



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217
PALMERSTON NORTH
NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1995 Edition

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ENQUIRES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

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TRIPS OFTEN LEAVE FROM THE FOOTOWN 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

APRIL

COMMITTEE MEETING:	April 6 th	CLUB NIGHTS	13 th & 27 th
APRIL 13	Thursday day trip		Phil Pearce 354-66

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

APRIL 15-17 Lake Colenso Medium Leader required 358-6894
If you are interested in leading or going on, this trip, please contact a committee member as soon as possible.

APRIL 16 Sunrise Hut Easy Nigel Scott 326-8161
DEPT 7:00 am Another cruisey trip. If it is clear we will go up to Armstrong Saddle to get a view of Ruapehu. On the return we will take the track down to Waipawa Chalet and go out via the river.

APRIL 20 Thursday day trippers Judy Stockdale 355-5277

APRIL 22 Awatere Easy Richard Lockett 323-0948
DEPT 7:30 am Please note that Richard Lockett is now leading this trip, Tui has work commitments this weekend. Richard will go in from Moorcock Base and will be walking up the river to the Awatere Hut. Please note Richard's new phone number is 323-0948. Tui will lead another easy trip 7th May.

APRIL 22-23 Mokai Patea Med/Fit Brian Lawrence 324-8552
DEPT 6:00 am Brian will be going in from Kawhatau Base, up to Mt Colenso and along the Mokai Patea range to Rongotea, drop down to Crow Hut and go up river to McKinnon Hut for the night. On the second day the group will climb up to the Hikurangi Range, drop the packs and walk along to Mt Hikurangi. The return will be back along the Hikurangi Range and down Kawhatau Base. If the weather conditions are not suitable an easier option will be taken.

APRIL 25 ANZAC TUESDAY Earnslaw Forest Easy Dennis Moore 357-5651
DEPT 10:00 am This is a very easy trip, suitable for families. Dennis will be going up Forest Hill Road to meet up with a stream which leads to a bush reserve. A good way to spend a work free day!!!

APRIL 27 Thursday day trippers Doug Wakeling 323-4127

APRIL 27 CLUB NIGHT
This evening's guest speaker is Peter Carver, a member of MTSC. Peter travelled to Nepal at the end of 1994, and he will tell us about his trekking experiences amongst the BIG Mountains.

APRIL 30 Sunrise Waipawa Loop Med Warren Wheeler 356-1998
DEPT 7:30 am Warren will be going up to Sunrise then around towards Te Atuaoparapara and dropping down the scree into the Waipawa headwaters. From here it is down the river and back to the road end.

APRIL 30 Harris Creek Jog Arron Panchaud 354-8422
DEPT 7:30 am Aaron says that this trip will be a quiet and enjoyable jog into Harris Creek Hut. A water bottle is essential.

APRIL 29-30 Medium
DEPT Brenton is unable to lead this trip and so will lead it instead.

COMMITTEE MEETING: MAY 4th **MAY**
CLUB NIGHTS: 11th & 25th

MAY 4 Thursday day trippers: Monica Cantwell 354-3834

MAY 7 Takapari – A-Frame Mtn Bike / Easy Stuart Hubbard 356-8782
DEPT 8:00 am This trip is suitable for all comers with mountain bikes. Anyone wanting to walk Takapari Road is welcome. If you want to do a crossing to the Hawke's Bay side contact Tui Craven who is going to do an Easy trip into Stanfield, (see below), so transport can be co-ordinated. The crossing would be more a Medium Grade.

MAY 7 Stanfield - A-Frame Easy & Easy-medium Tui Craven 355-4179
DEPT 8:00 am Tui will lead this trip as an extra to the advertised card trips. First Tui will be going up to Stanfield Hut, the weather conditions on the day, will be the deciding factor as to which route 'will be taken, from there she will go up to Takapari Rd and along to the A-Frame and drop back down to the road end.

MAY 6-7 Rockslide Biv Medium Mick Levland 358-3183

DEPT 6:00 am Mick will be going in from Masters Shelter in the northern Ruahine's. He will go along the ridge and make a loop around the tops and drop off at a likely spot to Rockslide Biv for the night. On the Sunday the return will be via a different route depending upon the weather conditions.

MAY 11 Thursday day trippers Judy Calleson 357-0192

MAY 11 CLUB NIGHT

This evening club member, Bruce van Brunt, will show slides of kayaking in Minnesota.

MAY 14 Mikairo Easy Brenton Sheppard 06-376-8474
DEPT 8:30 am This is an easy walk to a place that the club has not led a trip to. It is also a challenging mountain bike trip. If there is a sufficient number of vehicles it will be possible to do a cross over trip. So if it's a walk you want or a bike ride, phone up Brenton.

MAY 13-14 Penn Creek Medium Richard Lockett 323-0948
DEPT 7: 30 am From Otaki Forks Richard will be going to Penn Creek Hut via Field Hut track.

