



# PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217  
PALMERSTON NORTH  
NEWSLETTER

October 1994 Edition

Gear Custodian

Newsletter Editor & Newsletter Distribution

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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 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.

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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

#### OCTOBER

Committee meeting: 6<sup>th</sup>. Club Nights: 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### **OCTOBER 13**

Guest speaker this evening is club member Arthur Todd. While Lis attended a conference, Arthur had time to explore Hong Kong by foot. This evening's presentation is entitled "A Trampers Guide to Hong Kong".

**OCTOBER 27** This evening, Colin from MACPAC will be showing us what is new in their range of outdoor clothing and equipment. The meeting will be held at our CLUB ROOMS at the usual time of 7:45 pm.

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
<b>OCTOBER 8-9</b>	Dorset Ridge	F	Dave Hodges	358-5981

DEPT 5 am. Saturday. Dave plans to go in from Holdsworth, to Atiwhakatu, up Barton track to Baldy, west to Broken Axe Pinnacles over The Kings up to Girdlestone and along to Dorset Ridge Hut. On Sunday, Dave is heading back to Girdlestone via Brockett to Mitre Flats, over to Atiwhakatu and out to the road end.

<b>OCTOBER 9</b>	Maharahara	E/M	Judy Stockdale	355-5277
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DEPT 8 am. from the POLICE STATION, Church Street. A combined club trip with the Manawatu Tramping & Ski Club. Cars will be left at the Kumeti and Opawe road ends. The eastern approach is more graded, while the western approach is steeper. There is attractive bush on both sides and we will lunch at the top.

<b>OCTOBER 15-16</b>	Leon Kinvig	M/F	Andrew Carvell	359-0935
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DEPT 7 am. Andrew will be going in on the eastern side of the Ruahines and along the Apiti Track, staying at Leon Kinvig on Saturday night. On the Sunday there will be the choice of either completing the round trip or returning the same way.

<b>OCTOBER 16</b>	Kaiparoro Clearing	E	Brenton Sheppard	06-376-8474
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DEPT 7:30 am from P.Nth. This is a trip for all those people who would like to locate a lost aircraft. This time it will be third time lucky! The first time we were rained out, the second time we went up the wrong ridge, but this time we'll get to the lost aircraft because Gerald has marked the route - I hope!

<b>OCTOBER 22-23-24</b>	Day trips	All	Tricia Eder	357-0122
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If you would like to lead day trips on any of these days please contact Tricia 357-0122 with your suggestions. Thanks.

<b>OCTOBER 23</b>	Whanahuia Range	M	Mick Leyland	358-3183
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DEPT 7:30 am Mick is leading a Sunday day trip in place of his weekend trip to Wakelings Hut, which is postponed until next weekend. The trip to the Whanahuia Range is to check out a track and area not often tramped on club trips. Cars will be left at the Heritage Lodge road end. If you are interested in organising yourselves on a less strenuous tramp, transport could be combined. Contact Mick to arrange.

<b>OCTOBER 22-24</b>	Tararaas	FE	Tony Gates	357-7439
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Tony is unable to lead this trip, if you are interested in leading an overnight trip during this long weekend, please contact either Tony or Tricia phone 357-0122. If there is no volunteer this trip will be cancelled.

<b>OCTOBER 29-30</b>	Mangahao-Avalanche Flats	M	Richard Lockett	323-6489
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DEPT 8:00 am Luncheon will be taken at Harris Creek Hut, hopefully, in the sun, down on the river bank. After lunch we will head on up to the almost new Lockwood styled hut at Avalanche Flats, approximate tramping time 5 hours. Hut Pass or 2 hut tickets required.

<b>OCTOBER 29-30</b>	Wakelings	M/F	Mick Leyland	358-3183
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DEPT 6:00 am This trip is now a 2 day trip, hence the fitter grading. Mick intends to go into Wakelings Hut, then on to look at the waterfall. In this vicinity the group will fly camp overnight, so a good sleeping bag, poofier pad / sno-foam and bivy bag are essential to ensure a comfortable night.

<b>OCTOBER 30</b>	Waipawa River	E/M	Arthur&Lis Todd	323-6246
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This trip will be departing at 7 am. The exact route will depend on the weather at the time.

## NOVEMBER

Committee meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup>. Club Nights: 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

**NOVEMBER 10** FMC President, Hugh Barr and Murray Presland, will be coming up from Wellington to speak about issues that are confronting all of us who enjoy our mountains arid push environments. They will address matters relating to Pastoral leases, Treaty of Waitangi claims and access. Any local issues can be discussed and a question and answer time will be available. Club members are asked to extend an invitation to anyone who may be interested in this subject.

