



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217
PALMERSTON NORTH
NEWSLETTER

August 1994 Edition

President	: Tricia Eder	357-0122
Membership Enquiries	: Pauline Coy	354-9126
	: Nigel Barrett	326-8847
Gear Custodian	: Mick Leyland	358-3183
Newsletter Editor & Newsletter Distribution	: 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).

Trip Grades

Grade of trips can depend on many factors, most especially the weather and state of the track. As a guide, a reasonably proficient trumper would be expected to cover the graded trips in about the following times: Easy (E) 3 – 4 hours, Medium (M) 5 – 6 hrs, Fit (F) about 8 hrs, Fitness Essential (FE) >8 hrs. (Tech) refers to trips graded technical requiring either special skills and / or gear.

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

AUGUST

Committee Meeting: 4th.
Club Nights: 11th and 25th.

AUGUST 11

Climbing in the Tasman Saddle region – Dave Barker and friends.

AUGUST 13

Denmark, Holland and Finland – Doug Strachen will continue his European exploits.

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
------	------	-------	--------	-------

AUGUST 13

Sunrise

E

Malcolm Parker 357-5203

This will depart 7 am Saturday. Another cruisey trip with the opportunity to get up to the snow. Also if it is clear, to get a view across to Ruapehu from Armstrong Saddle. The return will probably take the track down into the Waipawa River and Hut.

AUGUST 13-14

Snowcraft II Tahurangi Lodge M

Derek Sharp 326-8178

Out and about at Tahurangi Lodge, Taranaki. Learn about cramponing techniques, rope handling skills, anchors and belays. Ice axe and crampons are essential. (Ensure that crampons fit your boots [including the adjustment of the straps] before leaving PN.) Departing PN at 6 pm Friday.

AUGUST 20

Coppermine Creek

E

Liz Morrison 357-6532

We plan to go around the farmland and drop down to the hut. This trip is open to everyone and new trampers are most welcome. Depart 8 am from Foodtown.

AUGUST 20-21

Upper Tama Lake

M

Peter Wiles 358-6894

A trip to check out perhaps the best spot in Tongariro NB. If weather forecast looks good, we might camp at the lake. If unsettled we will stay at Oturere Hut. Plan to go in from the Desert Road and complete a round trip. Depart 7 am on Saturday.

AUGUST 27-28

Sparrowhawk/Maropea

F

Nigel Barrett 326-8847

AUGUST 27-28

Mitre Flats

E/M

Doug Strachen 357-5732

Depart 8 am on Saturday. Hut is 2 ticket or use your hut pass and should be reached after 3-4 hours of easy tramping. Fitter enthusiasts might plan to ascend Mitre Peak if the weather is cooperative.

AUGUST 28

Mitre Flats

M

Doug Strachen 357-5732

A day trip can be arranged for either Saturday or Sunday depending on demand.

SEPTEMBERCommittee meeting: 1st.Club Nights: 15th and 29th.**SEPTEMBER 15**Cho Oyo climbing expedition (8,153 m, the world's 11th highest peak) in the Himalayas

presented by Clive Jones.

SEPTEMBER 29

Geomorphology in Tramping. Mike Sheppard will be introducing us to this aspect of tramping

with reference to the Andes, New Guinea and New Zealand.

Date**Trip****Grade****Leader****Phone****SEPTEMBER 3-4**

Syme Hut Fanthams Peak

T

Trevor Meyle 354-9126

SEPTEMBER 4

Eastern Ruahines

M

Daryl Rowan 356-4655

We will do the Longview-Makaretu circuit with a variety of tops and river tracking. There is also the option of an easy trip as well. Depart 7 am.

SEPTEMBER 10-11

Snowcraft 3 Whangaehu

F/T

Peter Wiles 358-6894

Depart 6 pm Friday evening. You will need ice axe and hammer, crampons and bash hat and a harness. If weather is reasonable we will climb up to Whangaehu Hut (at 2,050 m), otherwise we will head to Rangipo Hut and climb up the Whangaehu Gorge on Saturday morning, or perhaps check out the Mitre Ridge route option. (Whangaehu Hut belongs to NZAC and costs \$11 per night.)