MAY 18 Thursday day trippers Tony Cameron 356-5461

MAY 21 Rangī Easy Jenny McCarthy 06-376-8838

MAY 20-21 Rime Medium Doug Strachan 357-573

MAY 25 Thursday day trippers Russell Johnson 358-7777

MAY 25 CLUB NIGHT

This evening's speaker is John Barkla, an ex- PNTMC club member. John works for DOC in Wanganui and his special interest is endangered native plant species. This evening he will speak about threatened plant conservation in the Wanganui - Rangitikei - Manawatu areas.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS & PHONE NO.

Richard Lockett Phone 323-0948
Warren Wheeler P.O. Box 1066 P.N. Phone 356-1998
Candy Wong 43 Thomson Street. P.N.

EDITORIAL

As incoming president I have; taken this opportunity to put some thoughts down. First I would like to thank last year's president, officers, committee and helpers for their effort in club organization. As I started to make list of the many jobs that were done I began to realise that most of the effort is behind the scenes. For example all the phone calls and coercing weeks in advance to get the trip card out for six months at a time. Special thanks to Tricia, who as President has put in many hours of time.

It is over ten years since I was last on the committee. Since then there has been some significant changes; e.g. we don't use the MUAC Hut on Ruapehu any more, and Midwinter and Christmas celebrations have gone from Ranqi Hut. However there is still plenty of good trips being done (with mountain bike occasionally), open weekends take place at Rangataua, and there is a indoor climbing wall at Massey (used it yet?).

Autumn seems to me the logical time for the committee change since it is really the start of the tramping year. Many of us have returned from longer summer trips, long weekends are all but finished and the first snows will soon arrive. Weekend trips become the norm and it is a time to get to know new faces. With colder temperatures and shorter daylight hours it becomes more critical that tramping and alpine skills are learned and/or perfected. The series of snowcraft weekends, on Ruapehu and Taranaki, starting in July are just one part of progressive development of skills. Hopefully many current and prospective club members will come on these as well as putt in skills in practice on other trips. During winter we also have the photo competition, interclub debate and quiz, and midwinter festivities. What about visiting the climbing wall?

Later on in the tramping year, as spring arrives, other skills can be learnt including river crossing and mixed snow/rock climbing. In this way skills and experience are built up for use later in the tramping year which for many hopefully, will include longer South Island trips over the summer.

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NOTICES

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NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome four new members to the club:

Judy Callesen
Karere Road
Palmerston North

Adam Fort
14-B Milson Line
Ph. 355-1389

Toby Bunn
C/o 2nd. Field Squadron
Linton Army Camp Ph. 325-8819 ext 7544

Liz and Arthur Flint and family
43 Long Melford Road
Palmerston North
Ph 356-.1654
Kevin Mansell
14-8 Milson Line
Ph. 355-1389

NEW COMMITTEE FOR 1995/1996

The following were elected at the AGM to run the affairs of the club for 95/96:

President	Terry Crippen
Vice President	Derek Sharp
Secretary	Nigel Barrett
Treasurer	Peter Wiles
Patron and Auditor	Lawson Pither

Committee: Bruce van Brunt, Tony Gates, Nigel Scott and Warren Wheeler.

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 Peter's place 12 Jensen Street.

We are in the final stages of completing a map and hut pass order. Please get your requirements into Nigel.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

At the AGM, it was resolved that subscriptions would remain unchanged for 95/96. They are - Ordinary \$25, Family \$30 and Junior \$10. Please get your subs into the treasurer as soon as possible.

CLUB NIGHTS

At the AGM it was resolved that club nights will be standardised on the second and last Thursdays of the month. This will come into effect from July because the club nights for the first half of the year have been specified in the current trip card.

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.

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.

A TRAMPERS GUIDE TO THE OHAU CATCHMENT. By Tony Gates

The Ohau Catchment is the home of supplejack! It is a small catchment, at least by Tararua standards, often utilised, as the Mangatainoka is, as a jumping off point before you visit the vast Tararua heartland and the tops beyond. NB, access to the Ohau has frequently encountered legal difficulties because it crosses farmland, and, being only fifteen minutes from Levin, is not far for vandals go.

Lower Ohau River

From Levin, the Poads Road carpark is only 15, ten minutes drive. There are marker poles across the farmland to the bush edge (ten minutes), then a well used, though muddy, track follows the west bank of the river for 30 minutes to the new swing bridge over Blackwater Stream, then Ohau Shelter. That is a grotty place, that should be burnt to the ground if it has not already been destroyed. The river can be followed back down from the shelter at the price of wet feet. The usual route follows the river upstream from there for one hour, to the south/ North Ohau forks (Deception spur). There is now a new track on the west bank named "Oscars Track", which is yet to be connected to any others. Shelter to forks, by either track or river (when low) one hour. Continue on South Ohau (below).

