



# PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217  
PALMERSTON NORTH  
NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1995 Edition

Gear Custodian

Newsletter Editor & Newsletter Distribution

---

President	: Tricia Eder	357-0122
Membership Enquiries	: Pauline Coy	354-9126
	: Nigel Barrett	326-8847
	: Mick Leyland	358-3183
	: 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

#### MARCH

COMMITTEE MEETING March 2<sup>nd</sup> CLUB NIGHTS: Thursdays 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> (AGM)

Please remember to contact the trip leader at least 3 days prior to the weekend of the trip.

Thursday trampers contact the leader early in the week, they will give you all relevant information concerning their trip.

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
<b>MARCH 2</b>	Thursday day trippers		Pam Wilson	357-6247
<b>MARCH 4-5</b>	SAREX	Medium	Mick Leyand	358-3183
If you are a medium-fit tramper and are interested in being included on the PNTMC Search and Rescue callout list, or have not recently participated in a Search and Rescue Exercise contact Mick, ASAP. This SAR Exercise is being coordinated by the Dannevirke/Pahiatua SAR committee.				
<b>MARCH 5</b>	Sutherlands Bush	E/Family	Margaret Riorden	356-7460
DEPT 9:00 am. Inland from Turakina is Sutherlands Bush, a Forest and Bird Conservation Reserve. It is a very attractive piece of bush - lots of tall trees, beautiful ferns, a goblin forest and flocks of cockatoos. This trip is suitable for all family members, and anyone wanting a stroll.				
<b>MARCH 7</b>	Canoe Rangitikei	Open	Aaron Panchaud	354-8422
DEPT after work TUESDAY EVENING. NB the change of date and venue. Aaron has a race in Wellington on Sunday the 5 <sup>th</sup> but he will be going down the Manawatu River the following Tuesday evening. Anyone who is interested in going contact Aaron.				
<b>MARCH 9</b>	Thursday day trippers.		Neil Gutry	354-0284
<b>MARCH 12</b>	Kahuterawa	Easy/family	Liz Morrison	357-6532
DEPT 9:00 am This trip is suitable for families, children and hounds. All are welcome. This trip replaces the advertised Porewa Walkway trip. Last month DOC closed the Porewa track.				
<b>MARCH 11-12</b>	Mitre Flats/Peak	Easy & Med.	Warren Wheeler	357-9009
work 358-0189 home. DEPT 8:00 am. This is going to be a very easy laid-back trip into Mitre Flats Hut. Once at the hut there are several different options; 1) pullout the sleeping bags; 2) go exploring up and/or down the creek, or 3) get up early on Sunday morning and climb to the top of Mitre Peak where fantastic views are to be had north and south along the Tararua Ranges.				
<b>MARCH 11-12</b>	Ice Craft	Tech	Peter Wiles	358-6894
This will be either a day or weekend trip depending on conditions. If a weekend trip, we can either camp at the bottom of the glacier or stay at Blyth or Mangaehuehu Hut. We will investigate the Mangaehuehu Glacier at between 2300-2500 m on the Turoa side of Ruapehu. We will be checking out some glacier travel and climbing in a handy crevasse or two. We should be able to cope with most levels of experience. You will need, crampons, an ice axe, and a crash hat would be recommended plus usual day or weekend gear appropriate for this altitude.				
<b>MARCH 16</b>	Thursday day trippers		Liz Flint	356-7654
<b>MARCH 16</b>	<b>CLUB NIGHT PASSES &amp; PEAKS in ARTHURS PASS</b>			
Terry Crippen, Chris Saunders and Barry Scott will give a slide show of the Club's successful summer 3 Pass Variation, (or circumnavigation of Mt Rosamond) in the Arthurs Pass region, where they had 10 days of excellent weather, plenty of Passes and a few Peaks.				
<b>MARCH 19</b>	Ventura Crash Site	E	Tony Cameron	356-5461
DEPT 8:00 am. from Foodtown carpark & returning about 4:00 pm. A walk along the Waitohu Stream, east of Otaki then up a ridge to the site of the crashed Ventura. From there we will move up onto the Mick-Thompson Ridge and return to the carpark via the old logging track.				
<b>MARCH 18-19</b>	Totara Flats	Easy/Medium	Jenny McCarthy	06-376-8838
<b>NB THIS TRIP HAS BEEN BROUGHT FORWARD A WEEK</b>				
DEPT Palmerston North 7:45 am. Eketahuna 8:30 am. The toll call to Pahiatua costs only a few cents so don't let that put you off contacting Jenny. The group will be going in from Holdsworth, following the super highway track up to Mountain House and then onto Totara Flats Hut.. On Sunday we will return via the same route. This overnight trip is ideal for those wanting to extend themselves beyond day trips.				
<b>MARCH 18-19</b>	Pohangina Base	M/F	Graeme Roberts	357-8567
DEPT 6:00 am. Going into Moorcock Base, up to Longview and dropping into the head-waters of the Pohangina River. We will either spend the night at Leon Kinvig or fly camp. You may be lucky and see Blue Duck in this area. On Sunday we will go out to the road bridge on the Pohangina East Rd.				
<b>MARCH 23</b>	Thursday day trippers		Ken & Rosemary Hall	356-8538
<b>MARCH 25</b>	Egmont Summit	F	Bruce Van Brunt	328-4761

