



# PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217

PALMERSTON NORTH

NEWSLETTER

November 1993 Edition

Gear Custodian

Newsletter Editor & Newsletter Distribution

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Membership Enquiries	: Pauline Coy	356-8782
	: Nigel Barrett	356-1568
	: Mick Leyland	358-3183
	: Peter Wiles	358-6894

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## ENQUIRES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

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

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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 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.

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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.

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

### NOVEMBER

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
<u>NOVEMBER 14</u>	Diggers Forks	M	Mick Leyland	358-3183
<u>NOVEMBER 13-14</u>	Snow Caving	Tech	Derek Sharp	326-8178
<u>NOVEMBER 21</u>	Roaring Stag	M	Judy Stockdale	355-5277
<u>NOVEMBER 20-21</u>	Colenso Crossing	M	Llew Prichard	358-2217
<u>NOVEMBER 28</u>	Rangi Stream	E&F	Daryl Rowan	356-4655
<u>NOVEMBER 27-28</u>	Pinus Contorta	Open	Perry Hicks	355-1393

**DECEMBER**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Trip</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Phone</b>
DECEMBER 4	Ruapehu	Tech	Derek Sharp	326-8178
DECEMBER 5	Xmas Dinner	Food	Dennis Moore	357-5651
DECEMBER 12	Hinerua Ridge/Hut	M	Mick Leyland	358-3183
DECEMBER 19	Ohau Valley	E	Richard Lockett	323-6489
DECEMBER 18-19	Whangaehu Ruapehu	Tech	Peter Wiles	358-6894

Xmas trips ideas

Committee meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup>. Club Night: 9<sup>th</sup>. Dinner at Brian's place, Mt Stewart. As is usual, there will be no 2<sup>nd</sup> club night scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup>.

January trips local contact Tricia.  
BBQ 27<sup>th</sup> January Tricia's place.

**THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME**

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

**EDITORIAL**

Following on from the talk given by Noel Cantwell on his trip tip South Africa, last club night, I thought I would briefly write about some of my experiences tramping (or trekking / rambling, whatever it might be called) in other countries. Before coming to NZ I lived in Swaziland. We had a mountain at the back of our house called 'Mount Mananga' in the Lubombo range – this was a regular Sunday morning tramp, through elephant-high grass to the top, from where we could look out over the lowveld to both Swaziland and South Africa. There was a village at the top of this hill and we would often see the women trudging up the hill with their provisions in a sack on their head. You certainly didn't pop back to the shop if you forgot anything.

We went on longer tramps mainly in the northern part of South Africa, called the veld country of eastern Transvaal. The walks were along the Drakensberg escarpment, where there were sights such as 'God's Window' and 'Wonderwindow' – the views living up to their names – and passed through plantations and indigenous forest. Trails were around 3 to 5 days long, staying in huts (rondavels) at night. Instead of poles or track markers on the trees, the track was marked by painted feet on rocks etc. For the kids this was all part of the tramp – i.e. finding the next foot! The trails were developed by the Ministry of Forestry at that time. The Fanie Botha Trail and Blyderivierspoort Hiking trail (56 km) are well known for their spectacular views.

Trails were set up along other parts of the South African escarpment, particularly around East London to Cape Town, some of the trails forming part of the 'Garden Route'. We didn't manage to visit these areas since it took 2 or 3 days travelling to get to these areas from Swaziland. However we heard they were just as spectacular as the ones we knew and I am sure they have not changed over the years.

