



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217

PALMERSTON NORTH

NEWSLETTER

November/December/January 1989

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ENQUIRIES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

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ALL TRIPS LEAVE FROM THE FOOTOWN 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.

COMING EVENTS

Trip leader, please don't forget to pick up the trips lists from the notice board on Club nights.

30th November - Club Night with a difference

Tonight is our Annual PNTMC Christmas Dinner. So put on your glad rags and get together in the pleasant surroundings of the Coachman for a scrumptious dinner.

Venue: The Coachman
Contact: Monica Cantwell ph. 83834
Dress: Semi-formal

2nd December - Western Ruahines day trip

John has another of his circuits figured out - in by the West branch of the Tamaki River to Stanfield Hut. Up the tops to Takapari Road to Traverse Hut and then drop to the river to complete the circuit.

Leader: John Thomson ph. 74320
Grade: Medium
Departs: Saturday 7:00am

3rd December - Tararua Easy Day Trip

Tony will lead this trip up to Fields Hut in the Tararuas. Fields track is a popular access route into the hills and up onto the tops.

Leader: Tony Cameron ph. 65461
Grade: Easy -Medium
Departs: Sunday 7:00 am

2nd 3rd December - Tararuas Weekend

Brad is leading this medium trip along the Dundas Ridge in the Tararuas. "On a fine day you can see forever" and a not so fine day with wind can offer a real challenge - but let's not be pessimistic, join Brad for a weekend on the tops.

Leader: Brad Owen ph. 83467
Grade: Medium
Departs: Saturday am

5th December - MT&SC Guest Speaker Gottlieb Braun-Elwerts

Gottlieb Braun-Elwerts works with Alpine Recreation Ltd and just recently finished climbing all(?) the 3000+ metre peaks in the Southern Alps. He will be speaking to the MT&SC.

Venue: Rangitane Pavilion
Time: 7:45pm

7th December - Committee Meeting

At Brad's Place. Open to Committee members and interested Club members.

Venue: 436 College St
Time: 7:45pm

9th-10th December - Xmas at Rangi

Xmas at Rangi is a Club tradition! So bring out your Christmas party gear and conjure up your best plate of traditional Christmas goodies - in red, green and white (of course!) to share and amble up to Rangi Hut for a gourmet delight in the company of fellow trampers. Daniel Schupbach will lead an alternative trip of a medium-fit nature to arrive at the hut in time for Saturday night's nosh up. Linda will tell you what goodies to bring. Does anyone have a supply of holly they can gather for the festivities? Don't forget you will need two hut tickets for a night at Rangi.

Contacts: M-F Tramp - Mick Leyland ph. 83183
Food - Linda Rowan ph. 64655

14th December - Club Night - Final for the year.

Come along and hear tonight's speaker and view the slides then sidle off with Club members for a quiet drink to sign out the tramping year.

Venue: Society of Friend's Meeting Rooms
227 College St, Palmerston North
Time: 7:45pm

16th December - The Last Organised Trip for the Year!

An easy medium trip to Purity Hut in the western side of the Ruahines.

Leader: Jeremy Cole ph. 83640
Grade: Easy-medium
Departs: Saturday 7:00am

23rd-24th-25th December This is it - Christmas!

Enjoy your time with families and friends, opening gifts, the turkey and all the extras trimmings. If you happen to be in the hills for Christmas - have fun, take care and don't forget to leave out a little "something" to fortify Father Christmas on his travels!

MERRY XMAS TO ALL. HAPPY HOLIDAYING AND SAFE TRAMPING. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

25th January - First Club Night of 1990

This is the annual gathering of the trampers after the holiday break. A BBQ at 94 Wood St, at 7:00pm. It's a bring your own everything including a salad to share.

27th January - Tararua Day Trip

Tricia will take this day trip in by the Kapakapanui Track. This is a steepish climb but there is also an easy alternative in the area. An easy trip will be organised if there is sufficient interest.

Leader: Tricia Eder ph. 70122
Grade: Medium
Departs: Saturday 7:00am

28th January - Family Outing

For a more leisurely afternoon's activities (ideally suited for family groups) Daryl and Linda propose a walk in the Pohangina Valley area to be followed by a picnic or BBQ at 4:30pm at the Pohangina Bridge – All welcome.

Leader: Linda or Daryl ph. 64655
Grade: Easy - suitable for family groups
Departs: Sunday 1:00pm

NOTICES

*** Casual Tramping over the holiday period.**

Are you interested in doing a little tramping over January in the local area? Monica Cantwell ph. 83834 has offered to coordinate interested parties - phone her for details. Chris Morton ph. 77497 would like some company for a trip around Lake Waikarimoana in the Xmas break.

*** PNTMC T-Shirts For Sale**

Now that summer is on its way, it's time to buy a T-shirt with the Club's emblem on it. Help promote the Club by wearing one in the hills and about town. Contact: Terry Crippen ph. 63588.

Sizes: SM & M
Colours: fawn, blue, red
Price: \$15 each

* Kapiti Island Trip coming up in March.

TRIP REPORTS

I've managed to put in a few more of the trip reports in this newsletter. Thanks to all for writing up these reports - keep them rolling in as we usually have space to spare.

Roger Redmayne's trip to DSIR Ballantrae hill country farm near Woodville on the 8/10/89.

I'm sure those on this trip have been to places on Ballantrae farm where nobody has been before. The first worrying signs that this trip was not what I expected was when Roger asked over the phone if I had a climbing harness. What could warrant a climbing harness on a farm? Even if it did have hills they can't be that steep. Anyway a mob of eleven of us went forth on to Ballantrae with Roger.