DEPT 5:00 am. Bruce will lead the group up the East Ridge and down the North Face to Tahurangi Lodge and back to Stratford Plateau. Lunch will be had at the Sharks Tooth before going on to the summit. At present this is a snow free route except for the crater. It is a fun rock scramble up for at least 2 hours. In total, approximately a 7 hour trip. This trip is weather dependent and Bruce has a poor weather option sorted.

**MARCH 26** Manawatu Gorge E Mick Leyland 357-0122  
DEPT 10:00 am. This is an easy trip suitable for family groups, beginning trampers, those who would like to go for a stroll and those who like to go running through a bush environment in fact everyone should enjoy this trip.

**MARCH 25-26** Totara Flats M Jenny McCarthy 06-376-8838

**MARCH 30** Thursday day trippers Lawson & Sue Pither 357-3033

**MARCH 30 CLUB NIGHT WINE & CHEESE AGM**  
All club members and intending members are encouraged to come to the meeting. Come and have your say for if unable to make it, get your apology to the Secretary, please.

#### APRIL

**COMMITTEE MEETING:** April 6<sup>th</sup> **CLUB NIGHTS** 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>

**APRIL 2** Longview Medium Judy & Peter Stockdale 355-5277  
DEPT 8:00 am. We will go to the Kashmir Road, road end. The trip is a steady climb which will take approximately 2 hours. And the view from the Hut? Well...come and experience it for yourself.

**APRIL 1-2** Pouakai Taranaki Medium Malcolm Parker 357-5203  
DEPT 6:00 am. Malcolm will be beginning the tramp at North Egmont, going up the Razor Back to join up with the Round the Mountain Track, arriving at Holly Hut for lunch. After Holly Hut we will cross the Ahukawakawa Swamp, travelling on to stay at Pouakai Hut for the night. On Sunday the round trip will be completed coming out along the Veronica Track.

**APRIL 6** Thursday day trippers John Rockell 358-3513

**APRIL 9** Purity/Iron Peg Medium Terry Crippen 356-3588  
DEPT 7:00 am. Strolling up to Purity Hut then on to Iron Peg and perhaps beyond. Possibly meeting up with the weekend trip coming from McKinnon.

**APRIL 8-9** McKinnon Hut Med/Fit Peter Darragh 323-4498  
DEPT 6:00 am. Going into Kawhatau Base, across the river on the cage and hopefully spend some time on the tops. Up there we will review the options and make decisions - either to cross along to Mangaweka-Iron Peg or drop down to McKinnon and the Kawhatau River.

**APRIL 13** Thursday day trippers Phil Pearce 354-6687

**APRIL 13** CLUB NIGHT Thursday prior to Easter  
Informal Club meeting. Coffee and chat evening, bring along your photos to share with other trampers.

#### **EDITORIAL**

The other evening, I went to a meeting regarding Hillary Commission funding of club projects for the encouragement of sport, recreation and fitness in the local community. The Hillary Commission has \$1.30 per capita (nationally) to give away for the above activities. In this area the grants are administered by the PNCC. Funds may be granted (or loaned) for a wide variety of purposes that fit the criteria. Proposals must be at least 50% self funded. Training is seen as a key priority by the Commission. Ideas are sought for the committee to consider at the March meeting. Applications for 95-96 must be in by 31 March. Not much time.