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
<b>NOVEMBER 5-6</b>	Ngamoko/Main Range	F	Nigel Barrett	326-8847

DEPT 5:30 am. From Moorcock Base the trampers will head to Longview, go along the Main Range to the Leon Kinvig turn off, then drop down to the river and go along to the Ngamoko Hut. On Sunday, the plan is to go up and along the Ngamoko Range and returning to the road end.

<b>NOVEMBER 6</b>	Ruahines	E/M	Stuart Hubbard	357-0122
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DEPT 8:00 am This trip goes in from the Heritage Lodge Road end. You will travel along side the Oroua River, through Beech trees, cross a couple of streams and if you are keen take a dip in one of the many swimming holes.

**NOVEMBER 12-13** Purity-Hawkes Bay-Waterfall F Terry Crippen 356-3588  
DEPT Friday night 6-30 pm staying at Purity Hut. It will be an early start on Saturday morning to traverse the Hawkes Bay Ridge from Iron Peg to Ohuinga Trig. Superb views from this vantage point. From here, we will go down to a great hut called Waterfall Hut to spend the night. On Sunday the route out, will be chosen from various possibilities and will depend upon the group.

**NOVEMBER 13** Maharahara Crossing E/M Peter Stockdale 355-5277  
DEPT 8:00 am A popular tramp that if you haven't been on, then this is your opportunity. If you are wanting to independently do a fitter day trip, you can always dump your gear at Roaring Stag Hut and head up to Cattle Ridge, this option will add approximately another 2-3 hours.

**NOVEMBER 20** Diggers-Forks loop E/M Mick Leyland 358-3183

**NOVEMBER 26** Otaki Forks Family/E/M Linda Rowan 356-4655

**NOVEMBER 26-27** Snow Caving Ruapehu FIT Tony Gates 357-7439  
The snow caving trip has been rescheduled to this weekend.

**NOVEMBER 26-27** To Be Arranged M/F Tricia Eder 357-0122

### EDITORIAL

Those members who heard Clive Jones' presentations of his exploits in Peru (Alpamayo *etc.*) and more recently to Cerro Aconcagua (6,950 m) will have been prepared for an extremely interesting presentation to the club on 15<sup>th</sup> September. Clive did not disappoint. Those that missed this talk, perhaps missed one of the most extraordinary presentations that have ever been given to the club.

Only a handful or two of New Zealanders have, to date, managed to get to the summit of one of the world's fourteen 8,000 m peaks. It is an extreme test of both mind and body - many give up and many are still overcome by the altitude and other factors in the attempt. Even more remarkable, Clive achieved this on his first attempt.

After a recent resurvey, Cho Oyo (Goddess of the Turquoise, and first climbed by the Austrians in 1954) has gained another 100 m of height, or so, and is now claimed to be 6<sup>th</sup> in the world and over 8,200 m. Using the vehicle of a commercial expedition, Clive entered the region in early (Northern Hemisphere) spring via Kathmandu and the Kumbu Valley (known more usually as the route to Everest). After first seeing the tip of the mountain amongst a sea of other distant peaks, the journey (trek) over nearly two weeks continued with the mountain out of sight. Initially, there were ten people who set out on the expedition. A series of six camps were established (Base camp at a bit over 4,000 m was still far from the peak, followed by advance base, then camps 1, 2, 3 and 4. Camp 4 was at about 7,500 m, and was in the end used for two nights. Two members of the party had to give it away fairly early on when it was obvious that they were not adjusting to the altitude. Also by a cruel twist of fate, one of the party's unoccupied tents, supplied with gear, food and fuel was completely blown away during a storm, which meant that the three members of the party positioned further down the mountain at the time, lost their supplies and had to give up.

After reaching the Nangpa La (Pass) at about 6,000 m on the Nepal-Tibet (China) border, the journey briefly descended into Tibet before entering an adjacent valley which took the team to the mountain proper. (Coming over the pass was a daily exodus of Tibetan refugees - a remarkable storey in itself.) An Austrian party was attempting the peak at the time and already had done much work in establishing the route and placing fixed ropes where required. However, even after achieving so much, the Austrians had to give up. (There were, in addition, several parties simultaneously attempting the peak from the Tibetan side.)

Conditions on the mountain, seemed to me, to have two significant advantages and one significant disadvantage. Emerging from a stormy winter (dry season), the mountain was covered for the most part in hard blue ice. This both removed the problem of the considerable additional energy burden expended plodding (floundering) through drifts of soft snow and it also reduced the risk of huge powder and slab avalanches that have taken so many lives in the region (e.g. Bill Denz on Makalau). However the hard ice meant that the climbing was unforgiving - the slightest stumble while not roped could have had disastrous consequences.