The trip started with a bit of agricultural work (cheap labour eh!). Roger tried to get us to shift some bulls from an incredibly steep paddock, but most of us stood at the top of the paddock and watched Roger run down to the bottom and do all the work. Bull shifting finished, we drove up the Saddle Road to our destination, a very deep and narrow canyon formed by a stream cutting down into the steep hill country. An easy way down was discovered and soon we stood in the stream looking up at vertical walls. Lots of interesting native plants are hidden down here in this little jewel. Our aim was to find our way up to the other side onto the ridge where a huge Rata tree survived. Roger had spotted it the previous season when there was an exceptionally good flowering. After a few side creeks ended in vertical walls we did get to the other side. Most of us (I did) thought we would probably walk back to the car via easy farmland, but back down into the creek again we went, via a new route; there was a bit of a squeeze too and Dave just made it. For most of us this was an end to an enjoyable trip. Five however had a peek into another canyon nearby which looks just as exciting and definitely needs further exploring.

Kerry Ford

Snowcaving Ruapehu Labour Weekend 1989

Water is a remarkable and unique substance as any chemist will tell you. It makes life, as we know it, possible. It fills the beautiful seas, lakes and rivers and decorates the higher mountains with ice and snow. It shapes the landscape and is good to drink.

High mountains can be hostile places to puny humankind and to members of PNTMC. However, mountain climates provide potential shelter from their harshness, namely snow. Compacted snow is a good building material with excellent insulating properties. It is strong, light, non-toxic, dust-free, non-flammable, environmentally acceptable and recyclable, and free. Snow does not flap and shake nor tear as does nylon tent fabric. It can be cut into blocks and used for house construction (igloos). Or, given a steep slope of sufficient depth, an entrance tunnel and living and sleeping chambers can be excavated. Alternatively, natural holes and cracks in snow can be used with or without modification.

Mark Bown, Greg Reid, Jenni Madgwick, John Thomson, Kevin Pearce and Daniel Schupbach travelled to the Turoa side of Mount Ruapehu on the Saturday morning of Labour Weekend with the firm intention of snowcaving. The weather forecast was not good and it was raining in PN when they left. However, fine weather and spectacular views steeled their resolve when they arrived at the mountain and they proceeded upwards with heavy packs and glad hearts.

A site on the eastern (lee) side of the Blythe ridge overlooking the Mangaehuehu glacier was chosen for the cave. It was a place where snow accumulated. Kevin's steel-bladed, 16 cm wide conventional curved shovel-shaped, wooden-handled, spade-grip-equipped snow shovel (1968) vintage did the bulk of the excavation in the hard snow. Two modern plastic shovels were used to remove the debris. Four hours work produced a cave of just adequate size for the six people just as the rain started.

The six survived the night in reasonable comfort to find the weather according to the forecast. They decided against spending the whole of the day and another night in the somewhat cramped cave. They dressed and went down. Very strong winds, flying ice and poor visibility were experience. Lower down rain discouraged a proposed tramp and they returned home. Their experiences of the weekend confirmed the utility and comfort of snowcaves.

" a bit of a GROVEL " by Mr Ruahine

None of that lovely Pohangina Valley leatherwood on this trip. No delightful "Ruahine" type huts, easy tramping type gravel river beds or rolling tussock tops like at Rangi. For this weekend, just for variety (and of course a bit of a grovel) we chose the Northern Tararuas.

The two of us sweated up to South Ohau Hut on Friday evening, via the new "Ozzies Track". The dog hardly began to get warmed up, no sweat for him. Despite the hut being fairly dirty and unkempt, we appreciated its shelter (it rained). The dog enjoyed placing his wet body on my dry sleeping bag!

Saturday saw us at Te Matawai Hut for a brew-up, then a bit of a grovel into the Mangahao to investigate the leatherwood there. Told you it was nothing like the formidable Leatherwoodus Ruahine var Pohangina, the dog had little problem getting through, and I even began to enjoy it (liar). My mate began cursing after awhile, tho' confessing that the leatherwood wasn't so bad – "it's just all the other scrub intertwined with it". Actually, the springtime sunshine was getting pretty warm as we grovelled through the leatherwood belt. A fine day, worthy of a stroll on the tussock tops eh? Once atop Pukematawai peak we could check our planned route to the east and spy other trampers to the south. Kind of special on the Tararua tops, and different from the Ruahines. A great spot.

The dog wasn't too keen on the shin deep (for us) mud puddles on the crack, nor being left alone - he always seemed to be right in there behind me. He chose his duties as "guardian" to us when back at the hut, so "welcomed" our fellow PNTMC trampers in his usual manner (bloody noisy animal). But the dog is never slow at befriending others, he's always keen on those food scraps. And yes, no shortage of food that evening.

So, the usual Tararua weather greeted us as we floundered and splashed in the mud on Sunday morning. Long way to go so no mucking about. Destination Herepai road end and our awaiting friends. Thick mist all the way to Bannister, drizzle and some minor route finding difficulties slowed our tramping somewhat. I never had any doubts though, because as we headed east, I knew the weather would improve. Nor-wester clag all over Dundas and Mitre, finally for us, a bit of sunshine as we grovelled down into the Ruamahanga. How can it be a grovel on a track? Ask Mark.

The river, the bush, the warmth of spring and the usual profuse sweating as we raced for the car park, and it was all over. Felt as if I was walking like a geriatric the next day.