#### NOTICES

##### **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 Fiars Road.

Hut passes continue to be available as required at \$40 each.

##### **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?

## **A NEW MAP**

"E 39" otherwise known as "Aspiring" is the latest topo map of the 260 series to be published. It is a "must buy". One look at the location and the detail will have you planning trips there for the next six months. Some club members are fortunate to have tramped and climbed in the Aspiring area.

The Dart River is at the bottom of the map, with Treble Cone ski field near the bottom right corner, and the Beans Burn on the bottom right. Mt Aspiring is seen on the right edge, and the Pyke River (a tributary of the Hollyford) is on the left side. Therefore the guts of the map is the entire upper Arawhata catchment, with such ranges as the Olivine, Haast, Waipara, Barrier, and Snowdrift covered in all their glory. If you know anything of the area, then you will know that it is typically wild and remote, and has numerous mountains, glaciers, rivers, gorges, bluffs, forests, and river flats. It is an amazing area. And the only signs of man are a few huts (very few), one or two airstrips, a little bit of a dirt road, a swing bridge or two, and some tracks! Detail includes Rock Bivvi locations and heights of some waterfalls, and they must be pretty awesome when river sizes are considered. Nomenclature adds a somewhat different, moody, and romantic dimension to the area. Besides the usual Maori names, and names of dignitaries of the day, Charlie Douglas named of mountains such as; Stargazer, Skyscraper, Moonraker, Cloudmaker (lake), Daedulus, Gyrae, and of course Aspiring itself. Then there are theme names of watercourses in the upper Waipara Valley such as; The Common Sailor, The Third Mate, The Cook, The Funnel, The Rudder, The Steward, The Quarterdeck, Shipowner Ridge, Cabin Pass Rapids, The Flight Deck, and Engineer Creek. Douglas continued in the mid-upper Arawhata with; Mts Iona, Eros, Caria, Lydia, Athene, Alpha, Beta, Gamma, and Delta. Later Cartographers named peaks; Mallory, Irvine, Ammundsen, Peary, Johansen, Watkins, and Gates.

## **TRIP DECISIONS?**

If you decide you want to go on a trip, please ensure that you have contacted the leader by the Wednesday before, so that logistical decisions can be made. Recently, there have been several instances of people expressing an interest in a trip on the evening before - the leaders in some cases, having made other plans at that late stage.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Yes its true, Tony and Yvonne are pleased to tell their friends that they will be getting married. This is tying a knot with a difference, or getting roped in. Or shall we say they are going swimming, and will take the plunge.

## **A TRAMPERS GUIDE TO THE WAIOHINE CATCHMENT by Tony Gates**

Totara Flats. Waiohine Gorge. Nigel Barrett Rapids. Derek Sharp Waterfall. Sayers Hut.  
Carkeek Ridge. Park River. High Ridge. Maungahuka. Hector River. Cone Saddle and Ridge.  
Neill Winchcombe Ridge.

These are all names of famous places in the Waiohine Catchment. These names, and many others, have been etched into history by the toil and sweat of trampers. The names of the Waiohine Catchment will live forever in the minds of those who have tramped there.

The mighty Waiohine River is the longest river in the Tararua Ranges, and traverses the entire guts of the ranges from the geographical centre of the Tararuas, Arete, to the Wairarapa Plains. The Waiohine Catchment boundaries most other major catchments of the Tararuas. This is therefore the largest section of the route guide. The map shows it as a long, thin blue line, winding from north to south, bushclad, and with tussock tops along both east and west boundaries for most of its length. The Waiohine Catchment has everything, from beech forest to podocarp, from tussock to leatherwood, from gorges to grassy flats. From wilderness to metalled track. Tramping in the Waiohine Catchment can cover any superlative.

There are not many tracks in the headwaters (above mid Waiohine hut), and it is as remote as you can get in the Tararuas. Tussock tops permit good travel when conditions permit, and most of the main ridges are clear of leatherwood on their tops, or have tracks cut through the (usually) short sections of scrub. The main leading ridges are tracked through the beech forest and to/ from huts, but some of these will be declassified by DOC after 1994, and not maintained. River travel in the headwaters is generally difficult, with waterfalls leading to small gorges that rapidly become large gorges, however some of the most incredibly gorgeous places on this planet are the river flats and open beech forests in the upper Park and Waiohine. Then, all the way down river to the farmland, there are numerous small but extremely pleasant river flats locked in between sections of gorge. Side ridges and side creeks often present difficult travel, though the mountain beech forest is often a real joy to tramp through. The Leatherwood belt is thankfully not consistent throughout the headwaters, or for that matter, lower down the valley, though it still must be treated with respect!