Waiopahu track climbs the very gentle ridge on the Ohau catchments western boundary, from the farmland, or from Ohau Shelter. Farmland to Waiopahu Hut 4 hours (variable). Several dog legs on the flat track make for deceptive distance calculations. Edwards shelter, an hour or so before Waiopahu Hut is very grotty, but has water. Waiopahu Hut is a pleasant resting spot for those continuing on up the stepped track to Waiopahu peak, with its small area of tussock tops. Bit of leatherwood there too, but reasonably well cut r tracks where they count. Great views from Waiopahu. Then there is a gentle saddle to the south-east, before the grave and memorial cross of Twin Peaks. The partially overgrown track continues to the north, to a saddle then Richards knob (one hour), then a further three hours over Gable End and Mayo Knob back to Ohau Shelter. Muddy.

South Ohau

The route up into the North Ohau from the confluence follows the river bed, which can easily be followed most times. The small gorge presents no real problems. Forks to south Ohau Hut one hour. (South Ohau Hut is a reasonable starting point for a Friday night.) "Yeates 500" track climbs steeply behind the hut for half an hour, but soon levels off, then splits to the east, (a further half an hour) to Te Matawai Hut, (another half hour) and to the west, to Butchers Saddle then Richards Knob (one hour). Te Matawai Hut is a fairly popular hut because of its location, not its quality. Every time I have visited, it is grotty. Last year, it had no water! Five minutes past the hut, in heavy scrub and deep mud, the track splits, east (and up) to Pukematawai, or north (and down!) to Girdlestone Saddle. Te Matawai Hut to Girdlestone Saddle one hour. There is a quicker route from South Ohau Hut to Girdlestone Saddle directly up the main river sidling Downing Falls on a well marked track. Hut to Saddle one & half hours.

Deception Spur, in between the two Ohau branches, has an old route, but is not easy to follow. DOC plan a major new track there, and a swing bridge at the forks.

North Ohau

This catchment is seldom visited despite its proximity to the road end, and presents some very mixed travel. Following the river bed from the forks takes you past some wide open flats for about an hour, then just as the valley closes in, North Ohau Biv is found. No facilities, avoid! Five minutes up valley are some delightful grassy river flats, much more my style. Everything is strictly off track above there, as the valley steepens. However, there are still numerous open spots and slips, and some great views of mighty Dundas Ridge and the Mangahao Valley. An interesting off track day trip.

Part three: The Makeretu catchment

Another seldom visited catchment, with one long stream providing reasonable off track travel, and heavily bushed faces. Good river flats. The Makeretu provides a good route up to the big bush of the Waitewaewae/ Otaki, and to Oriwa Ridge Biv, but the area is strictly for the competent bushman, and can be rather unpleasant in grotty weather. Poads road car park to Oriwa. Biv seven hours (in good conditions!).

TRIP REPORTS

TRAMPING AND CLIMBING AT ARTHUR'S PASS

MONDAY JANUARY 9: Our tramp - a variation on the Three Pass trip - began in sunshine. This was especially welcome after the rain of the previous evening, which caused a minor electrical gremlin under the bonnet of Barry's car. The rain also made camping in a rest area somewhere south of Kaikoura at around midnight even less fun than usual. However, the weather brightened up during the day. We ate lunch at Arthur's Pass village and dried out the tent. Then it was an enjoyable walk up the Waimakariri River bed, leaving Klondyke Corner at 3:30 and arriving at Carrington Hut at 8:00. With just four and a half hours of tramping on flat terrain, it was a good chance to get accustomed to the weight of our packs.

TUESDAY JANUARY 10: We departed Carrington Hut at 8:00, under cloudy skies and almost immediately had to wade the fast-flowing White River. Currently this is the only way to cross the White, because the 1994 Arthur's Pass earthquake has rendered the cableway unsafe. We then tramped up the Taipoiti Stream, crossing several rock slides, more evidence of the recent quake. We crossed Harman Pass (1326m) and found a campsite near Ariel's Tarn. The weather had improved and the tarn looked very picturesque, with the sun shining on the deep blue water. We had an early lunch and left most of our gear there, covering it with rocks as protection against any delinquent keas. We spent the afternoon climbing nearby Mt. Campbell (1844m). Instead of returning by the same route, we scrambled along a rocky ridge, Barry leading the way, before descending and passing a large tarn which was mostly still covered in snow. That evening there were periods of rain and a chilly wind from the southeast, and Roderick found the cold temperature was ideal for making