Clive was one of five that made it to the summit, but even then the leeway was slim. An afternoon blizzard made their route-finding back to Camp 4 difficult. Clive also, inadvertently let his boots get frozen and got some badly frost-nipped toes which caused problems and considerable concern at the time but which have since healed successfully.

The slides that Clive used, perfectly complimented the quality of his presentation. It was fabulous stuff. Thanks Clive.

### SEARCH AND RESCUE UPDATE

Thanks to the PNTMC members who made themselves available for the search in the Sixtus Lodge area on September 7. PNTMC SAR contacts were called at 7 am. on Wednesday and asked to have two teams on standby ready to be sent into the Ruahines later in the day.

A party of three adults and two children were overdue from a day trip up Knights Track and it was thought that they may have taken the track to Leon Kinvig in the upper Pohangina catchment. With the weather deteriorating, the forecast for heavy rain and the rescue helicopter not able to be used, a party of DOC personnel were sent in to check the hut. At 11 am., we were contacted from the SAR base and the teams stood down as the missing party had been found and would remain put at Leon Kinvig until lifted out by the helicopter. (Several trips were made late in the afternoon and were reported as "pretty bumpy".) PNTMC SAR contacts then informed the teams that they were not required.

Although we aren't called out often these days, it was pleasing to know that when PNTMC is contacted we can organise assistance. Thanks again Tricia Eder/Mick Leyland/Linda Rowan.

## NOTICES

### **THURSDAY TRAMPING GROUP**

Actual location of the trips will depend on factors closer to the date, but the following schedule of events is listed below - so contact the leaders.

OCTOBER 13	PAM WILSON	357-6247
OCTOBER 20	KEN HALL	356-8538
OCTOBER 27	LAWSON & SUE PITHER	357-3033
NOVEMBER 3	JOHN ROCKELL	358-3513
NOVEMBER 10	PHIL PEARCE	354-6687
NOVEMBER 17	JUDY STOCKPALE	355-5277
NOVEMBER 24	DUG WAKELING	323-4127
DECEMBER 1	MONICA CANTWELL	354-3834

After 1<sup>st</sup> December, we will have a break until late January. Anyone wishing to go out during December or January, please ring through the list. We will be having a pot luck tea at Sue and Lawsons' place in October. Everyone will be rung. Monica & Sue.

### **ADVANCE NOTICE**

**TRIP CARD 1995 JAN-JUNE** A meeting will be held **Wednesday 2 November, 7: 00 pm. onwards**, at 57 Fairs Road to make up the club trips card. We have, in the past, had a great response from club members wanting to lead trips. Get those maps out and start planning where you would like to go next summer. We aim to provide a one day and a two day trip each weekend with a spread of easy, medium and fit gradings. Contact Tricia 357-0122 with your suggestions.

### **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 Fairs Road.

Hut passes continue to be available \$40 each.

### **HATCHED, HATCHED & DISPATCHED**

Jenni Madgwick has a baby son - congratulations. Jenni, Mark are currently in Christchurch.

### **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.

### **PRE CHRISTMAS EXPEDITION**

**November 11- 20. Rakaia- Bracken Snowfield- Mt Evans. Fit/ technical. Leader is Don French, with Tony Gates leading the Palmerston North contingent.**

The aim is to drive south after work on Friday 11 November, fly part of the way up the Rakaia Valley the following day, then tramp up to Whitcombe Pass and the Sale Glacier. A stiff climb up onto The Bracken Snowfield, snowcave, then attempt to climb Mt Evans via John Pascoe's "Golden Road". N.B. there are still some unclimbed routes Derek! The helicopter will be available for the return.

This area is wild, rugged, and seldom visited. Any extreme of temperature and climate can occur. A high degree of ability will be required. For those that visit such places, the rewards of the wilderness make it all worthwhile.

### **SAREX '94**

Instead of a SAREX in the Manawatu District this year, the Police have offered to sponsor SAR personnel from local clubs to attend the "Smedley Medley", an orientation event in Hawkes Bay to be held on Sunday November 27. The

intent is that by participating, club members will test their navigation skills and fitness. Sponsorship will comprise the Police covering the \$20 entry fee and supplying bus transport to and from Smedley Station in southern Hawkes Bay.

Teams may be made up of between 2&4 persons. Teams from this area will participate in the "B" course. Certain equipment must be carried. In addition to race clothes, equipment must include:

1. Small pack or bum bag,
2. Woollen/polypro top (not too tight!),
3. Woollen/Polypro longjohns,
4. Waterproof coat,
5. Food and drink, and
6. Snow gaiters.