The middle Waiohine valley, with the really big gorges and Hector River as well as the surrounding tops, is similarly not often visited. It is wild and relatively remote. Hidden scenic gems are however not difficult to find.

The lower Waiohine is probably what most of the visitors relate to, with the large river, wide open valley, and the vast grassy paradise of Totara Flats. The main track traverses the valley from Holdsworth Lodge, over to Totara Creek, down Totara Flats, then over to Cone Saddle and the Tauherenikau Valley beyond. There are a few side tracks, but these are planned for limited/ no maintenance, and will no doubt just slowly fade away. Enough of that, now the route guide.

Over the Northern end of the catchment, the only official tracks follow the watershed along the tussock tops/ beech forest, and are not always well marked. Carkeek, Dorset, and McGreggor Ridges, sliced by the map boundary, each have tracks similarly variably marked, each taking approximately one hour from the tussock to the river. To follow the catchment, from Holdsworth to Cone Saddle, would take a fit person in good conditions anywhere between two and four days! (in bad conditions, you simply wouldn't do it!) The few huts found in the central Waiohine- Hector catchments are stuck either on the mist enshrouded tops, or far below, on narrow valley floors. The tracks to and from them usually follow prominent ridges. Mt Holdsworth is perhaps the most prominent Tararua landmark viewed from the Wairarapa Plains, and there are good tracks leading up to the peak. West from there the track descends into the Waiohine catchment in traditional Tararua style, steep and rough (in places at least), and unforgiving for the unprepared. Firstly, Isobell Peak is traversed, then a kink to the left (south) to the bushline, and the long descent on a prominent ridge to the river. The bushline there luckily lacks much leatherwood, and is very pleasant. It is a real relief for the knees to reach the magnificent podocarp forest surrounding the standard NZFS Mid Waiohine Hut. Holdsworth to Isobell one hour, 15 minutes to the bush edge, then maybe one and a half hours to the river itself. The track winds down the eastern bank, over a bluff, then crosses the swing bridge before climbing steeply to the bushline on Aokaparangi. Good views of the gorge. (Avoid the gorge at all costs, unless you are correctly prepared, with a wet suit and truck tube.) Aokap. Biv is located on the bushline, on the next ridge to the south, but following the bushline can be difficult due to leatherwood. Perhaps better to climb up, then down, but beware of typically difficult route finding in poor weather.

The next track south follows the ridge from Maungahuka, East to Concertina Knob (fifteen minutes into the bush), then steeply down to Neill Forks Hut (another standard ex NZFS affair). Last time I did that route it took less than one hour! However, I suspect two- three hours to be more reasonable. There is a swing bridge there. Another steep climb on the track, for maybe one hour, will put you on top of Cone Ridge, then a more gradual descent for a similar length of time to Totara Flats, and the longest swing bridge in the Tararuas. From the bridge, you can glimpse some of the huge grassy slips up in the gorge. There is a slightly overgrown track climbing steeply up the other (western) side of Neill Creek to Neill peak, and the Neill Winchcombe Ridge Track. The ridge north from Mt Holdsworth follows tussock tops and rocky crags to the Kings, from where it is covered by the route guide for the Waingawa Catchment. The Otaki Catchment covers the western side from Arete to Hector. The Neill Winchcombe Ridge, descending east from Hector, will consume all of five or six hours of your life if you choose to tramp there. And be prepared for dry conditions and slightly overgrown tracks. The first two or so hours of the ridge is in tussock, with a strong hint of steep, rugged terrain around the place. Winchcombe Peak is just out of the leatherwood. Then the track proper starts, with a short stint through the leatherwood to the beech forest (large, gnarly and artistic trees) at the old Winchcombe bivvy site, a good spot to camp. This is two minutes stroll to the south of the ridge. Then the track winds up and down, through stunted alpine beech forest, to emerge on Neill peak (one hour). There is a small bit of scree and tussock, and good views from there of the upper Tauherenikau and Hector catchments, and the southern main Tararua Rartge. Five minutes east takes you to the track to Neill Forks Hut, then a short, sharp descent, and corresponding climb, up to the open areas of Cone Peak (Neill- Cone, one hour). The Cone Ridge track is very overgrown on the southern end, and, following a flat ridge, can be difficult to follow. Cone Ridge two hours. Cone Peak to Cone Saddle one hour down the hill, with a big step on the way.

