
PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - August 1997

THIS ISSUE

Trip Reports on:

**Haurangi Range
Ruapehu Summit
Kahurangi NP**

. . . and more!

CLUB NIGHTS

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| AUGUST 14 | BYO Slides | |
| AUGUST 28 | Interclub Quiz | |
| SEPTEMBER 4 | Committee meeting | |
| SEPTEMBER 11 | “Outdoor Adventures” | Ross Laird |
| SEPTEMBER 25 | “Botany of South Africa” | Jill Rapson |

Club nights are held for all club members and visitors on the second and last Thursday of each month at the **Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North**. Club nights commence at 7:30 pm during winter and 7:45 pm during summer unless otherwise notified in the newsletter. The PNTMC Committee meets on the first Thursday of each month.

At the club night: Please sign your name in the visitors book. There is a door fee of 50c which includes supper.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the new-look PNTMC newsletter!
Yes, having suffered a number of jibes of late

regarding the newsletter quality, we have taken the plunge and surged into the 90's with a new printed style. The old Gestetner has done us well but I think you will all agree that the quality of the photocopied format is a great step forward.

The big catalyst for the change was that we had always presumed that the Gestetner was the cheapest option available, but after approaching some printers for quotes, we were surprised that printers could do it cheaper (just over 4c/page). One reason is that foolscap-size paper is becoming quite expensive.

I would be interested in anyone's feedback about the new newsletter style. For example, the better print quality allows a smaller font size (11 point, rather than the 12 point in the Gestetner issues). I have tried 11 point because it takes up less room, but I have used a double-column layout to keep the small font size easy to follow from one line to the next. Our cheapest quote by far was also for an A3 size folded in half, newspaper-style, to A4 size. I am also trying out a photo scan in this issue, but I'm not sure how this will turn out in the printing process. Here goes!

On behalf of the club I'd like to thank Peter Wiles for his dedication over the years, cranking that Gestetner handle over god-knows how many times. I think Peter deserves the break & he can direct his energies to his role as club Treasurer, which is big enough on its own!

Two of the Snowcraft courses will be completed by now which no doubt, in the usual club tradition, will give rise to another band of new winter trampers and climbers in the club. Note the change to the club tripcard for September 6-7: to give new Snowcrafters more chances to put their newly acquired skills into practice, Graham Peters will be taking a tramp up into the snow and ice of Taranaki. A great trip.

Well I don't know about you people but I've been feeling the cold this winter for some reason - I think it might just be something to do with the fact that I haven't got out for a tramp in the snow yet this year (ie. I'm not acclimatised yet!), and its August already! Must get a move on, see you out there!

John Phillips

UP AND COMING TRIPS

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 hrs
- Medium (M): 5-6 hrs
- Fit (F): about 8 hrs
- Fitness Essential (FE): >8 hrs

(T) refers to technical trips requiring special skills and/or gear

Aug 14 Midweek tramping
Neville Gray 357-2768

Aug 14 Club night "BYO Slides"
This is members' own opportunity to show off. A mixed bag of slides of general activities that club members get up to.

Aug 15-17 Sawtooth classic FE,T
Derek Sharp 326-8178

Depart either Thursday night or Friday morning. This 3 day tramp will visit the central higher part

of the Ruahines; Sawtooth, Hawkes Bay and Broken Ridges, and all the best peaks. Staying in Waterfall Hut and Snowcaving. Snowcraft skills are essential.

Aug 17 Rangitoto snow E
Malcolm Parker 357-5203

Depart 8am Sunday morning. For those in a more relaxed mode, a fun day in the snow. Come along and enjoy the company above the bushline, but near to the hut if shelter is needed.

Aug 21 Midweek tramping
Jill Spenser 329-8738

Aug 23-24 Snowcraft 3 I, M/F
Bruce Van Brunt 328-4761
Andy Backhouse 353-0774

(prerequisite SC 2)

This will be held at the MTSC hut at Whakapapa again, which is a short distance from the road. In this course more advanced techniques will be presented for steeper slopes of ice or snow, use of

ice anchors, and multiple anchor belays. Indoor sessions will again be used for instruction on topics such as use of avalanche transceivers, basic alpine rescue, etc.