The bus will leave P.N. at 5:45 am sharp. Interested people should be prepared to serve in future SAR teams and give their names to Howard Nicholson, phone 357-6325.

## QUIZ RESULTS

Sorry I will have to pass on the quiz outcome - details next month. (ed.)

## A TRAMPERS GUIDE TO THE OTAKI CATCHMENT by Tony Gates

### (Part two) THE SOUTHERN CROSSING

Because of the importance and popularity of The Southern Crossing Track, the route deserves a separate chapter of its own. For convenience, it is traversed from north to south (from Otaki to Kaitoke). Approximately half of the track, the northern half, follows the eastern side of the Waiotauru Catchment, with Penn Creek then Hector River draining to the east. The remainder overlooks the Hutt and Tauherenikau catchments. Approximately half of the track is above the bush line: the rest is a mixture of thick leatherwood or pleasant beech forest. The Southern crossing is perhaps best known for the sweeping tussock basins draining to the east, into the Hector River, and beyond Mt Hector, somewhat steeper slopes draining into the Tauherenikau. Precariously craggy gulches to the west overlook the Waiotauru Catchment as far as Aston Peak, where one can similarly look over the Hutt Catchment. Once back in the bush on the slopes of Mt Alpha, the track soon finds Alpha Hut, then after a couple of ups and downs, follows the seemingly never ending Marchant Ridge to the Raitoke Shelter.

## THE ROUTE

The Southern Crossing Route usually commences at Otaki Forks, crossing the swing bridge at the main picnic area, then climbing up the hill past the old Parewai Hut. Cars can be safely left at the ranger station, a couple of minutes drive to the south (upriver). High grassy terraces characteristic of Otaki Forks blend into overgrown scrubby ridges, as the track winds up Fields Track on Judd Ridge. Joe Gibbs, the builder of Field Hut and Kime Hut during the 1920's made this a pack track (horse pack, not human pack). It was once steep on the farmland, and muddy on the flats in the bush, so during 1992/ 1993 DOC realigned and metalled most of the track up to Field Hut. The track gradient levels out on the crown of the ridge, at the top of the overgrown farmland. There once was an old hut here during the 1920's named Te Moe Moe. Mixed Kamahi forest blends into Beech forest as the track winds slowly up to Tiroiro Knob, then over some small forested knobs with an understorey of pampas grass to the welcome shelter of Field Hut. Some consider this hut to be poorly built, but it has been used and appreciated for nearly 75 years. I wonder if the modern mansions we see in the DOC estate will last as well or as long. A friend once ran from the car park to Field Hut in just under one hour, and Kime in a similar time. But three hours would be a more respectable time to Field Hut, and a further three hours to Kime Hut after a good rest. The farmland/ forest edge represents a little under half way to Field Hut.

The track above Field Hut was once notoriously muddy. It was partially re-aligned and metalled during 1993/ 1994, speeding tramping times considerably. A few zig-zags up the prominent ridge soon puts trampers in the leatherwood, and the first of many unrestricted views. There is a short flat section of the track, then it sidles the western slopes of Table Top along Joe Gibbs's pack horse trail, soon to emerge on the muddy tussock flats of Table Top. Here is where you most appreciate the new metalled track, because there are parts not yet metalled, and it is unlikely to be metalled in its entirety. There was a gentle uphill section of the track that follows a 2 metre deep trench, worn down over the decades by trampers boots and the forces of erosion. This section has now been bypassed by a luxuriously metalled track. More leatherwood is bypassed under Dennan, some of it overhanging the track, then tussock becomes prevalent. A little up and down on the track, then a sudden grunt up onto Bridge Peak.

The rolling tussock basins behind Bridge Peak are a feature of the Southern Crossing route, and appear quite suddenly for the uninitiated. They are a pleasant respite from the steep grunt up from Dennan. A few marker poles, and a well worn trail mark the track across the flats and over the peak to Kime Basin, Kime Hut, and possibly more importantly, Kime Tarn. Buffeted by the alpine weather, with its temperature extremes, Kime Hut provides shelter from winter weather and summer heat alike. Every time I have been there it has been messy, a tribute to the users. However Kime Hut provides roomy shelter, and sees many visitors. During (rare) fine weather spells, a two minute jaunt up behind the hut rewards you with a fine view of the Waiotauru Catchment, the Hutt Valley, and Wellington. And the other way, from the hut door, is over easy tussock slopes, and the distant Wairapara. If you visit during winter, you will understand why Kime Hut was built for skiing. A magic spot. The track ambles across Kime Basin to the slopes of Field Peak, a

further 15 minutes on. Then the ridge narrows, (and the track becomes more pronounced) dropping down to a marked saddle before the grind up onto Mt Hector. Kime Hut to Mt Hector one hour.