The route in to Totara Flats from Holdsworth Lodge (and road end) follows the well worn and pleasant path down Totara Creek. A friend took his six year old daughter there the other day, telling me that the track is somewhat improved from the old days. I don't really cherish my memories of deep mud puddles, log jams, and slippery boulders. It should take you two hours from the track turnoff to the swing bridge (but I once saw a party take eight hours, mind you, they looked like the sort that would take an hour to walk round the square in town!) There is a shorter alternative route, from Mangatdrere Road to Sawyers Hut (an old private hut, unlocked). Maybe two hours walk takes you to this delightful "antique" hut, on the verge of the middle of Totara Flats.

The swing bridge leads directly to the rustic, (though condemned) old Totara Flats Hut. A short half hour walk leads to the new Totara Flats Hut, with gas on tap and warden. Pleasant grassy flats, wide open spaces, and always the big river, with its swimming holes. The main track follows the river's western bank right down to the swing bridge at the road end. I always find it fascinating wandering down Totara Flats, through vast grassy river flats, then tall podocarp forests. A lovely place. DOC plan a major track upgrade for this bit, I guess with foot bridges, due to high usage, and some grotty sections of the track. At Makaka Creek, the track climbs off up to Cone saddle, steeply at first, then sidling Cone Peak, (one hour) en route to Tauherenikau Valley. Totara Flats Hut to Makaka Creek one hour, and two hours down to tile swing bridge at Walls Whare (Shelter). There is another track to Cone Saddle from the swing bridge, climbing steeply out of the valley, then following a long, flat ridge north to Cone Saddle (two hours). Note, there is another car park, with information and river access, about ten minutes drive down valley.

## TRIP :REPORTS

### ARETE FORKS ADVENTURES

Jan 14/15 by Nigel Barrett

THE PLAN: Blue Range - Cow Creek – Table - Ridge - Tarn Ridge Hut (for the night) - Arete Biv - Bannister - Cow Saddle - Blue Range - Home.

THE WEATHER: Two brilliantly fine days, not a cloud to be seen.

THE TEAM: Derek Sharp, Alistair Millward, Nigel Barrett.

THE COOK: definitely NOT Derek.

THE WAY IT ACTUALLY HAPPENED: (We Started tramping at 7. 22am, a reasonable pace was set, the track is flat for the first 5 minutes as it wanders through the Redwoods (are they native?) (sorry American - ed.) then rises sharply to the top of the Blue Range. It was here that we had our first view of what the day would hold. Mitre was in full view, one could even see Arete Biv in the distance with the naked eye; it was going to be a hot hot hot HOT day. We pushed on, not wishing to waste time as we still had a 1000m climb in the heat of the day. A daunting prospect. Quick progress was made to Cow Creek hut, which after 3.25 hrs saw us arrive just after 10.30. We were already wet with perspiration so we decided to rest by the river. Those of you familiar with the Cow Creek area will know that near the hut is a very deep and very enticing pool. The water was too tempting so a quick revision in plans was made, we were now heading to Arete Forks Hut after a lazy 2 hours swimming and lunching.

We set off again at 12.30 intending on taking THAT sidle track. The sidle track is about 120m above the river and goes constantly up and down through the hordes of Nettle. Nowadays it is well marked and cut; a mere shadow of its former hideousness. The good weather brought birdlife to a frenzy; on this section of track alone we saw lots of Riflemen, Bush Wrens, Tits, Bellbirds, Tuis, Wood Pigeons, Moas, and even the odd Fantail!!

We reached the hut with plenty of time to spare so we wandered upstream to the gorge and waterfall (well worth a visit) then sat outside and had a very frustrating game of Euchre. Dinner was Stodge and Derek did a fine job of heating the rice pudding.

