



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217
PALMERSTON NORTH
NEWSLETTER

May 1993 Edition

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ENQUIRES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

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TRIPS OFTEN LEAVE FROM THE FOODTOWN CAR PARK IN FERGUSON 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 RING LAWSON AND SUE PITHER (357-3033).

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 unless otherwise notified in the newsletter.

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

SCHEDULED EVENT LIST

MAY

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
MAY 9	Cattle Creek	M	Mick Leyland	358-3183
Departs 8 am. This will be a round trip from Stanfield via the creek and the ridge.				
MAY 15	Longview loop	M/F	Daryl Rowan	356-4655
Departs 7.00 am. Head over to Kashmir Road (near Moorcock Base), then down the ridge into the north branch of the Makaretu River, then a bit of river/ creek travel and up the ridge to the south emerging at Longview Hut. This hut has been rebuilt in the not too distant past. Then down the northern ridge back to the road.				
MAY 15-16	Top Gorge Ruahines	E/M	Llew Pritchard	358-2217
Departs 7 am. Llew will be going up to Longview and down from the Pohangina headwaters to Top Gorge Hut.				

MAY 23 Fields Hut M Kevin Pearce 357-0217
Departs 7 am. Kevin will be visiting the Otaki Forks area of the Tararuas.

MAY 22-23 Waitewaiwai E/M Tricia Eder 357-0122
Departs 7 am. Tricia will be checking out one of the newer huts in the Tararuas - fabulous setting in bush alongside the river.

MAY 29 Herepai Hut - North eastern Tararuas E Liz Morrison 357-6532
Departs 7.30 am. Suitable for family groups.

MAY 29-30 Crow/McKinnon F Nigel Barrett 356-1568
Departs 6.00 am. Nigel will be going to check out Hikurangi Peak on the western Ruahines and then dropping down to Crow Hut. Next day cross the Kawhatau River and up onto Mokai Patea Range and back via Colenso to Kawhatau Base.

Club Nights: Thursdays 13th and 27th.

JUNE

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
Queens Birthday JUNE 5-7	Te Hekenga Crossing	M/F	Mick Leyland	358-3183
JUNE 13	Stanfield/Takapari Rd	E/M	Tricia Eder	357-0122
JUNE 20	Kime	M/F	Brian Lawrence	324-8552

Into the Tararuas from Otaki Forks and onto the tops. Take your ice axe? and thermos?

Mid winter
JUNE 26-27 Waipawa Chalet All Contact Tricia Eder 357-0122
Only about half an hours walk up the Waipawa River from the car park on the eastern side of the central Ruahines. A longer route that avoids the short gorge can be taken via Triplex Hut, however, it is likely that you will still get your feet wet crossing the river.

Club Nights: Thursdays 10th and 24th.

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME

Club Nights: Thursdays 13th and 27th.

MAY 13 Bruce van Brunt will be giving a presentation of the Canadian Arctic and the Northwest Territories. Sounds interesting.

MAY 27 Another trip to Mountain Equipment. Colin spent the greater part of 2 hours speaking on the subject of packs, so now we can get the gen on all the other gear MACPAC has to offer - clothing, sleeping bags and tents etc. The evening will start at 7.30 pm again.

EDITORIAL

Sorry folks - don't have an editorial at this stage. Watch this space.

At the last Club night a sizable turnout saw Clive and Mark give an enthralling account of their climb of Cerro Aconcagua (22,834 ft or 6960 m by my atlas) in December last year.

Several factors surprised me about their expedition. One was the remarkable range in temperatures encountered - + mid 30's on the Argentinean plains down to -20°C at 6500 m. Secondly was the almost complete lack of useful infrastructure on the mountain, apart from a fortress like base building which is sub-optimally, located and generally bypassed, all the shelter has been either wrecked by avalanche or by storms and rendered almost useless. Especially critical is the lack of useful shelter above 5500 m.

A question that did arise during the evening was what is the latitude of Aconcagua? It was suggested that it was south of NZ. After consulting my atlas, it is evident that this is not the case. Aconcagua is located about 100 km north east of Santiago and very close to 32° south. Our North Cape by contrast is about 34.5° S.

For those who ponder useless information, the question that subsequently passed through my mind was; where and what is the world's most southern 6000 m peak? Since there are no 6000 m peaks in either Africa or Antarctica, it must be located in the southern Andes. I had another scan at my atlas. The answer might be Cerro Tupungato (22,310 ft) about

100 km south of Aconcagua and almost due east of Santiago. (Anyone got any other candidates?) Thereafter the Andes seems to drop down to mostly peaks of 3000-4000 m.

