharp and Peter Wiles.

## **KAPAKAPANUI**

By Thursday night only one person had contacted me about this tramp so I rang them back saying it looked like we might not be able to get transport. Within the next two days, six more people joined us (including one who turned up on the morning of the tramp).

We put plenty of sunblock on and splashed up the river together but once we started climbing up the hill, the party almost immediately split into three groups at their own (leisurely) pace. We joined up again at the bush edge for a quick snack before climbing up to the top and wandering round and down to the hut. Field Peak was covered in cloud but we had good views of Otaki-Waiotauru Forks, Horowhenua, Kapiti and Wellington.

About half an hour down from the hut, Judy realised she'd forgotten her ski-pole/walking stick so - one of the fit trampers ran back up to the hut to retrieve it.

The more sedate carload headed straight back to Palmerston, while the other carload went for a swim at the beach on the way back.

We were (in alphabetical order): Amanda, David, Judy, Kevin, Markus, Monica, Stuart and Terry.

## **CAPE KIDHAPPERS - Saturday 30 January by Peter Wiles**

Six arrived at Clifton shortly after 9 am on Saturday. The woman at the store that collected my parking fee told me; "I doubt whether you will be able to get to the Cape today because of the spring tide". I replied "I think well should manage".

High tide was at 7.30 am (roughly) and after walking only for 15 minutes or so, we encountered problems. A substantial section of the cliff (at least 100 m) had recently collapsed. (In fact we found out later, that very night) and the sea was running into the foot of it. A section, amounting to several cubic metres collapsed into the sea only a few metres in front of us as we darted forward between the waves. We climbed up onto the main debris and worked our way to close to the end to find there was an almost shear drop into the sea. However, we back tracked a little and scrambled (slid?) down back to the beach, once again dodging the waves. Candy nearly got swept off her feet in the process and was soaked. The sea presented problems for some distance with the team being forced to make stuttering progress between surges. While not paying attention chatting, and thinking that they were above any significant waves, Peter (W) and Michelle got soaked.

Progress was better going for a while although care was required. We reached Black Reef at about 11 am and admired the considerable numbers of gannets that are now inhabiting this area (many more than I when I last visited the Cape about 15 years ago). Once again we had to synchronise with the waves to get round a rocky corner. Then the Cape came into view and it was an easy walk along rock slabs to the start of the track and the DOC visitors' shelter.

We decided to continue out to the Cape before having lunch. There were heaps of birds, a foul smell (no pun intended) and spectacular views. It was turning out to be a brilliant day as the morning cloud evaporated. There were a few people out there already who had come by the overland route (possibly with the DOC ranger who was also out for the day). After the necessary photographs, we returned to the visitors' centre for lunch.

There was no sign of the tractor bringing the Rowan family and Liz Morrison. We assumed (correctly as it turned out) that the operator felt it was too risky with the state of the tide and unstable rocks about.

We spent an hour or so for lunch and while doing so, watched a number of people arrive along the beach. Low tide was at 1.40 pm, so we figured, the earlier we started back the fewer the problems and the quicker the return journey. This proved to be the case, although conditions were rather warm at times. We were back at Clifton before 3.30 pm, having avoided all the drama of the outward leg.

After an ice-cream, we decided to visit Te Mata Peak. We spent about half an hour admiring the view (rather hazy) and in particular the duo parapent taking those game enough to take the plunge, cruising about the summit area. We reached home at about 7 pm.

Team: Peter and Judy Stockdale, Mark?, Michelle Dell, Candy Wong and Peter Wiles.

### **WAKARARA Jan 22-23-24 - by Stuart Hubbard**

Those present were Terry Crippen, Christine Cheyne and Stuart Hubbard. This weekend's activities in the Eastern Ruahines were coordinated by Arthur & Liz Todd, in conjunction with Forest & Bird. We three decided not to stay at Wakarara camp, but to do a 3 day trip in the vicinity, instead.

Departed midday Saturday from the Makaroro road end, about 4 km north of the camp. The joint was jumping, with several cars, and a party of mountain bikers about to head up the Yeomans Track. It was a hot, clear day as we trudged up the Makaroro River, the level of which was fairly well down. We saw a couple of rainbow trout, and stopped for a swim ourselves in a waterhole. Arrived at Upper Makaroro Hut about 6 pm, encountering a group from Hutt Valley Tramping Club. The hut, which was a modern tidy 4-berth job was set on a terrace well above the river, and looked across the steeply sloping valley side opposite.