SEPTEMBER 11

Canine Capers Hound Hike

E/M

Monica Cantwell 354-3834

An easy tramp for everyone, as well as those with a 4-footed friend ... an experienced tramping dog with map and compass ...

SEPTEMBER 17

Rangi Hut snow play

E

Tony Gates 357-7439

Depart after breakfast and back late-ish. Indulge yourself a little. Play in the snow. Bring your skies. Bring tea, coffee, cake etc.

SEPTEMBER 17-18

Cattle Creek

E

Tui Craven 355-4179

Another easy/medium cruisey trip up the creek to Stanfield (1 ticket), returning via ridge. (Sorry this might not be right - can't read the writing. Ed.)

SEPTEMBER 24 Herepai E Sue & Lawson Pither 357-3033
 SEPTEMBER 24-25 Top Gorge M Llew Prichard 358-2217

EDITORIAL

Those who attended a very well attended meeting at the end of July heard an enthralling presentation by Jill Rapson. It seems that some of these academics can arrange really cruisey summer vocations (correction – research expeditions) to some of the most dramatically stunning parts of the globe. Jill said that she had edited her presentation down to less than a third of the slides that she took of the Patagonia region. It is possible that she might be able to give us another dose of this region sometime in the future.

Talking of future presentations, we have a very good line up for the next month or so - Dave Barker followed by Clive Jones and Mike Sheppard. Don't miss them. At some stage later in the year we might be able to get Hugh Barr, President of FMC along. Stay tuned.

Also John Barkla is scheduled to give a presentation to the MTSC in September.

NOTICES

NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome a new member to the club:
 Neil Campbell,
 1/123 Fitzherbert Street
 Palmerston North.
 Phone 359-5048.

THURSDAY TRAMPING GROUP

Actual location of the trips will depend on factors closer to the date, but the following list of events are scheduled, so contact the leaders.

Date	Leader	Phone No.
11 August	Monica Cantwell	354-3834
18 August	Peter Johnstone	358-8596
25 August	Ken Hall	356-8538
1 September	Judy Stockdale	355-5277

Leaders are to choose their tramps and ring the group. If not able to do your tramp please ring another member and arrange a swap. It has been suggested that shorter day trips may be of interest during the winter months. More information can be obtained from: Tony Cameron (356-5461); Pam Wilson (357-6247); John Rockell 358-3513).

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 Tricia's place 57 Fiars Road.

DOC NEWS

We understand that DOC have opened up an access into the Northern Tararuas off the end of Tokomaru Road. Check it out and let us know more of the details.

MAP ORDERS & HUT PASSES

We have received our latest map order - charge of \$9/map. See Tony. Hut passes, continue ,to be available \$40 each. Alpine and Antarctic calendars have arrived \$13.00 each. See Tony for your order.

HUT TICKETS

I called into the PN Information Office in the Square recently to buy a few hut tickets. I was told the DOC person stationed there had left and despite the DOC promo. material being still very evident, hut tickets were no longer sold there and that I would have to visit the Tremaine Avenue office. (Why only a DOC staf member can sell hut tickets, I can't quite fathom.) If there are any changes to this strange bureaucracy, can you let us know?

RESULTS OF PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

This year there was a much improved turn out of both slides and prints in the annual photographic competition. The results were:

Alpine:	1	Cameron Valley	Derek Sharp
	2	Tukino Waterfall	Derek Sharp
Overseas	1	Zermatt Valley	Bruce van Brunt
	2	Matterhorn Hotel	Bruce van Brunt
Topical	1	Cameron Hut	Derek Sharp
	2	Pouranaki River	Derek Sharp

Scenic	1	Kawhatau Valley	Nigel Barrett
	2	Ruamahanga River	Derek Sharp
Natural History	1	Cushion Plant	Peter Wiles
	2	Pen Wiper Plant	Peter Wiles
Prints		Near Travers Saddle	Liz Morrison
		Colin Todd Hut	Trevor Meyle

(I hope I have ;go1;: this vaguely right; anyway well done to all the winners, and we'll have to see what can be done about these sharp images that keep cropping up.)

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.