instant pudding. This was in fact to be the only rain we experienced during our time in the South Island. Awesome.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 11: The objectives of the day were to cross Whitehorn Pass and to climb Mount Rosamund enroute. After a cosy night in the tent we set off at 8:00, ascending steadily up a snow-covered valley towards the pass. Near the pass we dumped most of our gear and commenced our ascent of Mount Rosamund. The first stage of the climb was a steep ascent of some 30 metres, after which we crossed a ridge and emerged on to the Cronin Glacier. We edged around the glacier towards the eastern end of the summit ridge, but decided that this steep, exposed approach was too risky: apart from crampons and iceaxes, our only climbing equipment on the tramp was one 30 metre length of 6mm rope. Perhaps the summit would be more accessible from the west? We traversed the nevee, negotiated a couple of bergschrunds, pigeon holed up another steep slope. From here a ridge of bare, very loose rock led up and along to the 2195 metre summit, which we reached at about 1:30. We headed back down, eating lunch before the tricky final descent, and returned to our kea-proof depot of gear at 4:30. This was not the time to kick back and enjoy a well-earned rest. Instead it was time to throw all our gear into our packs and get moving. We still had to cross Whitehorn Pass (1753m) and trudge 6 kilometres down the Cronin Stream to Park Morpeth Hut. In the Cronin Valley one stop was made because one member of the party had a nose bleed: blood pooled in some Ranunculus leaves, making them seem like a new species of carnivorous plant. But overall travel was swift down the valley. We reached the hut at 8:00, feeling pretty weary. Park Morpeth - "Park Morbid" - is not the most salubrious of huts and some of us were quite happy to sleep in the tent. (However, DOC is very keen to collect fees for P.M., as we later discovered).

THURSDAY JANUARY 12: Today was a rest day, of sorts. You can't waste a beautiful sunny day lounging around the hut, especially if the hut in question is Park Morpeth. It was nearly eleven o'clock before we departed on a day trip to Browning Pass. We walked up the Wilberforce for a couple of kilometres; then it was an increasingly steep climb up to the pass. Care was needed near the top, and iceaxes were required on a little patch of snow. On to the pass, and Lake Browning came into view – magnificent sight. Ice floes contrasted with the dark blue sun-dappled water. The surrounding golden tussock ensured that the scene was by no means a polar one, without detracting from the beauty of the scene before us. We had lunch above the lake and then wandered back to the hut, but before doing so, Terry, Chris and Roderick spent an hour walking around the lake and getting a view up the Wilberforce valley towards Popes' Pass.

FRIDAY JANUARY 13: We rose at the painful hour of 5:00 and by 6:30 we were tramping up the Wilberforce, in the twilight of another fine morning. The early start was necessary if we wanted to avoid the full force of the sun while making the steep climb up to Pope's Pass (1600m). This we did, and were on the pass at 9:30. We were in the sunshine as we sidled down to the Julia River through soft snow, and it was very hot already. The second stage of the day's journey was to travel down the Julia valley to Julia Hut. Initially this seemed a doddle, just ambling and botanizing our way down the stream. (Incidentally, the plant life was superb in the areas we passed through). But then the stream grew bigger, we encountered a series of waterfalls, and there was no track to resort to. A couple of hours of bashing through dense scrub - often on near-vertical slopes, falling down holes, and getting very hot and thirsty, and then we stumbled upon a somewhat overgrown track. By this time it was nearly 2:30, time for lunch in the shade. Another couple of hours, and we reached the New Julia Hut.

SATURDAY JANUARY 14: After a good night's sleep, we set off for Hunt's Creek r Hut via Dry Creek at 7:45. We tramped down the Taipo for a couple of kms, crossing the three-wire bridge over Tumbledown Creek. Next it was a "steady" one thousand metre ascent up Dry Creek - it wasn't dry - to the unnamed pass at the head of the valley. Having read the brief handwritten route guide provided in the hut book, we knew to cross the northern-most of the two saddles. Lunch was eaten at the top of the pass, and then Terry and Chris wandered up to the peak between the two saddles (1580m) while Barry and Roderick just basked in the sunshine and absorbed the amazing views. Mount Rosamund was still visible, as it had been from all the previous passes. It was another steep descent to Hunt's Creek: first on soft snow; then down a scree slope and through tussock to the stream. From there we walked through scrub and boulder hopped to Hunt's Creek Hut, a very pleasant little four-bunk hut. We were able to cool off in a little lake close by. Visitors to the hut were few and included a British couple whose activities in the National Park comprised "having sex in wilderness huts", according to the Hut Book. No wonder one of the bunks was in danger of collapse. That afternoon there was another visitor to Hunt's Creek Hut: an inquisitive weka who entertained us as he snooped around the hut, beak darting this way and that. The weka made an unsuccessful attempt to make of with Roderick's crampons, displaying questionable taste in mountaineering equipment.