Mt Hector, at 1529 metres altitude, is a famous peak at the top of the Southern Crossing. The memorial cross, to those who perished in the war, is the main landmark, stark in its outline. The ridge drops steeply south from Mt Hector to the aptly named "Beehives", then winds along to Atkinson. The well worn track should not be difficult to follow, however, there is "False Spur" leading off Atkinson and into the depths of the upper Tauherenikau. Deer knew the ridge well before the days of the helicopter, the deer knew the trampers wouldn't go down there! It's only 15° of (compass) angle off the main ridge, but descending in misty conditions can be difficult. The well worn track underfoot on the main ridge unfortunately is also well worn down a false spur, from generations of trampers making the same mistake. Check your map and compass, and pull back before it is too late. Once past Atkinson, the track drops gently down the ridge 100 or so vertical metres to the Dress Circle, where gentle tussock basins resume. The track follows the ridge around to Aston, and Renata Ridge, rising steeply up from the forest. Pleasant, easy tussock ledges with a smattering of leatherwood lead up to Alpha Peak, approximately two hours from Mt Hector. From Alpha, the track curves slightly to due east and drops 15 minutes down a tussock and gravel ridge to the open beech forest, then Alpha Hut.

The Marchant Ridge always feels like it takes ages to tramp! A fair estimate of the total time is six hours, road end to Alpha Hut, but this is very variable. Tramping either to the north or the south, it is time consuming and tiring. Boring, too, if you miss out on the good views. The forest is mostly open beech, which is quite pleasant, ghostly, mossy stuff. From Alpha Hut, the track winds north-eastwards for 15 minutes, dropping steeply, climbing, then dropping again to cross "Hells Gate". The track turn off to Cone Hut is reached just before Omega Peak, just in the tussock, then there is another track dropping down Omega Track to Tutawai Hut, far below. Alpha Hut to Omega one hour. Block XIV Track goes similarly from half an hour further south. All three tracks are well marked. The Marchant Ridge track winds on and on. DOC propose to construct a large new hut somewhere along here, I guess approximately halfway from Alpha to the road. There is a short grind up onto Mt Marchant, basically the only uphill, then the clearing known as "the axe hole", a pleasant place to rest with water in a tree stump if you are lucky. Otherwise, it can be a very thirsty ridge. Omega to Marchant one hour. Clearings and open patches of "the burn", immediately south of Marchant Peak, give good views of the Hutt Valley. The ghostly dead trees are familiar to all who have been there, and can be seen on the distinctive skyline when viewed from Upper Hutt. The track drops down to Dobson Hut (site) [never a tidy spot], then follows an eternally muddy track to the top of "The Puffer" and the Kaitoke car park. An alternative, safer car park can be found at Kiwi Ranch. Marchant to road end two hours. The track always seems to drag on a bit from Dobson's if you are at the end of your tramp, and are feeling the effects. That's it, the Southern Crossing of the Tararua Range, in a nutshell.

(The northern section of the Otaki catchment next month - watch this space.)

## TRIP REPORTS

### UNUSUAL VEHICLES, DOGS, AND WEATHER (Mitre Flats, Aug 27-28) by Doug Strachan

Bang! Ha ha haa. Rattle rattle ... do you think that's the wheel bearings or the drive shaft making that noise? Around another corner, another backfire Bang! Ha ha, bet they got a fright. And so the van entertained us with a chorus of onomatopoeic words all the way towards Masterton. As we descended the Pahiatua Track, Warren made a comment about the importance of keeping left when rounding curves. His point was emphasised in a rather timely way when we rounded another bend and encountered an accident scene. A farmer's vehicle was side on in the middle of the road with one back wheel destroyed and the drive shaft hanging on the ground. The driver of the other vehicle stood lamenting over the new shape of his car, and the stream of water running from its radiator. He muttered a few expletives in between comments like "I just bought it yesterday". Nobody hurt, no worries. Help was on its way so, after wishing the guy a nice rest of the day, we carried on our way. Bang! We took the Masterton by-pass and made our way to the Waingawa Rd end. The rest of our group were following in Nigel's van. Nigel's first comment on arrival being "who was shooting at us?"