TWO BOOK REVIEWS By Tony Gates

There is a plethora of guide books on the shelves at present. Most, though by no means all, of New Zealand is covered by what should be indispensable literature for us trampers and mountaineers. With the NZMS 260 series maps, these two texts really bring their respective areas down to size. "Tramping" and "Journey" should inspire and assist you. The next book reviews on the list include two guide books on North West Nelson, and more from Mark Pickering.

The Southern Journey, By Mark Pickering (1993)

Published by Mark Pickering, Christchurch

Mark Pickering has written some excellent "state of the art" books about tramping in New Zealand. They are well known to most trampers, and are seen on many library and bookshop shelves.

This latest book of his tells of tramping the west Coast of the South Island, mostly along the coast from north to south. "The Southern Journey" is an interesting departure to the usual guide book, being a descriptive historical guidebook of European exploration, with comparative modern day route guide information. It tells you how to, for example, drive, paddle, and walk to the coast these days and where to hire a canoe from, after describing what the first Europeans encountered. Maori exploration is spoken very highly of, and their crucial assistance to Europeans. Many of their names, and those of early Europeans, well 'known to us, are permanently inscribed in our history and on our maps. Politicians, gold prospectors, coal miners, surveyors, and explorers of last century all feature. I like the way the book talks about the journeys last century of Brunner, Harper, Dobson, Haast, Heaphy, Seddon, Graham, etc. Then it tells you about "Walkway, picnic area, toilets at the beach ten minutes drive from the main road". The extraordinary Charles Douglas is featured. And the journeys obviously were quite something. Most early European routes followed the rivers and the coast, and to a certain extent utilised local Maori knowledge. "Permanent" employment was found in the occupation of ferrymen, living on the banks of the large rivers, awaiting travelling customers who needed to cross before bridges were built. Otherwise, raupo rafts could usually be made from the prolific flaxes growing there. The main characters each have a paragraph or, two written about them, and lovely wee line portraits. There are also paragraphs on things such as weather and clothes.

The writing is of top quality. Fully referenced quotes, and historical acknowledgements, adding authenticity, are frequent. Historical writings appear in normal type, whereas modern day route guide stuff is in italics. There are no photographs, bar a delightful cover shot of two "swaggers", and a few simple line maps. Stretches of the coast are discussed in each of six chapters, and there is general information as well as a very full Bibliography, Index, and Footnotes. These raise the book to the levels of a university and reference text without excluding the person on the street. "The Southern Journey" is written for all who may visit and tramp the West Coast.

TRAMPING IN THE SOUTHERN ALPS Arthurs Pass to Mt Cook. By Elise Bryant and Sven Braburn (1994). Published by Bryant & Brabyn; Christchurch.

My eyes lit up when I saw a review of this in the latest FMC Bulletin. I immediately ordered two copies, and eagerly awaited them. It is an excellent publication, admirably filling a geographical and literature gap. It looks to me like the sort of book that will be around bookshop shelves for a long time to come. "Tramping" will be a vital guide; for all visiting that large area of the Southern Alps. I'm sure you've all read heaps of NZ tramping/ mountaineering literature. These authors' names can now be added to the long list of accomplished NZ mountain authors, such as; Hillary, Pascoe, Powell, Dingle, Temple, Pickering, Radcliffe, Bishop, Spearpoint, Rundle, and Logan.

It differs from the last new South Island guide book "Barron Saddle to Mt Brewster" (refer March 1994 newsletter) in that this does not take you to the highest points. It is up to date, longer, with more detail than all other books of the area. It is valley- pass guide to huts, tracks, routes, and bridges for tramping/ pass hopping trips. There is also frequent mention of the alpine environment, required equipment, and some easy climbs.

Six chapters discuss each of two or three large catchments. There are two chapters (covering Arthurs Pass, and the most accessible tramps in the region. Then there are two chapters covering all of the major catchments on the

eastern side of the Divide down as far as the Havelock valley, and two chapters covering the mighty West Coast catchments of the Hokitika, Waitaha, Wanganui, and Whataroa, and the Callery/ Tatare. Need I say more? This piece of dirt has some of the most rugged and most beautiful country in New Zealand. Some of the best mountains are hidden here, behind some of the deepest gorges and tightest bush, and of the most pleasant river flats (some with hot springs!). Talking of superlatives, the highest rainfall ever recorded in New Zealand was measured in the lower Hokitika, some fifteen metres annually! And sandflies! But don't let them put you off, just go prepared.