SUNDAY JANUARY 15: Al though we were a day ahead of schedule, we decided return to civilization today. The weka had returned this morning with a friend, and greedily fed on our porridge scraps. We left the hut at 9:00. The sky was grey as we tramped down the valley, but the cloud had lifted by the time we reached Hunt Saddle (808m). On the way we paused to watch a kea which was perched on a rock only a few metres from us. It was very warm as we covered the last few kilometres down Kelly's Creek to Kelly's Shelter beside the main road. At the shelter Terry checked the 1: 50000 map carefully. Three kilometres to the Otira pub. As you

would imagine, we made good time up the highway and those beers tasted pretty good after a week in the wilderness. Back in Arthur's Pass village we decided to stay in the NZAC lodge, which has essential benefits of Western civilization such as electricity and hot showers. Good value for money too.

MONDAY JANUARY 16: Today was a rest day, but not a day of inactivity. In the morning we walked down to the village and visited the DOC visitors' centre, and after lunch we tramped up the Otira Valley - checking out the route up Mt Rolleston. In the evening we also spent a very useful session doing rope work just outside the lodge in preparation for the next day.

TUESDAY JANUARY 17: This was the day for our assault on Mount Rolleston. We rose before dawn and at 6:15 we began tramping up the Otira Valley, retracing our footsteps from Monday afternoon's outing. The weather was excellent. Again. It was calm and the patches of early morning cloud soon cleared, giving way to blue sky. After about an hour and a half we hit the snow and began the long climb up the Otira Slide. The snow was firm and the surface a little icy, so cramponing was good. We continued in a zigzag fashion up the Slide. Thankfully we were in the shade for almost the whole way up the Slide: the sun had not risen above the Goldney Ridge yet. Occasionally rocks plummeted down the slide at a tremendous rate of knots and one missed Chris by about six feet. At about 9:30 we reached a saddle and from here it was a rather steep climb up to a point just below the low peak of Rolleston. We arrived there just after 10:30. Terry took the opportunity to bound up to the low peak (2211 metres). The decision was made to put on our harnesses here. Then we crossed the rocky ridge and skirted around the nevee of the Crow Glacier to the base of a ridge. We removed our crampons, crossed a shrund and immediately embarked on some intense - it was tense in places - rock climbing: around, up and along a series of bluffs which comprise the ridge of bare rock leading to the summit. The rock was mostly of much better quality than on Mount Campbell and Mount Rosamund. We didn't rope up but caution was certainly needed. At 11:45 we reached the summit of Mount Rolleston (2271m). The glorious weather meant that there were spectacular views in every direction: mountain ranges as far as the eye could see. After eating lunch we headed back down over the rocks. Barry and Terry belayed Roderick and Chris respectively down the last couple of pitches before we reached the snow. The rock was steeper there and there was more loose material than elsewhere. The extra weight of all that climbing gear had been justified. We retraced our steps in the much - softened snow around the nevee, crossed the ridge, and then pigeonholed - some people at faster speeds than others - all the way down to the steep col. The sun was now overhead and it was damn hot. No one had much, if anything, left to drink, but all members of the party travelled quickly down the Otira Slide to the stream. From here we made good time along the valley to the carpark, at 4:30. Immediately we resumed a comparatively sybaritic existence. Hot showers at the NZAC hut, then, resplendent in our street clothes, we walked down to the Chalet for a few beers. What a life. Everyone, even Terry, was feeling somewhat worn out, so we decided to return home a day early, on Wednesday the 18th. (Also fine: it was a scorcher as we drove through North Canterbury and Marlborough in the middle of the day.) Members of the party were: Terry Crippen, Barry Scott, Chris Saunders and Roderick Saunders.

TO WAIOPEHU HUT VIA GABLE END - 22 January 1995

At 8 o'clock on the Sunday morning we parked the car in Ohau Gorge without taking it across the rather ominous looking bridge. We walked for some 20 minutes across pastureland and then got into the rainforest. Only three days after my arrival in New Zealand (from Sweden) I was standing in a kind of vegetation we only see on TV and then in connection with snakes, tigers or booby-traps, so it was reassuring to hear that New Zealand wilderness contains no hidden dangers. Though later during the day we were to pass a few crosses with names engraved. ...!

Palmerston North Tramping Club had appeared in the form of Mick and Brian at 7 o'clock that morning and in an easy going "stroll" now took us to Ohau Hut. There we caught some campers just waking up and also used our last chance to fill our water bottles before the next hut. The following 2½ hours were less easy going. Now the path up Gable End climbs steeply through the bush. It was narrow and sometimes a bit unclear but the trees marked, so it could always be found. A couple we met hinted that completing the loop the other way round might have been more comfortable. I was inclined to believe them.

As we left the mysterious looking forest, we got out onto the ridge at about 1100 m above sea level and had some very well deserved good views over the Tararuas. The vegetation now consisted mainly of spikes, hooks and prickles and sharp edges. It had also grown across the path which was therefore invisible and consisted of a series of booby trap's. (I know there had to be something!) A pair of gaiters (which we Swedes only use when we go cross-country skiing) would have been good.