Sunday dawned a brilliant day, not a cloud anywhere, we packed our Nano packs and headed toward the tops. Our plan was now to cross Bannister and head to Blue Range via Cow Saddle. Well today we were spoilt with glorious views 36 shots ain't merely enough, definitely some photos worthy of this years photo competition, both coasts were in full view. There were not so many birds on the tops but there were literally thousands of grasshoppers, green ones;, brown ones, black ones and even a rusty coloured one. In some places three or; more would jump with every footstep. Arete Biv was reached after 3 hrs, this would be our last water supply for the next 7 hrs so we filled up and plodded on. The track across Bannister was not as difficult as I remember it, it would be tricky in winter though. 3.5hrs later we were out of water and merely at the beginning of Cattle Ridge. We descended to Cow Saddle and then along to the Cow Creek turn off. This track is unmarked on the Tararua park map, but it is well blazed and we had no problem at all following the track. By now thirsts were raging and we still had 2hrs to the next water supply (Blue Range Hut), it was time to hang ones head and just plod on and on and on. We had been 4hrs without water before we reached the hut, it was a very welcome sight. After drinks all that remained was the drop to the carpark and the long drive home. We spent 13hrs tramping that day and by the end the heat exhaustion was starting to show on some of us. All-in-all, an excellent trip.

#### **ROARING STAG - 15 January by Doug**

We didn't go to the beach but we enjoyed the beech  
We went to the mountains but not to Mountain Rock  
A falling tree broke the bridge but we crossed the river dry  
Monica saw a trout but we didn't have fish for tea  
We're not aristocrats but there were crown ferns aplenty  
We saw a robin but no one got mugged  
Dragonflies were numerous but only one flying dragon

Five of us went but had 12 legs

Neil Campbell, Monica and Noel Cantwell (and Rosemary the dog) and Doug Strachan.

#### **WATERFALL HUT - HAWKES BAY RIDGE TRAVERSE, RUAHINE RANGES 4-6 February 1995**

This was the third attempt on the Hawkes Bay Ridge in the central Ruahine for the two of us, Terry Crippen and Peter Darragh, within the year. The trip started as usual, on Friday night, with the evening walk up to Purity hut by torchlight. This gets about 700 m, or 2000 ft (which sounds better), of height out of the way, with very little effort so you wake up in the morning with only 400 m of height to gain before you are on Iron Peg. And there is nothing wrong with Purity hut for a good nights sleep.

Saturday morning, as usual, was misty as we headed up to Wooden Peg. The mist didn't clear and the rain started. Reaching Iron Peg, we then turned southeast and worked our way along the start of the Hawkes Bay Ridge. (This 5 km long ridge connects the Hikurangi Range to the main range at Ohuinga). Map and compass were the order of the day as the mist got thicker and the rain got heavier. By the time we got to the saddle at the head of Pinnacle Stream, we couldn't see the point of spending the next five hours wet and with no views so exited down Pinnacle Stream to Waterfall Hut and an early lunch.

About mid afternoon the rain stopped and the cloud lifted so we decided to go for a wander. The wander turned out to be a climb onto, and traverse along, Broken Ridge, which isn't the easiest access to and from Waterfall Hut. Good views were had of Ohuinga in the south and Rangioteatua to the north. We returned down the much easier travelling Tussock Creek, hoping that the fine weather would hold for tomorrow.

And it did. So with an early morning start we packed our gear, headed up the upper Kawhatau, and climbed Tussock Creek. Heading south along the main range, it didn't take too long before we reached the top of Ohuinga, by now capped in mist. So it was out with map and compass again as we headed, this time northwest, along the Hawkes Bay Ridge. It wasn't long before the mist lifted and we got the traverse and views we were wanting. A good section of well worn path, some interesting rocky nobs to scramble over, and a 'hole in the rock' saw us having lunch on point 1632 m just above Pinnacle Steam. We had a number of options for the afternoon: drop to the south down to the Pourangaki, or continue along to Purity or to McKinnon, or drop down to Waterfall again. While we were idly discussing these options we could see so black evil rain clouds bucketing down on parts of the farmland to the west. We decided on the Waterfall hut option.