The concept of ding walks probably began in UK – I'm not sure – but I walked the first national trail in Britain just after it was opened. This was the 'Pennine Way', a 400 km trail, which officially opened on 24 April 1965. It begins at Edale, near Manchester and ends at Kirk Yethom and the Cheviot Hills on the Scottish border. The landscape varies from peat bogs of Kinder Scout, river valleys, to wild windswept hills. Some of the areas are relatively deserted, other parts more tourist attractions such as the historic areas like Hadrian's Wall. You can camp or stay at Youth Hostels or farm houses, many of which now supplement their incomes by providing 'B & B' (bed and breakfast). There are many other long-distance walks around the coastal areas of Britain, or along historic route paths e.g. Offa's Dyke, Pilgrims Way, but you usually have to share these with other walkers. I think I would choose the Pennine Way if limited in time in KU, since it offers such a variety of landscapes. My favourite memory is the Yorkshire Moors and Wuthering Heights country, which we crossed in a storm and staying at a Youth Hostel called Mankinholes. The tracks are more accessible than those in New Zealand but still hold their challenges and are well worth doing if you have the time, even if only in part. This is much easier to do than here because they are more accessible.

- Pauline Coy

## NOTICES

### **NEW MEMBERS**

This month, please welcome a new member:

Dale Lockart

43 Apollo Parade

Palmerston North.

Phone (sorry I don't have a phone number at this time – can you let me have it Dale?)

### **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.

### **ORGANISATION OF NEXT TRIP CARD**

It is time to organise the trip card for February – June 1994 so that we can send it out with the December newsletter. A meeting will be held at Tricia's place (57 Fairs Road) from 7 pm – onwards, on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November. Anyone aspiring to lead a trip, or anyone with some ideas for a trip or two, please call in or give Tricia a ring.

### **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.

Is your DOC season pass about to expire? It is understood DOC are deliberating again over their hut pass policy. We will keep you posted on developments.

### **TRIP REPORTS**

#### **CENTRE CREEK – TAKAPARI ROAD** by Perry Hicks

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> of October was a grey old morning, but with no rain about we drove up the Pohangina Valley. Leaving one car up Takapari Road, we started our trip from the Pohangina River bridge about 8.30.

The river was very low and we only had to link arms on two crossings, before we met up with the sidle track (now marked with a rather large Forest Park sign). The sidle is in good condition and cleared. Thirty minutes along this track is the junction of the high sidle to Mid-Pohangina Hut and our route which took us down to the river again. Five minutes from where this track descends, Centre Creek comes in from the right (true left). The bivy is 5 minutes up Centre Creek on the right hand side. The bivy is still habitable and the grass outside provided a pleasant lunch area.

From here, we followed the ridge track through some very attractive bush with a lot of fern and new native growth. Good views were had of the Ruahirie Range to the north and the lower slopes of Mount Ruapehu. After 2 hours we emerged on Takapari Road, leaving us an easy 45 minute walk back to our car.

We were: Linda Rowan, Dale Lockart, Colleen Guy, Tui Jarmin and Perry Hicks.

#### **LABOUR DAY - QUICK TRIP TO MANGAWEKA TRIG**

It must be half a dozen years since I had been up the Purity track and the Monday weather forecast looked like the pick of the days over the long weekend. I left the house at 5.50 am and found that I needed to check the road map a couple of times along the way to get to the Purity road end. There was a rather uniform layer of overnight cloud hovering around the 1000-1300 m level so the walk up the ridgeline into the bush was pleasantly cool. I arrived at the hut at 9 am - just as the last of the cloud evaporated to reveal a marvellous morning. After a dose of suncream and a few words with a chap standing outside the hut, I continued. It was evident that the previous day, it had snowed down to 1400-1550 m or so, and once it had cleared there had been a good frost on the tops during the night. I crunched my way through many puddles along the track. At Wooden Peg, a cool easterly wind started to make its presence felt and I stopped to put on a polypropylene vest and a fibrepile jacket. I continued along the ridge top mostly on good winter snow. At 10.30 I reached the trig. The view was wonderful but the wind colder than I had bargained for. I put my parka on. It was time for lunch - it hardly seemed to touch the sides. I had decided not to bring a camera but had substituted the binoculars instead. I

scanned the vista and most particularly Ruapehu - where I knew that Chris, Rod, Bruce and Nigel were doing their stuff on the slopes of Girdlestone. I wondered how they were getting on.