After a couple of sandwiches the number of booby traps decreased markedly, and once we had passed Richards Knob, the highest point of the track, and started coming down the ridge which leads to Waiopahu Hut, the track was pleasant, visible and went through nice grass.

A specimen of New Zealand wildlife (suspiciously similar to a Swedish house mouse) departed hastily as we entered the somewhat rough hut where Mick made some very welcome coffee. The retreat also

deserves to be mentioned for its nice interior decoration (true!). Edwards Shelter, on the other hand, situated further down the track, does not deserve mentioning. You'd have to be more than desperate to even consider entering it!

A pleasant descent through the forest took us back to the car. After 9 hours, the day had to me felt like a true adventure and it was a great introduction to New Zealand wilderness.

Kristina, Brian and Mick.

ICE CRAFT 11-12 MARCH by Alistair Millward

"Wow, ice sculpting" said a friend when I told him I was going on ice craft. This isn't quite what the trip was about, we were more interested in learning the skills of glacier travel and having some fun on ice. We left late on Saturday afternoon, because Sunday's weather looked better and after a short walk in we spent the night at Blyth Hut. This is a great spot although usually filled with people. The long evening of discussion led to the invention of the T.C.L. We were talking about what to do if you have to tramp in the dark and don't have a torch (something some of us have done with varying degrees of success at times). Terry came up with the idea of putting a candle in an inverted plastic bottle hence the Terry's Candle Lantern. No doubt a design will appear in this newsletter soon. During the night some of us didn't sleep very well. I woke at three and experienced the typical mountain hut situation of lying awake listening to other people lying awake listening to me. Isn't it funny how in that situation no one ever says a word.

The next day we returned to the cars and drove to the top of the skifield road. From here it is an hour and a half to two hour walk up to the glacier. We then proceeded to rope up for glacier travel. Peter's group were quickly away but the others were slower. Some had to tie swami harnesses because they didn't own a proper one or one particular person had left their brand new sit-harness on top of the wardrobe at home. We crossed the glacier carefully following the correct rules although there was little risk as the crevasses were all open and obvious. Some of the group went straight onto the vertical ice while. Others practised cravasse rescue techniques. After learning about prussiking and z-pulleys they then went and joined the others in a great little slot with a snowed in floor. There was lots of vertical ice which everyone had a go at climbing. Terry set up a prussik for those who hadn't done it earlier and we were also introduced to the joys of classic abseil, rather a risky operation if you ask me. Derek did a good lead of some particularly steep ice and in following him up that same person, who had also forgotten their bash hat dropped an ice axe on their own head. Adam while climbing this same section had a fairly spectacular fall. Vertical ice climbing is much harder than it looks and if you don't have the proper boots and technique it is very strength dependant. We spent several hours doing this and although the weather packed in, it was nice and sheltered in the slot.

We were having so much fun that we didn't get back to the cars until after five and believe it or not, Derek was beaten off the mountain! The service station at Waioroti had sold out of hot pies much to our disappointment. We arrived home late, tired, sore in unusual places (I wonder about those who did the classic abseil) and some of us were very hungry. Overall it was a great experience. Many thanks to our instructors: Peter Wiles, Terry Crippen and Derek Sharp. The learners and those out to have a good time were Alan Bee, Adam Fort, Kevin Mansell, Phil Brown, Peter Burgess and Alistair Millward.

RANGATAUA OPEN WEEKEND 18-19th February by John Eyres

Having only ever tramped on disorganised and usually disastrous expeditions into the Tararuas with friends, I was a little nervous at the prospect of an "open" weekend at Ruapehu. I thought we might be really roughing it up there! It turned out to be a civilised, even luxurious weekend. Sue and Lawson Pither kindly offered me (and my outrageously overloaded pack) a ride up with them on Friday afternoon. After a pleasant drive we arrived at their chalet, basking in sunshine reflected off the snowy peaks. Unfortunately the lawn mower wouldn't start, so despite my offer to do the lawns, I was forced to put my feet up and contemplate the beautiful surrounds. After an excellent dinner, Lawson took me for a walk around Rangataua; once a prosperous railway town, but now a kind of ghost town with an interesting mixture of decaying and beautifully renovated houses.

Terry and Christine arrived that night and Lou, Jenny and Rose early on Saturday morning. Terry and Christine left first on Saturday morning to climb to the Ruapehu summit before the sun reached full strength. They went up Taurangi via the snow slopes above the ski field then onto the rock ridge to the top. Terry says they "could see all the relevant world: Kawekas, Kaimanawas and the Ruahine Ranges".