Another question occurred to me which arose from one of Clive's remarks was that all the peaks immediately surrounding Aconcagua are considerably lower and therefore the view from the summit is correspondingly awesome. Are there other peaks in Chile of anything like comparable height? Yet another scan of the map revealed at least a surprising six peaks in Chile / Argentina over 6,700 m or 22,000 ft.

NOTICES

SUBSCRIPTIONS

It is that time of year again - please get your sub into the Treasurer as soon as possible. Still the bargain of \$25 for ordinary members, \$30 for family and \$10 for junior members.

TRIP CARD - July to December 1993

It is that time of year again. Time to start thinking about where we want to take trips in the next six months. We will be making contact with people in due course.

There will be a drop-in evening putting the programme together at Tricia's place on Wednesday 12th May from 7.00 pm onwards.

FOR SALE

Chest Freezer - 12 cubic feet; Motorbike Suzuki GN250, phone 357-0122.

ALPINE CALENDARS

Tony has a list to take your name.

OTHER MEETINGS

Steve Oliver (pilot for the NZ Rail rescue helicopter) will be giving a presentation on SAR at the Deerstarkers Hall 24th May at 8 pm.

TRIP REPORTS

Don't forget to get your trip reports in, or a letter to the editor, or some good gossip, or a poem or what ever.

COMMITTEE MEETING

The next committee meeting will be held at Mick Leyland's place.

TRIP REPORTS

BLUE RANGE / KIRIWHAKAPAPA by Richard Lockett

The day dawned nice and sunny over this side of the ranges which made a change, so I proceeded through the Gorge and headed south to Kiriwhakapapa Road, stopping at Pahiatua for Jenny McCarthy on the way. This being my first tramp of the new year, I was keen to get going, but the long climb up to Blue Range Hut, I was reminded as to the reality of a walk in the woods.

On top of the ridge, just before the hut, magnificent views of Mitre Peak and its surrounds were seen which made the climb instantly worthwhile.

A large population of big black flies in the hut had us eating an early lunch outside in the sun where our movements during the afternoon were discussed and with me having an interest in old railways, it was decided to explore the old bush tramway which ran along the track between Kiriwhakapapa Road and Mikimiki Road. So it was off back down the hill to the car park through a large crop of redwood trees. How did these come to be here? (I guess someone planted them.)

A lot of wooden sleepers and the remains of wooden bridges across streams are all that remain of the tramway which would have been quite steep in places. If any member knows how this tramway was worked, I would be very interested?

A good day out which helped tune the old body up for the next weekend up the back of Sunrise Hut somewhere.

The team was Richard Lockett and Jenny McCarthy.

ARTENE SKYLINE WALKWAY - ANZAC Day 25th April

We left our side of town at 7 am to meet up with Richard in Feilding at 7.30. The day to start with was cloudy but improved to be a lovely day. It is quite a long drive - nearly two hours. We arrived at 8.55, just in time for a 9 am start. We were made welcome by a Wanganui club committee member.

We made for a different entrance to the track from normal as the old track off the road has a major slip on it. On climbing the fence line some ¼ hour later we realized we were again on the usual track. The track generally was in good condition; nothing like last year when we were on it with all the runners going through.

We followed a long line of people through to the clearing and shelter for lunch at 11.30. The organizing club had a large billy of tea ready which was very welcome. We were once again welcomed as a club. They had invited the public to come along and the question was asked, "How many people not belonging to a tramping club were present?" Amazing the number of hands showing. Our party made an early start on the track down and reached the road at 2.30. This is a lovely track with nice views of the mountains (when visible). This is an annual event by the Wanganui Club every ANZAC Day. We counted 57 at lunch time but everyone had not arrived when we left. I would recommend more people come along next year. A lovely day out.

Team was Peter and Judy Stockdale, Monica Cantwell and Richard Lockett.

EASTER at Ruapehu - more eastern side activities - by Peter wiles

At the transmitter base on the Tukino Road, it was raining quite hard on Friday morning, but more importantly, the wind was roaring down from the nor'west. Getting changed on the lee side of the building was some consolation - trying to make progress up the Tukino Road with the intention of reaching Whangaehu Hut was almost impossible, so we elected to put the whole thing behind us and headed south for Rangipo Hut instead. We arrived in under 1 hour 30 minutes and apart from the warden in residence there was no one in the hut.

The first task was to get the fire going. Fortunately, the warden handed us some dry wood for kindling - everything else was outside and soaking. During the afternoon, people started arriving in dribs and drabs; from the southern side of the Round the Mountain Track. A warm hut was a great reviver for some. That evening the hut had 23 or so in it.

Even though the wind did not change from the Nor'west, it snowed during the night. We decided we could plough into the blizzard and climb up the Whangaehu Gorge to Whangaehu Hut.