I began to notice daytime cloud starting to form and in spite of the full sun, my hands were freezing. (I regretted not bringing any gloves.) Shortly before 11 am, I packed, up and headed back along the ridge. Just after 12? I called into the hut. The party had departed so I checked the logbook and made an entry. Just after I headed off again down the track and only a short distance away, someone started frantically blowing a whistle. I continued wondering what type of emergency was unfolding. A 100 m further on I encountered a rather surprised and perhaps embarrassed looking chap in his 60's. So I said, "You were letting off a bit of steam weren't I you?" To which he replied; I was just letting the others know that I could see the hut! I can't imagine what commotion there would be in a real crisis. Sure enough, over the next 300-400 m, I passed a combined group of about 8 men and women, mostly in their 60's, aiming for the hut. Back at the farmland, it was becoming a rather warm day. I passed another two chaps making heavy weather of the climb up the ridge in the full sun.

I was back at home by 3.15 ready for several rounds of rehydration therapy. Peter Wiles.

Do you realise that on Wooden Peg there is an iron peg? And on Iron Peg, there does not seem to be any peg? Strange.

## **POST EXAM TRIP TO TUKINO SIDE OF RUAPEHU 7-10 November**

Late Sunday morning we were bouncing our way up the Tukino Road when we noticed a campervan off the beaten track, a little way past a point where the road is rather indistinct. We stopped to check and sure enough a couple of German visitors had got stuck. After a few heaves they were free and we explained where the road went to. To continue, we suggested that they follow us.

We parked at the round-the-mountain track park and loaded ourselves up with rather excessively large packs, which these German tourists took some interest in with their video camera. We had a brief rest at the road end by the Depot, before commencing the major part of the climb to Whangaehu Hut. We had not got much further, when after a couple of claps of thunder, we were pelted with hail, which after a few minutes eased off to be replaced with light snowfall and increasing wind. We were very pleased to reach the hut after 3 hours travelling.

It snowed 3-4 cm during the night and was clear in the morning but the wind was merciless. Around 8 am, the wind seemed to have moderated a bit, so we decided to climb the (north-east) face of Mitre which dominates the view directly opposite the hut. The key to this was to find a way through the band of bluffs that form the base of the peak opposite the hut and immediately above the mid-Whangaehu Gorge. From the hut, the best prospect was a narrow snow ramp at the far eastern edge of the bluffs. We left the hut at about 9 am and sidled around to the wide bench under the bluffs. As we got close to the bluffs, we noticed a diagonal dyke cutting up through them, of what appeared to be sound rock. We elected to investigate. We scrambled up onto it and it was very promising rock. However, there were several problems, a belay anchor to start off from was not well placed; the rock was partly plastered in snow and water was flowing over part of the section to be traversed. After some debate, we decided to give this idea away (for late summer perhaps when things are dry). At the base of the originally intended snow ramp we put our crampons on and front pointed up the narrow rib of snow. The rest of the way to the summit was a steep plod in warm sunny conditions. Cloud descended over the summit as we arrived. After a brief lunch, we decided to return the same way rather than via the ridge and saddle route, to avoid the full force of the wind. By now the cloud was down almost to the hut and was rather damp. Once we were back at the hut, it turned to snow.

Next morning the wind was still blowing but it was clear and cold - like our boots and any damp gear in the hut was frozen. We decided to head up towards the Clock Tower. We cramponed upon good firm snow and made a detour over to an ice face 5-6 m high. Derek led the way and set up a belay with his snowstake before bringing up Nigel and I.