After some debate over the logistics, it was determined that Sue, Jenny, Rose and myself would attempt the Tongariro crossing from Mangatepopo. Lawson and Lou would accompany us up as far as Red Crater for lunch and then traverse Tongariro, circling back to the car park to pick up the cars and meet us at the bottom of the Ketetahi track. On the track the sun really caught up with us after morning tea, just as we started to climb the saddle up onto South Crater. Lawson took it easily in his stride, fresh from his silver medal performance in the master's power walking. I was at this point that I really regretted bringing my heavy pack - it

reduced me to a crawl, and I offered it to the tourists several times. After lunch at the top, Lou and Lawson galloped off for Tongariro. The rest of us sauntered down to the Emerald Lakes where I had a swim and immediately cramped up. I thought I was going to drown. The rest of the tramp was fairly relaxed, walking through the craters, taking in some of the most interesting, eerie scenery around. Very nice stop at the pub in Ohakune on the way back too. It was amazing to see the number of European tourists (literally hundreds) on the track. It makes me wonder if we might have to pay to get onto the track in future?

Sunday turned out to be fairly low key due to Saturday's exertions and a fairly late night. Sue and Lawson had a rest day. Jenny, Lou and Rose went off to Mangaturuturu Hut. Terry and Christine and I went for a bash in search of the old Blyth Hut, following the old Blyth track, clearly marked on one of Lawson's old maps.

We left the "round the mountain track" just on from where it joins the existing Blyth track, eventually finding the remains of the old hut, then looped around and down the new Blyth Hut, sometimes called the old Blyth Hut, perhaps because there's another Blyth Hut somewhere ..I'm really quite confused about the whole thing! Anyway, I think it's fair to say everyone had a great time. Thanks to Sue and Lawson.

Team: Sue and Lawson Pither, Terry Crippen and Christine Cheyne, Jenny and Lou Prichard, Rose Aston and John Eyres.

SAREX Operation Tamaki: 4-5 March

"Gone to find a DOC hut in from Dannevirke, and will stay there overnight." This is all the information a group of six from Levin had left regarding a weekend tramp! They only had an AA map! They didn't return on Sunday night so a "search" was initiated. This set the scene for the annual Palmerston North Police District Search and Rescue Exercise. Six teams participated together with all the other personal.

Saturday morning was spent practising with radio, navigation, first aid and helicopter use. The search began in the afternoon and continued through to Sunday. The PNTMC team searched the route up to Stanfield Hut (a relaxing walk). The lost party had left a note in the hut book that they were going up the track to Takapari. One search party was directed up this track while we were sent up the track up onto the ridge towards Cattle Creek where we fly camped for the night. Sunday was spent searching up the overgrown Lost Track to Takapari. Due to time constraints the "lost party" was not found in this initial part of the search procedure. They had done what trampers should never do and that was to change their plans without leaving the change of plans in the hut book. They had headed instead to Cattle Creek Hut and ended up with one "broken leg".

So even if their wasn't a successful rescue, we all gained from the exercise, both the ones with previous SAR/SAREX experience and ones new to this important role for tramping club members. Plus it was an enjoyable weekend. The PNTMC team was: Adam Fort, Terry Crippen, Patrick Janssen, Graeme Roberts, together with John Dawson from Levin as our umpire.

POHANGINA RIVER ADVENTURES 18/19 March - by Anon.

The Tramping

It took us one hour to Longview from Moorcock Base. After a cup of tea, we proceeded down into the head waters of the Pohangina via a route which didn't take long, but Kristina was sure no person could have placed a foot here before, as we climbed over some of the Leatherwood. The river gained size as we enjoyed the easy walking to Top Gorge Hut for lunch. There are a few waterfalls but these are no problem.

Another 2½ hours through one or two log jams and some deeper pools and we arrived a Leon Kinvig.

On Sunday we got walking at 7:30 and arrived at Ngamoko at 9:45 for coffee. The river was a little deeper but still easy going. After lunch at Mid Po., the river travel became more "real man's stuff" with lots of boulder hopping, crossing through rapid water and some deep gorges. We climbed up to the track for the first gorge but pack floated the second one. After Centre Creek Biv, we got sick of the river and took the sidle track to Pohangina Base and then went via the river again to meet our pickup cars at the road at 4:20 pm.

Yes we were 20 minutes late, but if I'd had my way it would have been more. We didn't stop for afternoon smoko: he's a hard man that Graeme Roberts!

The Goings On

Kristina Almost skydived off the ridge going up to Longview in the strong westerly wind.
Toby Fell into the river in more ways than anyone, and almost of the top of a waterfall in the headwaters.
Brian The only one with real food and coffee, but this didn't stop him getting a bad cold.

Graeme Trip organiser extraordinaire; we almost always arrived at , a hut at the official time for smoko and lunchtimes. Almost never got lost.

Bad Points Our front wheel drive Jappers couldn't make it to the road end up Kashmir Road, so we had to walk one hour to the start of the track.

- Gusty winds. In the river, waves could be blown up off flat water and gallons of spray was pelted over us.

Good Points We also enjoyed lots of nice times with calm, warm and sunny weather.