Under blue sky, we began the walk in to Mitre Flats. Bonnie the dog, unaccustomed to styles, somersaulted through a fence, did a roly-poly in the middle of the manoeuvre, slid upside-down over the wire, and was through. Her stream crossing techniques were also rather unconventional. Rather than using the ramp she tried to leap straight onto the bridge. This move backfired worse than the van and she fell, landing upside down in the stream. This at first prompted worry, and then laughter. Bonnie got her own back by spending the rest of the day waiting until people were negotiating a particularly awkward point in the track, and then crashing past.

We had all day to get to the hut and stopped for lunch along the way. There were also a few plant I.D.' breaks aided by Don, our official botanist. Opposite Mitre Flats it is possible to ford the river but we opted to walk 15 minutes further, climbing to by-pass a slip, to the new bridge. Liz was relieved to see that it was of dog-proof construction.

What marvellous weather. The trip leader basked in praise for organising such a sunny day. Alas everything in life operates by the yin-yang principal: when we arrived at Mitre Flats hut it was pretty full, with a school group and 3 dogs. The yin element dealt its worst blow at 2.30 am. when Spatch, a little yappy dog, proceeded to bark and wouldn't shut up. All the hut occupants were woken. Adam was just about ready to despatch Spatch when the owner finally silenced the critter.

Nigel B., Stuart, and Tony had only come in for the day and were spared all this; however, they were no doubt more tired the next day than we were. They had reached the hut in less than half the time we took, climbed Mitre, and were heading out the same day, equipped with torches. Probably about the same time they were stumbling over roots in the dark, we were sitting around a fire near the river using various fanning and blowing techniques to encourage the reluctant wood to burn better.

Sunday was another brilliant day. Some of the group opted for a leisurely departure out. The rest of us were keen to go up Mitre Peak. Near the top we got the ice axes ready and put on some 23+ (sic) sunblock. Three hours after leaving the hut we were atop Mitre. What could be more rewarding than seeing the Ruahines, Kaimanawas, Ruapehu and Egmont? Turning around and also seeing the Nelson ranges and Kaikouras! There wasn't a cloud in sight. We envied two other trampers who were staying another night at Mitre Flats and so had enough time to tramp on to Girdlestone. After lunching on the top we got down in just over half the ascent time. Our descent was partly facilitated by a time-saving glissade. Some of us came down on our gluteus maximii. We had a short break just above the bush line to savour the view of the Wairarapa one last time.

Back at the hut things were quiet. The friend of the two trampers we met on top had stayed behind to recuperate, having fallen down a bluff the previous day. We cheered him down by telling him of the view we had, and, then headed out.

Our wonderful weekend was well summarised by the words of Jenny, the youngest in our group: "it beats the hell out of staying home."

Those who didn't stay at home: Nigel Scott, Angela Dick, Tim Murphy, Warren Wheeler, Ee-Kheng Birks, Don Kerr, Christine Kelly, Jenny Wood, Adam Fort, Liz Morrison and Bonnie, Doug Strachan. Day trippers: Nigel Barrett, Stewart Hubbard, Tony.....

### **BLUE RANGE HUT** Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September

Due to our leader Daryl having the flu, we rang around and had a party of five go into the above hut. We left Judy's place at Aokautere at 8 am. At Eketahuna, we met up with Jenny and Cathy.

Initially the track passes through a grove of giant redwoods along the flat before climbing all the way up to the turn off to Cow Creek. The Blue Range Hut looked spruced up on the outside with a nice coat of blue paint. Inside we were upset to see smashed beer bottles all over the place. After getting stuck in with a broom, we all agreed it looked 100% better with a clean up. Old maps adorned the roof and walls - a nice idea. We took 1½ hours to reach the hut and our descent was less. Not wanting to go back home too early, we decided to complete the loop track to Mikimiki (not quite to the farmland). We left the picnic area at 3 pm. A lovely day and great company.

We were: Judy Stockdale, Stephanie H, Jenny and Cathy McArthur and Monica Cantwell.

### **CANINE HOUND HIKE AT TANGIMOANA BEACH** - Sunday 11 September

Our main group left from Milson just after 9 am. We met up with two others plus two hounds at the beach. After waiting for a latecomer who did not arrive, we set off just before 10 am. The beach area has changed with the river coming in very close to the car park. The day was excellent with a slight breeze and good walking conditions on firm sand, as the tide was part way out. Masses of logs of wood littered the beach. We then followed the stream up and over a bridge and from then on the forest road. It was hot and sheltered and nearly all took off as many clothes as they could. The dogs were dipping themselves into the pond for swims and drinks. We stopped at noon for lunch.

Stuart & Adrian (& Sledge) had eaten theirs for morning tea, so decided to head back. From the bridge, we took a different route back over the sand hills onto the beach for about ½ hour, arriving at the cars about 3 pm. The canines were very well behaved (& Rosemary did not need her map or compass). Everyone had a great day and enjoyed the company.