Presentation is user friendly. Estimated / average track and route tramping times are listed in hours down the outer margin for quick reference, as are huts and required maps. The lack of photos is well compensated for by the good, no nonsense writing and the simple though effective line maps. General information is provided, and Appendices with lists of trips of various grades, huts (time in days), hut fee requirements, maps (260 and NZMS 1), equipment, other literature, and an index. Advertisements for sponsors will also remind readers of where to buy their supplies, i.e. Macpac, Fairydown, McEwings, and DOSLI.

For those of you privileged to have tramped with Trevor Bissell, you will know that the Hokitika is his home stamping ground. Were he here, Trevor would have written a couple of chapters of these books.

A TRAMPERS GUIDE TO THE MANGAHAO CATCHMENT. continued. By Tony Gates

This is the third in the series of tramping route guides for the Tararuas, completing the more popular parts of the Mangahao catchment. There will be more in depth coverage of the Tararuas, and other ranges, in future editions.

The Mangahao Catchment is the closest, most accessible large catchment to P.N. It is becoming increasingly popular, despite its long and winding road, and relatively few tracks in the lower gorge area (covered in the last newsletter). From the top dam there is a track that follows the east bank of the dam to College Creek, (15 minutes) then up the steep, obvious spur to the leatherwood, and the tops overlooking Ngapuketerua Stream and Baber Creek (one hour). Travel from there is strictly off track, and restricted basically to the tussock covered ridges climbing south over Massey to Ruapae. (Two and a half hours). Following the eastern side of the Mangahao watershed south to Arete is the main divide, or Dundas Ridge, familiar to many of us. It is a dominant tussock ridge reaching 1500 metres in places that is easily visible from the plains. East Peak is some 15 minutes south of Ruapae, then there is a deep saddle to cross before the ascent to West Peak (one hour) and an easier gradient along to Walker and Pukemoremore. Continual ups and downs typical of the Tararua tops lead to Logan, then finally the trig of Dundas. West Peak to Dundas two hours. There is a recently cleared track from Dundas, over Triangle Knob, then down to the Mangahao River. Down one hour, up two. A little over an hour south on the main range sees you on the slopes of Arete, at the southern end of the Mangahao catchment. Arete Biv, located on Arete Bench, is just over on the Waingawa side. Note, the biv may be difficult to locate in the mist. Following the catchment boundary west, it is maybe one easy hour over to Pukematawai, then a long two hour descent to the well used Te Matawai Hut. It always seems an even longer distance to climb. Actually, Te Matawai Hut is about ten minutes into the Ohau/ Otaki along a very muddy track, as the track to Girdlestone Saddle drops off the ridge in the monkey scrub, and is soon in the bush. Turn off to Girdlestone Saddle 45 minutes.

A large leatherwood infested area to the west of the upper Mangahao River, known as Tawirikohukohu, or "The Camelbacks", due to their profile, are untracked, and seldom visited by trampers. Need I say more?

The main Mangahao Valley, from the top dam to Girdlestone Saddle, takes approximately eight hours to tramp. Please note that the time is very approximate. From the top dam, a good track follows the waters edge to Roaring Creek (no bridge), then rapidly degenerates to the mud bog it is known as. Wide, Beech covered river terraces soon close in to the upper gorge, which the track sidles, then crosses on a swing bridge a little over an hour in from the car park, and about half way to Harris Creek Hut. The gorge sidle track is well worn, but jumps up and down a bit. Some parts of the track resemble a goat track! Dick Creek, difficult to cross in flood, is reached five minutes before Harris Creek Hut, a cosy spot, though typically, prone to becoming rather muddy. Car park to Harris Creek two-three hours. Then the valley opens out to pleasant grassy flats and wide beech forest terraces. Harris Creek has recently been bridged, but do not be fooled, Barra Stream, en route to Mangahao Hut, is a similar size, and impassable when in flood. I seem to recall a very muddy track on the beech forest terraces up valley, but also some extremely pleasant river terraces. An easy hour up from Harris Creek Hut will see you at Barra Stream. Then there is a small gorge - a small series of pools the track easily climbs past - and from one high point on a slip, a magnificent view of the Mangahao River circling around beneath. From that prominent view point, the track crosses several pleasant grassy flats to the luxuriously appointed new Mangahao Hut. Harris Creek Hut to Mangahao Hut two hours. It takes a further two hours on the track from the hut up to Girdlestone Saddle. There is another sizeable creek to cross about twenty minutes up from the hut, then the Mangahao River itself a further hour upstream, past the old Avalanche Flats Hut site. The track winds up over one bluff, but presents no real difficulties apart from the river crossings. From the high point above Avalanche Flats, the Dundas Track climbs steeply up to the leatherwood on Triangle Knob, then Dundas (refer above). The last bit on the main track up to Girdlestone Saddle leaves the Mangahao River, follows the western tributary, for ten minutes on easy terraces, then wanders for ten minutes more up to the saddle.