By the time we had got into the head of Pinnacle Stream (5 minutes) we were engulfed in a deluge from one of these evil looking clouds complete with thunder and lighting about us. Within 5 more minutes the head of Pinnacle Stream was a raging torrent of brown mud, rock, and water coming down in surges! We quickly scrambled out of its path, not wanting to be bashed to bits then washed away. We spent some time watching this flash flood, as neither of us had seen anything like it before! The rain was so concentrated that an adjacent scree was beginning to flow also. We worked our way down the side of Pinnacle Stream, noticing that none of the other side-gulleys or streams were in flood, and we were soon out of the rain. Even the Kawhatau was flowing almost normally, except for Pinnacle Stream's brown contribution.

Reaching Waterfall Hut we found a welcoming fire, with Mick and Trev, and others in residence. Later on that afternoon we had a hailstorm on the hut, then Waterfall Stream had its own bank-to-bank flash flood.

By morning the steam and river were almost back to normal, and the westerly conditions had changed round to the east. We headed down the Kawhatau and up Iron Peg stream. One section of the stream had recently been chocked with gravels to a depth of 1 to 2 metres then soon after scoured out as the stream cut back to its previous bed. This left an interesting set of depositional/erosional terraces. We decided that all of this would have taken place within a hour or two yesterday with another localized downpour.

Once we had climbed out of the stream onto Iron Peg it was sunny weather, an early lunch at Purity and a stroll down to the road end to complete the trip.

**COBB AND CO.** December 1994. T. Gates, Y. van der Does, S. Hewson.

It's a long and windy road to the Cobb Valley, behind Takaka. However, it is a delightful spot for a few days tramping, and deservedly gets quite a few visitors. Fenella Hut, located in sub-alpine Beech forest at the head of the Cobb valley, is well known as one of the most delightful huts about. That was our destination.

We arrived late-ish at the road end, so camped the night next to the lake (with hundreds, no thousands of blood thirsty little insects!) Then there was no hurry to Fenella the next day, a reasonable four- five hour tramp. We ambled up through the very pleasant alpine flowers and grassy river flats, and pockets of beech forest, to the first hut, Chaffeys, a rather antique affair made from beech timber slabs. The track was good, but extremely muddy in the few short sections that have not been drained. Shin deep mud! (or was it thigh deep?) Overcast weather and drizzle made us keen to press on, stopping only briefly at Cobb Hut (four bunks), then Fenella Hut for a late lunch. Nice to have the fire, gas, and mattresses. The weather somewhat detracted from what is obviously a very scenic valley, and some of the alpine type bluffs of the wondrously named "Mt Xenicus" were semi-hidden by the mist. However, there was some clear weather later in the day, and we did get out and about for a look-see. Some even went swimming in one of the lovely crisp alpine tarns near the hut.

A good nights sleep, and the weather was still overcast and semi drizzly. We didn't rush things, preferring to look about, and do a couple of side tramps. We enjoyed the ten minute walk to Lake Cobb, which would be a lovely spot to camp at. We had a few swims in the river on the way back, but found the water a bit too chilly to permit more than a nano second dip! Diary records a high sandfly population still. The tramp ended in that most enjoyable of ways, with coffee and cake at a local B. & B.

**RECIPES FOR THE ADVENTUROUS** (The D. Sharp "hot stuff" recipe)

This is for a taste of variety, of style, of "hot stuff". This is the recipe for "Ruahine Relish", to be appreciated with savouries on your next tramp.

Mince	- Six onions
	- Twenty green tomatoes
Add	- Chillies to taste
	- spoon curry powder
	- spoon salt and pepper
	- a few cloves
	- 500 g brown sugar
	- cup flour
	- ginger & lemon peel

- cup seedless raisins  
- quarter cabbage or cauliflower  
Boil with - 1 litre vinegar, two hours  
Cool and bottle.

## GEAR HIRE

Yes! PNTMC has gear for hire. ...

13	Ice Axes	8	Snow stakes
7 pairs	Rawlings Crampons	4 pairs	Salewa Crampons
	Tent Flys	5	Ropes
1	Abseiling Rope	1	Climbing Rope 11 mmx50 m
4	Fuel Bottles	5	Primus
1	Tool Kit		
	Assorted Climbing Gear - Karabiners etc.		
1	Pressure Cooker	5	Billies
1	Bivy Bag	8	Tent-flys
1	Tent	2	First Aid Kits

Reasonable prices.

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

**PLEASE RETURN THE GEAR PROMPTLY**

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

Postage Paid  
Permit Number 286  
Palmerston North