If there is sufficient interest, we will have another Tuesday evening, this time at the City Rock Climbing Gym at 38a Grey St at 7pm to practise more complex rope and belay systems, prior to this weekend.

Aug 23-24 MSC Bush 3 I, M
 Noel Bigwood 355-1453

This is a repeat of the instructional weekend being run by the local branch of the NZ Mountain Safety Council. It is an advanced course, including off track navigation, emergency shelters, leadership skills Its being held in the Rangitaua Forest area on the southern slopes of Mt Ruapehu. For details and bookings contact Noel at 355-1453 or PN Police Station.

Aug 23-24 Ohutu Ridge M
 Mick Leyland 358-3183

Depart: 6 am. Into the northwest Ruahines via Mokai Station, to check out a new track and biv. Interesting greywacke and limestone country, good forest, and Mick to show you the way.

Aug 24 Blue Range E/Family
 Liz Flint 356-7654

Depart: Sunday morning , and head off into the eastern Tararuas with Liz. Good bush and the Hut for a lunch stop. Families welcome.

Aug 28 Midweek tramping
 Doug Wakelin 323-4127

Aug 28 Club night “Interclub Quiz”
The annual tramping inter-club quiz featuring PNTMC v MTSC v MUAC v Mountain Equipment. Can our mixed team of 3 wrest the coveted and prestigious "Trevor Bissell Billy" trophy from last year's winner, Mountain Equipment? Be early for a ringside seat, 7:30pm at the Society of Friends rooms in College Street.

Aug 30-31 Lake Colenso M/F
 Nigel Barrett *06 385 8230 work
Depart 6am Saturday morning into the north western Ruahines via Mokai Station to Lake Colenso with its excellent podocarp forest and limestone bluff surrounds. Good tracks, bush and river country, and a hut for the night. * NOTE change of phone number. Contact Nigel by phone during work hours, at least a week in

advance. Nigel is living out of town now , so that transport has to be organised well in advance. If you leave it any latter you don't go.

Aug 31 Maharahara Xing M
 Llew Pritchard 358-2217

Depart: 7:30 am Sunday morning for an excellent crossing of the southern Ruahines. A chance to stretch the legs. Great views and perhaps some snow. Need two cars for key swapping midway.

Sept 4 Thursday trampers
 Monica Cantwell 326-9691

Sept 4 Committee meeting

Sept 6-7 Mt Egmont M
 Graeme Peters 329-4722

This will be a fine weather trip staying at the Egmont Alpine Club hut (Kapuni Lodge). It is intended to be a trip for those who have been on the snowcraft courses, giving an opportunity to put into practice the very fine skills they have learnt. Leaving Fri night or Sat morning.

Sept 7 Tunipo Ck FE
 Dave Grant 357-8269

Depart 6am Sunday morning and head into the Western Ruahines up above Heritage Lodge and the Oroua River. Up onto Tunipo and north along the range before dropping into Tunipo Creek. Tops, a wee bit of leatherwood, and some stream descending. Should be good.

Sept 11 Thursday trampers
 Liz Flint 356-7654

Sept 11 Club night “Outdoor Adventures” Ross Laird
Ross operates “The Action Connection”, running outdoor pursuits, featuring local river rafting and other adventure sports. His company caters for virtually all levels of interest in these pursuits.

Sept 13-14-15 Climbing Whakapapa F,T
 Terry Crippen 356-3588

Depart 6pm Friday night and walk up to the NZ Alpine Club hut above the Whakapapa skifield, on Mount Ruapehu. This is an opportunity for you to put into practice all those skills you learnt on the Clubs snowcraft instruction programme. Lots of good climbing to be done on the Pinnacles and the various faces and ridges up higher. Find yourself a climbing buddy (and lots of climbing

gear). We have places in the hut booked for Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights - so you can have the three days up there if you want. Hut Fees per night \$8 NZAC members, \$18 non members.