We were: Pauline Coy (with P.C.), Liz Morrison (& Bonny), Nigel and Sue Scott (with Nicky), Stuart Hubbard, Adrian Regnault (with sledge), Stella and Kelly Eastman, Rose Aston, Sun, Charm and Kang Kim, Sue Johnson, Noel and Monica Cantwell (with Rosemary [Leader]).

### **NEARLY HUTCRAFT III** - September 10/11 by Peter Wiles

On Friday, the Desert Road was closed and the prospect of it being open first thing on Saturday morning seemed slim. Even if it was open, the likelihood of us getting to Whangaehu Hut in much less than a day was probably remote. With six committed to go on Snowcraft III in the morning, a rapid reorganization was called for. I rang Paul Roberts in Hawera in the off chance that Kapuni Lodge was available for the weekend - it was - switch venue - problem solved!

We left PN at 5 am in calm frosty weather - great weekend. It did not turn out that way. The closer we got to Taranaki the less promising the weather looked. At the Dawson Falls road end there was about 10 cm of snow. While we struggled to get ourselves organised it started to rain.

We started the plod up the track to the Lodge. The depth of snow gradually increased until by the time we reached the hut it was 30-50 cm deep. There were no fresh tracks to follow so it was plugging all the way. Higher up the

track, it was guesswork to decide where the steps were buried under the snow. We were very glad to reach the hut and get out of the wind, cloud and showers.

The first and major task was to get the fire going. We spent the day heaping vast quantities of coal into it, interspersed with chatting, reading and snoozing and drying out our gear. The water supply seemed reluctant to work, so we gathered some of the copious supply dribbling from the melting snow on the roof. We kept a ready supply of nearly boiling water in a huge cast iron urn on top of the stove. With the stove showing signs of red-heat, we gradually shed a layer or two and moved back from the fire.

Next morning was not a lot better, but we were determined to get out and try to achieve at least something useful. We climbed up about 100 m above the hut and sidled across to the Kapuni Gorge. The wind was not too bad, and it was surprisingly dry with the occasional burst of sun and clearance. We went through our routines, starting with the placement of different sorts of snow anchors and then getting the ropes out to try some belay work on a handy slope nearby. After about 3 hours, we had just about covered everything, so we plodded back to the hut for a well earned early lunch. We tidied up the hut before leaving shortly after 1 pm. The plod down the track was through heaps of slush and mud. Back down away from the mountain, it was fine sunny weather. We arrived back in town in good time. Team was Alan Bee, Tony Gates, Andrew Carvell, Alistair Millward, Lance Broad and Peter Wiles.

#### **DAY TRIP TO SUNRISE HUT** by Malcolm Parker

The trip began with the usual meeting at the Foodtown car park in the early hours of the morning. There should have been nine of us but after waiting a short time, we decided that a couple of intendees had been put off by the early start. I guess it is better to loose party members before a trip begins rather than during it!

We headed out to meet Nigel at Ashhurst. With a slightly reduced party, we could now all fit into Nigel's van and avoid the need to take two cars. But did Nigel know where to go? Everyone was happy to tell him.

After arriving at the car park and organizing the gear and boots and all, we wandered up to have a quick look at Triplex Hut - just inside the bush line. A very nice spot.

Then it was time to begin the grind up to Sunrise Hut. We were a party of mixed fitness level and even some of the fitter ones were quite looking forward to a casual relaxing trip. The result being that we decided to take it quite slowly. After all there was no hurry and the sooner we got there, the sooner we would have to come back.

As we climbed the wind became more vicious until by the time we reached the hut it must have been close to gale force. Clearly, there was no chance of wandering over to Armstrong Saddle today. But there was plenty of snow around to play in and plenty of coffee to drink. What magical power does snow have that makes it bring out the child in us all?

By the time we decided to return the wind had become worse and the temperature had dropped a degree or two, so it was quite unpleasant until the lower levels were reached. Fortunately, everyone maintained their sense of humour and were quite happy to laugh at Rose hanging upside down at one of our rest stops. Does this confirm the theory of the origin of the species?

An excellent day, a great trip with company to match. We were Warren Wheeler, Malcolm Parker, Candy Wong, Nigel Scott, Monica Cantwell, Rose Aston and one other?

#### **BOYD LODGE ADVENTURES** 21/26 August 1994 By Dennis Moore

During a routine visit to the famous Boyd Lodge, Kaimanawas, a few out of the ordinary adventures were encountered.