Sunday began with a hard slog up Totara Spur, which rose steeply through beech forest, which thinned out into sub-alpine scrub as we made for the tops, gaining over 2,000 ft by lunchtime. The perspiration was flowing freely, for it was another hot day. Proceeded along the tops, pausing at the Tupari trig (1526 m), to admire the splendid views of the Kawekas, Ruapehu, and all around. We continued past a sizable tarn to Te Atu Mahuru trig (1534m). Here Terry investigated the track down Colenso Spur in case the weather closed in. We were pleased to reach a group of tarns (little lakes or big puddles) as we had exhausted our water supplies. Here we rested out the hot part of the day, before cooking an early meal and heading on to Sparrowhawk Bivvy. We didn't sleep there as it was full, but is in fact a modern 2-person shelter with a water tank and a toilet. Christine and Terry pitched tent while Stuart crawled into a bivvy bag. The wind picked up a bit overnight, but nobody got wet despite a few drops of rain to tease us.

Monday was a somewhat easier day; we dropped down Sparrowhawk Ridge, stopping now and then to admire the tops we had traversed the day before. Legs were aching from the previous day and I (Stuart) was sort of relieved that I wasn't continuing on with Terry and Christine to do 5 days in the Kawekas. Stopped for a swim down in the Makaroro, and met Arthur and Lis, who related how a member of their party keeled over from heat exhaustion. I could well believe it. We parted ways at the road end. T. & C. went on to Napier, and I hitched a ride back to Palmerston, feeling happy but rather sore.

### **CATTLE CREEK: A REAR END PERSPECTIVE - by Margaret Riordan**

We headed off first down the West Tamaki Stream, enjoying the sound of the water over the stones, and all made good time to Stanfield Hut. There was an option at this point: either to stay and relax at Stanfield until everyone else returned, or to do the round trip to Cattle Creek. All decided to continue.

The REAL work then began. Your trip report writer has not set foot on the steep sections of the Ruahines for several years. She came with some recent intensive gym workouts behind her, and a determination that she really did want to get back into tramping. But a few steps up the next very steep section, and her heart and breathing rates became very fast. The temptation to return to Stanfield was very strong, as every few steps necessitated a rest to slow down the breathing rate. Where was that elusive second wind, and that slow, steady, tramping rhythm? Knowing that there were some supportive trampers not very far ahead helped her to decide to carry on up the ridge.

We reached the top (some of us more quickly than others!) and the crossroads in the track. Which way first: down the creek or ridge?

Chris had heard that the track was quite hard to find when you headed back up the creek, so we headed down the creek. It proved to be rather an adventure. The creek was very overgrown with cutty grass and thistles, and the stones and logs were often slippery. But it was very soothing proceeding downstream with the constant sound of water. (And we all agreed that with the overgrown nature of the creek, it would be very difficult while heading upstream to know where the track began.) We lunched at Cattle Creek Hut and then another ridge climb began. Your rear end tramper was in the swing of things by now and managed this one much more quickly, arriving at the top to receive the congratulations and support of the rest of the group. "Mr Two Minutes" stayed chatting with "the rear end" for much of the ridge top, always predicting that the descent was only about two minutes ahead. The descent (when it finally came) was our original ascent from Stanfield, so the Cattle Creek round trip section was completed.

We turned out of the West Tamaki Stream to head up the Holmes Ridge. The "rear end" was as usual last to arrive at the top, and found a ute parked there ready to head downhill. Unfortunately, nobody seemed ready to hotwire it for her! A rest in the sunshine provided adequate compensation.

The march out along the 4WD track was like the reverse of the Molenberg ad, with the rear-ender striding out behind the rest of the pack. But she was blissfully enjoying the spectacular view of the Ranges, secure in the knowledge that there were no more ridges to be climbed that day!

The "rear end" would like to thank Chris for his leadership and everyone else for their support. At the end of the day, the "rear end" had a great sense of happiness with her achievement. Being confident of group support was a crucial factor in her success.

Members of the group were: Chris Saunders (Leader), Ray Te Paiho, Nigel Barrett, Dale Lockart, Roderick Saunders, Steve Glasgow, Jenny McCarthy, Michelle Pentland, Alistair Millward and Margaret Riordan.

**STOP PRESS** - Two members climbed Mt Aspiring in February. Full report in next month's newsletter.

PNTMC  
Box 1217  
Palmerston North

Postage Paid  
Permit Number 286  
Palmerston North