Climbing up the Whangaehu Gorge is not necessarily straight forward - it is desirable to minimize the river crossings and there are a considerable number of lava bluffs and waterfalls. The main river is generally confined to the northern side and the map suggests that keeping well to the southern side - at least for the first half of the climb should be okay. This strategy was mostly successful, although for a while we thought we might have got caught by a lava bluff and waterfall that were not big enough to feature on our map. Visibility did not permit us to pinpoint our progress for considerable periods. After about two and a half hours we recognized the rock buttress upon which the hut is perched. It was time to find a river crossing. The aim was to try to avoid putting our feet into the acid water. After inspecting several spots between a couple of waterfalls, we decided that there was no reliable rock-hop across and there was only the option of fording in the usual way. The water was noticeably warm in comparison to the freezing surroundings - perhaps 20-25°C. Once across, we climbed up a gully for about 120 m before sidling across to the hut.

After lunch and a visit outside, Derek announced, "You know we did not have to get our feet wet after all. Just below the hut there is a snow bridge to cross!" Sure enough, if we, had ventured a few more minutes further up the gorge we would have encountered a substantial heap of old snow which still covered the river.

At the hut we found that a new external water supply had been installed. This was a mixed blessing. There was every indication that the new system was more hygienic than the old, but you had to go outside into a blizzard and risk frost bite (no exaggeration). The tap was well frozen and unscrewing the top cover a bit tricky. (My guess is that the tank will be frozen solid for six or seven months of the year.) Meanwhile the bog has problems of its own - the door has blown away and the entrance faces directly into the prevailing wind. I imagine that for about six months of the year quite a bit of digging will be required before its utility can be fulfilled. (Forward planning will be required.)

Derek was a bit short on dry clothes so adopted the steaming routine in his sleeping bag and dreamed that he could solve many of his problems if he had \$1000 or two to spend. Meanwhile Pat settled down with a book or two.

On Sunday morning the temperature was -1C° in the hut when we woke up. Not surprisingly, all our wet gear was well frozen. The wind was still fairly strong but the tops began to become more visible. Derek began to perk up, while Pat ploughed into his second book. By mid morning, it was evident that if we were going to salvage anything on this trip we better get out and do something. We sort of thawed our socks using the burner and a double billy arrangement (has promise but needs more optimisation). Derek and I left the hut at half eleven and headed out onto the Whangaehu Glacier. The flatter parts were covered with an average of 30 cm of powder snow which was a bit tedious to wade through. The steeper areas were clear of fresh snow revealing rather hard ice. Here the strategy of gaining height as soon as possible caused a problem as we had to carefully detour slightly down around a corner of 45° hard ice. At about 2250 m we did a long southerly sidle beneath Pyramid before dropping into the upper sanctum of the Whangaehu Gorge. I imagine that not many people visit this area tucked between Pyramid and Mitre. Here we noticed a phenomenon that we could not entirely account for - the Crater Lake seems to have not one, but perhaps three separate outlets. Apart from the surface outlet which flows down the gorge?, we could see two streams emerging over waterfalls about a third of the way up the rock bluff on the south-east face of Pyramid. This will require further investigation at some stage but may not be easy.

Such distractions aside, the wind was dropping and in the sun was rather warm. We began scrambling up a rib on the north-western side of Mitre. This went well but required a couple of careful moves. We arrived at Mitre at about 2.30 and elected to head for Tahurangi. It was about -3°C on Mitre and Derek found that his camera would not work properly. I expected the summit to take a further hour or so.

We reached the summit in good time although the snow / rocks / scoria conditions were rather unfavourable. A bank of cloud rolled in just before we arrived at the top. There was no evidence that anyone else had been there that day. We only spent a minute before starting down. We elected for a slightly easier but less direct route to avoid the final gully to the summit. After struggling for a few minutes in a white-out, we returned to our ascent tracks and followed them religiously. We were back at the hut by 5.15pm. During dinner the wind returned.

In the morning, we all agreed that it was warmer, until Derek checked the temperature in the hut (-1°C again). We were inclined not to believe this but examination of our boots and socks confirmed that it was indeed below 0°C again. Outside the wind continued but it was clear apart, from the spindrift racing over the ridges.

We packed up and after giving the hut a good tidy, we left at about mid-morning.

Team: Pat Janssen, Derek Sharp and Peter Wiles.

MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT Ltd.

14 The Square Ph 359-2162

What's new in the outdoors Mountain Equipment?

Mountain Equipment invites YOU to the shop on Thursday May 27th at 7.30pm to learn about what's new in the outdoors.

- Come and See
- Come and Feel
- Come and meet your Fiends and ask questions

Guest presenter will be Colin Hancock from MACPAC Wilderness. Last evening he held the audience spellbound for more than 90 minutes on the subject of packs. This time it will be everything else – especially MACPAC's range of outdoor clothing and a few comments on the latest in tents.

PS. Don't forget your biscuits.



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