Sept 14 North Range Rd E &/or M
Cath Farquhar 356-8295

Depart 8:30 am Close to town, this well formed paper road is well worth the visit with good view of the Manawatu and the Pahiatua side as well. Either a circuit or along part of the track and back, depending on weather and transport. Can be windy and cold but always exhilarating!

Sept 18 Thursday trampers
David Ross 06 376-7139

Sept 20-21 Kime Hut M
Peter Darragh 323-4498

Depart 8 am Saturday morning for Otaki Forks in the western Tararuas up though the bush past Feild Hut onto the tops to Kime Hut. A fine

weather moonlight ascent onto Mt Hector is on order for Saturday night. So bring your sparklers!

Sept 20-21 Southern Crossing M/F
Graeme Roberts 357-8567

Depart Friday afternoon to Fields hut for the night. This is a classic Tararua crossing. Staying at Alpha Hut on Saturday night before heading south to Kaitoke. Please contact Graeme well in advance so that transport at both ends can be organised. If you leave it too late you dip out!

Sept 25 Thursday trampers
Kath Lyttle 329-8608

Sept 25 Club night
"South African Botany" Jill Rapson

Gill was in South Africa for a few weeks last year, and will present us with a talk on the Botany of the country, featuring Fynboss, Karoo, and Savannah vegetation types, and a trip to Kruger National Park, well known for its wonderful animals.

Trip leaders:

Please discuss with the trips convenor (Terry 356-3588), as soon as possible, if there is any doubt that you will be unable to run your trip as scheduled. This is so that alternatives can be arranged, put in the newsletter, or passed on at club night.

Trip participants:

If you are interested in going on a trip, please advise the leader **at least three days** in advance. Trips often leave from the Foodtown carpark in Fergusson Street unless the leader arranges otherwise. A charge for transport will be collected on the day of the trip, the amount depending on the distance travelled and vehicles used. Leaders should be able to give an estimate in advance. If you are interested in a day trip midweek (Wednesday or Thursday) see details above for that day, or ring Liz Flint (356-7654), Lawson and Sue Pither (357-3033), or Monica (326-0691).

***** OVERDUE TRIPS *****

Enquiries to: Mick Leyland (358-3183), Terry Crippen (356-3588) or Sue & Lawson Pither (357-3033)

NOTICES

TRIP REPORTS AND OTHER NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

To all of you who would like to contribute articles to this newsletter, small articles are okay hand-

written (deliver to John Phillips, 87 Victoria Avenue), but it makes my job a bit easier if larger articles are on disc. Even better, if you have the facilities at home or at work, why not "e-mail" it

to me at my work e-mail address which is PHILLIPS@MWRC.GOVN.Z.

PLEASE NOTE that I am now editing exclusively on Microsoft Word, and am no longer using Microsoft Works software. If you use any other software, give me a ring on 357-9009 (work) or 358-1874 (home) and I may be able to indicate whether it is compatible or not. If in doubt, a pretty safe bet is to send any files as an ".RTF" (Rich Text Format) file, which can be easily converted from one software format to another.

Please note the deadline for anything to go in each month's issue is the FIRST THURSDAY of the month.

ALPINE 1998 CALENDARS

These popular items can be ordered at the discount price, through the club, of \$13.50. See Laurence Gatehouse at club nights.

A THANK YOU TO DAVE L., GRAHAM P., BARRY S.

From the trips co-ordinator, Terry

Over the last couple of months; Dave, Graham and Barry contacted me in advance to let me know either they couldn't lead their trips or were wanting to change the details of their trips they were taking. This is as it should be. Thank you. It enables reorganising to be done, people are kept informed and prospective trip members don't get confused or put off by conflicting information. Plus it is important that the Over Due Trip Contacts have the latest info. I hope all leaders continue this good contact with me if changes need, or are wanting, to be made.

FOR SALE

Parka; large size, high quality, waterproof, nylon, red, Alp Sports parka. Excellent condition, hardly ever used. It will keep ALL snow, wind and rain

out, and it comes well down your backside. Much cheaper at \$100 than a Goretex one. Phone or see Terry 3563-588.