Our overnight stay at Leon Kinvig was comfortable with plenty of wood for the fire and lots of food, with daylight saving ending that weekend, we gained art extra hour. It took Graeme a few times to convince Brian to wind his watch back not forwards!

**HAPPY DAYS IN THE HILLS
PNTMC GUIDE FOR TRIP LEADERS**

(All club Members should keep this for use/reference)

BEFORE THE TRIP

- 1: If you cannot lead your trip/ try to arrange a substitute leader and/or contact one of the Trip Convenors as soon as possible.
- 2: Check the Trip Sheet on the notice board has correct relevant details on it (put up by Trips convenor). Collect sheet/ or details of prospective trip members from it, and contact them.
- 3: Make yourself familiar with the area to be visited; ask if in doubt. Obtain permission to cross private land. Got the latest relevant map? Party First Aid Kit?
- 4: Make sure trip members are aware of the type of trip it is, its grading, level of fitness and experience required. Any special medical requirements? If in doubt about any prospective member's ability for the trip/ quiz them and/or discuss with Trip Convenor.
- 5: Inform trip members when and where trip starts. (Usually outside Foodtown in Ferguson St).
- 6: Discuss with trip members communal and personal food and equipment required, hut passes/tickets, estimate of transport costs. Be in early to hire gear from Gear custodian.
- 7: Ensure trip members have informed their parents/partners/flatmate to phone trip leaders home and/or the Overdue Trip Contacts if they do not return after a reasonable time. The Overdue Trip Contacts will know if there is any need for concern at this stage.
- 8: Leave written information for SEARCH & RESCUE purposes either at your home with a reliable contact (i.e.: partner/parent), or one of the Overdue Trip Contacts (Mick Leyland, 358-3183, Linda Rowan 356-4655, Sue & Lawson Pither 357-3033), or at the Palmerston North Police Station. Include: PNTMC name; Overdue Trip contacts names/phone No's; date and duration, grading, destination and planned route of trip; destination/registration of cars, what road end parked at; list of all party members names/phone numbers; and a generous due out time/date.
- 9: On returning to Palmerston North inform whoever has the list. When using the Police Station, uplift the information sheet in person (otherwise you may get a 2am phone call!)

ON THE TRIP

- 1: Communicate clearly your objectives to all trip members.
- 2: Be aware of where each member is, and how they are going, during the trip.
- 3: Collect all hired party gear at end of trip.
- 4: Make sure all members leave the road end at the completion of the trip.

AFTER THE TRIP

- 1: Check ,any hired party gear and return it promptly to the Gear Custodian.
- 2: Write a trip report (delegate?) and give it to the Newsletter Editor.

Any queries about the above contact a Trips Convenor (Terry 356-3588, or Derek 326-8178).

A list of the various responsibilities in the running of the club were decided on at the recent committee meeting. (You may want to keep this list for future reference):

Social Convenor	Bruce Van Brunt (328-4761) & others
Club night supper	Nigel Scott (326-8161), Derek Sharp (326-8178)
Trip Convenors	Terry Crippen (356-3588), Derek Sharp (326-8178)
Advertising	Monica Cantwell (354-3834), Terry Crippen (356-3588)
Newsletter Editor	Peter Wiles (358-6894)
Newsletter distribution	Peter Wiles (358-6894) & others
Membership enquiries	Nigel Barrett (326-8847), Jenny Prichard (358-2217)
Membership list	Peter Wiles (358-6894)
Gear Custodian	Mick Leyland (358-3183)
Conservation/FMC	Tony Gates (357-7439)
Map orders/Hut passes	Tony Gates (357-7439)
Search & Rescue	Linda Rowan, Warren Wheeler (356~1998), Mick Leyland (358-3183)
Overdue Trip Contacts	Linda Rowan (356-4655), Sue Pither (357-3033), Mick Leyland (358-3183)
Telephone tree	Nigel Scott (326-8161)
Thursday Trip Contact	Monica Cantwell (354-3834)

Trip Grades

Grades 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.

Gear

The club has gear available for hire. For major trips and instruction courses, some gear might be in short supply and early bookings are desirable. Phone Mick Leyland (358-3183)

Gear for General Trips

For day trips, each person should have appropriate footwear, small pack, lunch and nibbles, water bottle, parka, over trousers, gloves, whistle, and woollen head gear. There must be at least one torch, first aid kit, map and compass amongst the group, plus an adequate supply of toilet paper and sun cream etc. On snow, dark glasses or preferably goggles are essential. For weekend or longer trips, a large pack with sleeping bag and cover, carry-mat, parka, over-trousers, mittens, balaclava, longjohns / change of warm clothes, torch, with spare bulb, map compass, eating utensils, first aid kit, sun cream, candle, matches, toilet paper, and food for appropriate number of days. Dinners are usually communal. Hut passes are required depending on location and plans.