DOC are considering making a new tramping track through the Ohau (Deception Spur) and main Mangahao Valley. Judging by the recent increase in tramping there, it, would make a popular circuit. Some new tracks and bridges are all that is required.

TRIP REPORTS

SNOWCRAFT I July 16-17 by Peter Wiles

Mindful of a disappointing turnout at last year's snowcraft I wondered what this year's might be like? Nigel; who was all prepared to field this one had to drop out because of work commitments (it's tough at the top) and Derek was still confined to base with a lame hoof, so I had to fill the gap. However, all was not quite lost for the 11 enquiries I received (one had to drop out at the last minute) because Terry and Bruce willingly offered their services and knowledge to cater for the masses. (Is this a record turnout by any chance? It might be getting close - anyway it augers well for the future.) My problems were how to organise sufficient transport to get everyone to Ruapehu and plan what to do if the Desert Road was closed - as it had been for some time in the week before.

I need not have worried too much as we left Foodtown shortly after 6 am on Saturday morning. The weather was fine, calm and frosty - at least until we started up the Desert Road where before long we went into cloud and breezy rain. We stopped at the bottom car park up the Tukino Road where Terry and I fitted chains and proceeded to ferry a load up as far as we could (hopefully to the repeater station). We could not quite get that far (my car got bottomed in a deepish drift of snow). After some digging with a shovel for just that situation) and a fair bit of pushing, we were free and we returned to the bottom. Bruce led the advance party off along the track to Rangipo. The rear guard packed everything else up and headed up the road and in due course reached the start of the track and finally commenced the walk proper. We were walking on virtually continuous snow at this stage. The wind was not very strong but it was certainly good to have the northerly wind at our backs.

In the damp cool conditions things were subdued. We stopped for a short break when we reached the Whangaehu Gorge and then commenced the climb out up the "escarpment" at its south side. Here things were a little more tricky than I had imagined (in fact I had never encountered hard snow on this slope before). Although everyone got up okay in the end, two or three (including one of the instructors) came unstuck and had to repeat their efforts! We arrived at the hut shortly after midday. Time for a batch of soup and instant noodles for lunch - after having cleared away a drift of snow nearly a metre deep on the porch.

The weather looked rather better after lunch as we were located close to the transition between the cloud to the north and the clear sky to the south. We decided to get into the snowcrafting programme for the afternoon. We headed south above the round the mountain track until we eventually came to a gully about 50m deep, about half an hour from the hut and close to the Waihanao Gorge. Here the pupils learnt one of their first lessons of snowcraft - going up is one thing but going down is another thing all together - especially when the ground is frozen hard and rather steep - and no crampons. Step cutting was for real. People chipped away in earnest for a considerable period, gradually inching their way to the bottom of the gully. On the south side, the conditions were perfect. Steep dry soft powder snow covering hard snow underneath. (There were a few patches of ice to add more interest.) The weather was also close to excellent - sunny, cold and only a slight breeze. The view was also good with the north-eastern aspect of Girdlestone rearing up ahead and the bluffs of the south-eastern aspects of Mitre above, and Taurangi filling the ridge in between. The Kaimanawas were almost entirely covered in cloud.

Once we could get onto this snow slope it was into the self-arresting exercises. And as people gained confidence, bodies were soon, careering around all over. The final masterstroke was to try glissading - the slope was nearly perfect - except perhaps the rather bumpy ice near the bottom!