REVIEWS

NEW TARARUA PARK MAP by Lyn Murphy

Towards the end of June the Department of Conservation finally launched its new Tararua Park map in the old Alexander Turnbull Library building just up from the beehive, and I got the chance to go along courtesy of PNTMC. After all, someone had to drink the club's share of the wine. Warren didn't actually tell me when he rang that you needed a grey beard to get in but most people seemed to have one. There were various speeches including one by the new director general of Conservation Hugh Logan, who wrote the Mount Cook Guide Book in the 1980s and was the head of the Nelson Conservancy. He liked the map, seemed pleased it had at least a few contour lines and incidentally did not have a beard. Les Molloy, who seemed to have played a major role in the map's development including taking almost all of the photos except the one by Tony Gates, told us he and a colleague had walked all the tracks and averaged the times between the huts. I think he was joking, but like others who have walked the Maungahuka this summer, certainly hope they have adjusted the ridiculously optimistic six hours between Otaki Forks and Anderson's Hut via Waitewaewae. There was a fine collection of Tararua maps through the ages but, strangely in these commercial times, no copies of the newly launched map for sale. They have been available for some months in the shops so perhaps it was assumed everyone already had one. Snacks included the sity-slickers version of Tararua biscuits (they didn't break your teeth) and some cafe-style scroggin complete with biscotti. All in all, it was a pleasant way to spend a wet winter Monday evening in Wellington and the wine wasn't bad either.

TRIP REPORTS

MIDWINTER CELEBRATION - KAWHATAU
BASE June 21-22 David Grant

Hard to realise that half the year has almost gone, the shortest day is upon us, and the weather has to get worse if the law of averages is to prevail !!!! Anyway with these thoughts at the back of our

minds we departed the Foodtown car park a bit after 7 am en route to Kawhatau Base for the traditional midwinter celebration. Arrived at the base about 9.30am after an uneventful trip to find the weather had deteriorated to a cool mountain misty state which served to ensure we unpacked the vehicles and got the wood range and the log fire in the base going as quickly as possible before considering doing something more in the tramping line. Leaving Warren behind in the warmth (you should ask him sometime how he hurt his foot) Maree led the rest of us out to climb to Colenso high point. Several windfalls in the lower beech forest indicated recent stormy weather but didn't impede our progress too badly.

Just below the bush line we stopped for a snack and as the weather hadn't improved only four of us decided to continue on to Colenso, the rest returning to the base. There was little evidence of the previous week's snow left on the ridge to Colenso. After the compulsory photo by the trig we also turned for home, pausing only to lob a few rocks through the ice covering the tarn, and admire a brief view of the upper Kawhatau farmland through a break in the cloud. On the way down through the bush we were rewarded by the sight of several small flocks of robins and a couple of wood pigeons.

We arrived back at base to join the others in a welcome bowl of pumpkin soup prepared by Warren. Richard and I ventured down to the Kawhatau river for a bit of a look and Maree went for a 10km run just to finish the day off. By this stage we had also been joined by Warren Soufflot and Penny. Then it was into the serious stuff of decorating the quarters, preparing the food and settling in for a good time. What a feast we had on the varied fare that had brought !! And all by candle and gaslight since the generator wasn't working. In between courses we yarned and sang and by about 10pm everyone was totally stuffed (literally) and it was all they could do to toddle off to bed.

Morning time, a leisurely breakfast (except for Warren S and Penny who were off to watch the Kawhatau section of the Daybreaker car rally) and then we had to resolve the vexed question of accomplishing the customary midwinter dip. We'd had vegies dipped in cottage cheese the night before, fruit dipped in chocolate fondue for breakfast, now it was time for bodies dipped in water. Outside the mist was coming down, inside Warren W still had his sore foot. We had to pool

all our mental resources to solve the problem but accomplished this we did by all standing together in the bath half full of warm water !! Honour satisfied (just).

With that we broke camp and headed back to civilisation having celebrated another midwinter in typical staunch PNTMC style !! Thanks Warren W for the organisation. We were Warren W, Richard, Maree, Gina, Alan, Lawrence, Heather, Warren S, Penny, & David.