The wind was still blowing and once on the ridge spindrift was a nuisance - especially when stopping for a snack. At a small saddle in the ridge we crossed over to sidle directly under the base of the Cathedral Rocks. Immediately to the left of the central tower, a steep snow ramp led up to the ridge top between the Central and Southern Towers. We elected to climb this. The slope averaged 50° on excellent hard snow for about 60 m. We climbed free without belaying. Before even half the climb was completed the leg tendons were complaining painfully that they had had enough of this, while the brain was shouting that this is no place to hang around on or to make a mistake. Once at the ridge top everything changed - the verticality of the eastern side of the Cathedral Rocks gave way to the flat expanse of the Plateau - and the wind had died out to give a marvellous day on the mountain. We scrambled up onto the Central Tower and surveyed the view. Next we had lunch in the full sun on the northern side, looking directly across to Te Heu Heu and the Fishtail Face. Both Derek and I had wanted to tackle this for some time. This was the time. We walked across the Plateau to the base of it. As we sidled under Tukino the slope rapidly steepened to over 50°. The western edge of the face was the nearest, but it is also the steepest. We climbed up towards a rock that projected on the western edge of the face where we could see a probable snow scoop or flattish area to stand on. Once at the rock it was time for the rope and a solid belay. The options at first seemed a bit limited, until the ice formation between the rock and the Tukino bluffs came under scrutiny. Derek's 25 cm Chouinard ice screw went straight in up to the hilt and seemed bombproof; but not to take unnecessary risks, I placed a Selewa screw about 50 cm away alongside. Now that the belay was organised, we needed to focus our attention on the next stage. Beyond the rock the slope was getting close to 60° and what eventuated beyond we could not see. We also had a bit of a logistical problem - one rope, two snows takes and three people - not the most workable combination. (The

return of the rope back to the third climber could not be guaranteed by throwing it down because the belay was round and under a corner.) Derek led off again and after about half a rope length used his snowstake for a belay. Nigel followed and secured himself with his snowstake; I followed up last. With a little gymnastics, Nigel transferred to Derek's anchor and I took the stake and continued through. Although the hard snow suddenly changed to powder, making climbing easy despite the acute steepness, the rope ran out 2-3 m short of the ridge top. I set up the final belay with my snowstake and brought up Nigel and finally Derek. Afternoon cloud was wafting around us at this stage so we did not get a full view from the summit. We descended to the Plateau via the slope to the west of Tukino.

In a whiteout, we plodded south across the Plateau with the final objective in mind - to plod up Pyramid. In the mist we nearly ended up walking in circles - once we locked onto Dome we found our way. On Pyramid we had a reasonable clearance before dropping down the Whangaehu Glacier back to the hut. Derek and Nigel took advantage of seat of the pants travelling for as far as was possible. Apart from some sore toes, back at the hut, we felt well satisfied with the day's efforts.

Although the evening was perfectly clear and calm, the wind returned during the night and by morning there was dense high cloud everywhere. It was below freezing outside which suggested that as the conditions deteriorated, there would be more snow sometime later in the day. We decided that we would get out while it was still fine, rather than stay another day as originally planned.

Back down on the road it might have been a little warmer, but there was no respite from the wind - it blew us all over the place.

Derek Sharp, Nigel Barrett and Peter Wiles.

### **POLITICS IS NOT ALL DOOM AND GLOOM?**

And now that the dust of the election is still hovering in the air – a question and answer session:

What distinguishes the Decent Society from the Dog-Eat-Dog Society? A wider choice of Jellimeat.

What is the difference between the Alliance Party manifesto and a meat pie? The pie is flaky on the outside.

What is National's campaign theme? Yes, We have no bananas.

What is the difference between the Labour Party's manifesto and a packet of crisps? You can eat the crisps.

What is the difference between Jim Bolger and a log of wood? Pass.

What is the difference between Mike Moore and a log of wood? You can export the log.

Where can the average person find the obvious signs of trickle down? Through the door on the left, along the corridor and second on your right.

(excerpts from the NBR)

### **AND SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN?**

It is reported that a certain member's mother tried ironing his polypropylene longjohns - Oh dear how sad! I don't know whether the iron is still useable but even the most skilful darning would have trouble with this little hole.

### **USELESS BUT FASCINATING INFORMATION**

Having trouble paying your bills? Well, this difficulty might have been taken to new extremes in Pakistan recently. The state power company fell behind with the phone account. The phones were cut off, whereupon the power company retaliated by cutting the power off to the phone company. One hopes that the mail service was up to the task of conveying messages in the ensuing negotiations.

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