About 4 pm we had had enough of that and returned to the hut, got the fire going and started the dinner operations. In the evening the wind picked up. In the morning; it was cloud, wind and rain. (There was no point in going for an exploratory walk in these conditions. That left us to pack up and head back to the vehicles - this time into the wind and rain. During the night quite a lot of snow had melted, and what was left was rather soft. At the drop into the gorge, this made things much easier, although some found the initial slope rather intimidating.

It was thoroughly miserable at the cars, but we heaved everything in and headed off to Waiouru. It was fine there so we stopped at the Hot Bread Shop, changed and filled up with a hefty lunch.

The cast of thousands were: Terry Crippen, Bruce van Brunt, Lance & Vera Broad, Adam Fort, Gavin ?, Don Kerr, Andrew Carvell, Alan Bede, Alistair Millward, Maree Limpus, Michelle Pentland and Peter Wiles.

THE NOT RANGI-HOWLETTS CROSSING 25-26 June by Terry Crippen

Peter Darragh and Terry Crippen headed up to Rangqi Hut late Friday night - good conditions with no torches needed. The plan was for a solo Rangi-Howletts crossing, with the other person being taxi. Nobody else had wanted to do the crossing due to a week of bad weather. Others were heading up to Howletts from the Hawkes Bay side.

Come Saturday morning the wind had got up and the cloud base had dropped. Terry and Peter headed up to the range crest just north of Mangahuaia before making the final decision. Sheltering in the lee of the range, the thought of 6+ hours, plus no visibility, plus strong winds, plus only solo equalled NO THANK YOU.

Instead both of us headed south over Mangahua and. returned to the car park by the alternative ridge track. So although we ended up with no crossing, we still had an enjoyable "overnight tramp".

Back in P.N., with the help of modern technology - cell phone with Llew at Howletts and Howlett's people ringing Tricia as arranged on Saturday night we were able to inform them that they did not have to worry about anybody still battling out the weather on Te Hekinga or thereabouts.

OPEN WEEKEND AT RANGITAU 9-10 July

Expecting lots of fine weather and good snow conditions, 13 people headed up to Sue and Lawson's place on the south side of Ruapehu for the annual open weekend. Terry arrived on Thursday heading into Mangaehuehu Hut for the night (a warm hut surrounded by deep soft snow, about 2 hours beyond Blyth Hut). Sue and Lawson, meanwhile had arrived at Rangitaua. Friday saw Terry returning from Mangaehuehu with strong winds and deteriorating weather. Llew and Jenny arrived at Rangitaua and began to tackle the clear felling of multi-branched willow tree monsters which were cutting out the sun at Rangitaua.

Friday night saw the onset of quite heavy snowfall, so by Saturday morning we awoke to a white 'wilderness. Mick, Trevor, Pauline and Stuart arrived quite early, to the amazement of us already, at Rangitaua, since the Taphape-Waiouru road was closed!

Saturday's activities were; varied. Sue and Lawson ski toured around Rangitaua. Others spent some time in a stalled queue up the mountain road - quite a major traffic jam waiting for the mountain road to "open". Abandoning this some headed off to watch the rugby test in comfort, while others walked around the Rangitaua forest area. Jo, Lawrence, Dominique and Fabian, who arrived in the afternoon spent some time enjoying the snow at lower levels.

The evening was spent inside warm and comfortable with lots of eating and chatting.

Sunday's weather was no better than Saturday, so yet again skiing was off. Snow and ice work was practised by Stuart, Mick, Trevor, Terry and Llew on slopes opposite the learners' slopes at Turoa. This was far more useful than trying to ski in zero visibility. We could clearly hear but not see skiers no more than 50 m away.

An enjoyable weekend was had by all. Thanks to Sue and Lawson. Those partaking were Jenny and Llew Prichard, Sue and Lawson Pither, Mick Leyland, Stuart Hubbard, Jo Lawrence, Fabian and Dominique O'Halloran, Pauline Coy, Trevor Meyle and Terry Crippen.