We flew from Feilding in to the Boyd Lodge airstrip in a little fixed wing ail-craft in magic weather. Great views of all over the place. We did our air drop of food in Gold Creek, our destination, then ferried in two friends from Mangahaone Station. Running short on av gas by this time, so we were forced to "borrow" some out of a top dresser parked at the Boyd for the day. The aircraft was tied down and secured, and we were on our way down to Gold Creek Hut, for a few days hunting, and generally enjoying the bush and tussock lands of the upper Ngaruroro Catchment. The hut is private, and has a placard on the wall warning that the temperature is below freezing for 300 nights of the year! The weather continued to shine on us, and I can assure you we believed the wall placard each morning. Frosty conditions, I mean real frost. She was real cold up there. A good look around produced no deer for the pot, but a good relaxing time.

We pushed further up Gold Creek for a couple of days, and bivvied out. We looked at an old airstrip there, planning to land there sometime in the future. The deer were there in numbers, seven seen, and one shot. Obviously this is the place to go hunting.

It was half a day's tramp back to Boyd Lodge via the old pack track, then a mere 15 minutes flight to Mangahaone Station as the crow flies {as the plane flies I mean}. Then plans went off the rails, the plane was grounded with a flat tyre. What to do?, blowing a gale at this time, immobile aircraft sitting in the middle of the airstrip with no tie downs. So we "borrowed" a four ton truck to park in front of the aircraft to protect it from the elements. Poor old Jim, still at Boyd Lodge at that stage, "donated" all the tie downs from his tent fly to assist with tying down the aircraft. And Jim & Co. were still



waiting at the Lodge missing out on the action. A quick phone call to Shamus Howard, of HeliSika, Poronui Station, Taupo, and Jim and Co. were whisked out of Boyd Lodge to the helicopter base, \$250.00 poorer.

I picked up Jim's car from Mangaohane Station, and proceeded to drive some 350 km to Taupo, where I managed to pick up a new tube, borrow some money, have a much needed feed, and proceed to Poronui station. Jim and Co. were met at about 8.00 pm, and we bedded down at Sika Lodge on Clements Road, \$12.00 per night and a great spot.

Back to Mangahaone Station the next day, where the weather was miserable. We removed the aircraft wheel, and used the Stations' facilities to do the necessary repairs. Then an uneventful flight home! Next time I'll carry a spare!

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From Hillary and, Russell, at Mountain Equipment

There is one sound in the hills that everyone both loves and hates. After a hard day tramping or climbing, there is nothing quite like the sound of dinner cooking away over a stove, and at 5 o'clock the next morning that same stove roaring away to boil up a brew while annoying those people trying to continue sleeping. A portable stove can be both a boon and a bane.

In this article, we wanted to explain the various types of stoves and ,what you need to consider before buying a stove. This is a guide and is by no means comprehensive.

There are 5 types of fuel for stoves - gasoline, alcohol, kerosine, solid fuel and compressed gas. The first 3 can be called collectively "liquid fuels". Alcohol fuel is almost always methylated spirits (meths); gasoline fuel is known as white spirits (depending on where you buy it from there are various trade names as well), and kerosine which also comes under various trade names. If you're unsure, come into Mountain Equipment and pick up a copy of the Mountain Safety council leaflet "Fuels for portable burners".

There are many different models of stoves available. They all have different heat outputs, burning times, weights, and so on. Generally, a liquid fuel stove puts out more heat than gas or solid fuel, is much cheaper to run, will work much better at high altitudes and cold temperatures, and is easier to carry a lot of fuel for. Gas stoves are cheaper, often lighter and smaller, are easier to use, and safer than liquid fuel stoves. Solid fuel is light and easy to carry, but not very user friendly.

Long term costs of a stove are important if you get out and use the stove a lot. Liquid fuel stoves are relatively cheap to run - some of the Coleman stoves will run on unleaded petrol, so one litre will cost under \$1 and a 250 ml tank will last from 1 hour on full to 7 hours on simmer, making it pretty cheap to run when compared with gas. Gas stoves will burn from 100 g of gas for \$7.50 per hour to about 250 g per hour so you can see the difference there. White spirits, meths, and kero are all about \$5/L.

Other points to consider about stoves are: the bulk and weight of the cooker and fuel, the cost of the cooker and fuel, the ease of use (including effect of wind), how safe it is to use (including stability), how fast it is to cook with, what sort of guarantee and spare parts are available, how easy it is to service yourself, and how easy it is to get fuel if you are travelling.

There are lots of options in the stove market. Come in and talk to us about stoves, talk to other stove users to get their thoughts, and think about how you are going to use your stove.

Happy cooking form the team at Mountain Equipment!