MID WEEK TRAMPING GROUP by Monica Cantwell

This group had started before I commenced taking records of our trips. The first one recorded by the group was mid June/July 1992 to Centre Creek lead by Russell. From there we have had some great variety. Wharite (via the road), Forest Hill, Herepai, Waiopahu, Kapakapanui, Harris Creek, Artene Walkway (where we spotted a wild pig on the track/ several goats and kids, plus 2 giant cut out cardboard moa's (when moa mania was in the news).

We were faced with what could have become an emergency in April this year when we were in the Ruapai Falls area. One of our party managed to stake his ribs with a branch and with intense pain he passed out. We all acted immediately as to what each of us had to do. Two go for help, 2 stay. Pack all spare food, clothing, drinks, torch into 1 pack etc. Fortunately we had a nurse in the party, so the leader left it up to her to decide whether after 3/4 hour, he remain or walk out slowly. The latter was decided. It was a very good exercise for the party.

During the winter months, we have been walking in the country i.e. Kiwitea, Ridge Road area, Dam block, Old West Road, Tiritea area etc. We have 14 members on the ringing list, with new members phoning and coming along. PNTMC members are in the minority at present. The majority are from the Manawatu Club.

I think it is really great to have a mid-week group - a good backbone to any club.

We are planning to have a pot luck dinner sometime in September/October. Either Sue or I will report further to the newsletter as we go along. Monica.

TUNIPO-TOPS-IRON GATES (30&31st July) by Adam Fort

Three students, 1 ex-dairy farmer (now rest home manager!) and our leader Terry Crippen set off on a wet July morning towards the Central Ruahines aiming to conquer the summit of Tunipo. We climbed through a variety of vegetation zones (as explained by Terry) to reach the snowline at about 1,300 m. As the drizzle turned to flurries of snow and the visibility worsened, I soon realized that a view from the top would not be a reward for our efforts. Nevertheless, we trudged northwards along the Ngamoko Range through snow which varied from ankle deep to groin deep. Once we found the right track, it was a relatively easy walk down to reach the 'Iron Gates Hut, just before dark.

Iron Gates is a small tidy hut (sleeps 6-8) nestled in a clearing just metres from the Oroua River. It took some time to get the fire going due to lack of dry wood and paper but with seven people in such a small hut we soon warmed

up. After a hot dinner that was rapidly consumed by all, we retired to the warmth of our sleeping bags to relax and spin a few yarns.

After a long winter's nap, we arose soon after daybreak to cook up a hot scrumptious brekkie. My flatmates and I had reheated leftovers (macaroni and saveloys) that had become decidedly distasteful, but it is surprising what you will eat when you are low on energy. With the wet weather lingering around the hills, it was good to walk the pleasant (but very undulating) sidle track out past Heritage Lodge to the road end on Table Flat. On the way out we ran into Mick Leyland's party who were deciding whether or not to ford a flooded Oroua River.

I found the route perfect for a weekend trip with a wide variety of terrain. It would be great to do the same loop again when there is better visibility so the view can be fully appreciated. Many thanks to Terry Crippen whose navigational skills proved invaluable.

Recipe for SCROGGIN

Chop and mix chocolate, raisins, dried apricots, bicycle tyre patches, ink bottle corks and milk bottle tokens with an equal proportion of well chewed newspaper. Pound with sledgehammer and mature for about 3 years. Improves with age. Does wonders for social interaction at those frequent short rest breaks along the track.

GEAR HIRE

Yes! PNTMC has gear for hire. ...

- 13 Ice Axes
- 8 Snow stakes
- 7 Rawlings Crampons
- 4 Salewa Crampons
- Tent Flys'
- 5 Ropes
- 1 Abseiling Rope
- 1 Climbing Rope 11 mm x 50 m
- 4 Fuel Bottles
- 5 Primus
- 1 Too1 Kit
- Assorted climbing Gear
- Karabiners etc.
- 1 Pressure Cooker
- 5 Billies
- 1 Bivy Bag
- 8 Tent-flyes
- 1 Tent
- 2 First Aid Kits

Reasonable prices.

Contact Mick Leyland Ph 358-3183, and he can advise as to your requirements.

Sender: PNTMC.,
P O Box 1217,
Palmerston North.

Postage Paid
Permit Number 286
Palmerston North