HAURANGI RANGE

June 28-29

by Harley Betts

My introduction to tripping around with the PNTMC, and, I'm sure, the start of a long addiction! This was the easy option of two PNTMC trips run in the area - the other a "fit" trip led by Graham Peters - and we were a party of five: Terry Crippen, Gina Fermor, Trudi Aspden, Jonathan Openshaw and myself.

On a clear, frosty Saturday morning we travelled southward through the Wairarapa, stopping off at Martinborough for a bite to eat and a coffee. One of the local craft shops proudly displayed a sheep and a couple of other creatures made from rough driftwood, going cheap at only \$1,550 for the three. Who needs to work when it seems you can bring in top dollars with a few bits of driftwood and a pot of glue?

Onwards to the carpark below the Putangirua pinnacles, where we spent a few hours looking though the main gully and eventually climbing up to the gully head. Just as the June newsletter promised it was a very strange landscape, with innumerable columns and towers rising sheer from the loose gravelly stream bed. With conditions being overcast by this time, the charcoal-grey forms of the pinnacles combined with the heavy sky created a very moody atmosphere, and our voices echoed eerily between the gully walls. A quick scramble onto the ridge above the main gully allowed us brief glimpses of the greater Palliser Bay coastline to the west, spectacular through the low, ragged cloud base.

After returning to the carpark, we drove on towards the Mangatoetoe Valley, near Cape Palliser. We also took along Tony's car from the Pinnacles carpark, to relieve Graham's fit party from a 20-30km walk back to the Pinnacles from Mangatoetoe. Along the remote south coast we passed through the quiet village of Ngawi, tightly wedged in between the sea and towering greywacke hills behind. The row of rusting bulldozers at the top of the beach, each with a fishing boat attached ready for launching, made no secret of the main industry here. After roughly an hour's stroll up the valley we arrived at the Mangatoetoe Hut, only to find it already occupied by two very dead-looking pigs courtesy of a hunting party. Deciding they wouldn't have been the best of company, we continued up-valley and pitched camp near the stream a short distance away from the hut. Obliging, the rain held off until the last few mouthfuls of our evening meal, and the rest of the evening was spent gathered under Terry's tent fly, teaching Trudi and Jonathan the finer points of cut-throat 500. Trying to keep score without pen and paper proved a bit too challenging, so it was an honourable 5-way draw in the end.

The following morning was spent back on the coast, where a heavy swell from the overnight southerly was pounding spectacularly on the foreshore. We strolled along the beach towards Kupe's Sail, an impressive outcrop of sandstone which was well worth the short climb to the top for a look. Near Cape Palliser, the local seals (easier to find by scent than sight) were indifferent to our presence, and a couple of males were seen to be engaged in what seemed like a yawning contest.

With the huge waves thundering in, we were amazed how the seals seemed to be able to negotiate the rocks through deadly-looking surf, yet they made it look all too easy.

After a brief lunch at the Cape we headed back north, stopping off at the Mt Bruce Wildlife reserve, although we only had time for a much-needed coffee and a quick look at one of their

Takahe before closing time. All in all, an enjoyable trip to a place well worth going back to.

HAURANGI FOREST PARK

June 28-29

by Graham Peters

Having driven down to Cape Palliser, and seen the splodge of green on the map denoting bush, Terry's suggestion of a club tramping trip to the Haurangi Range seemed like an excellent idea. On studying the map, the obvious trip seemed to be from the Putangirua Pinnacles at Te Kopi, south across the grain of the country and out via the Mangatoetoe Stream to the sea near Cape Palliser.

We (Yvette, Janet & I) turned up at the camping area at the Pinnacles on a clear, cool Friday night, closely followed by the A Team (Tony, Peter, Richard). Over a brew the A Team made their wish for a pre-sparrow's-fart departure known. The B Team thought a more civilised departure

Kawakawa Hut, a lovely spot in the Haurangi Range (Photo: P.Burgess)

time appropriate and we compromised on a just-post-sunrise departure.

As a good trip leader I'd checked out with everyone as to the suitability of their pack contents. Tony had some smoked salmon and some wildberry Brie, Yvette had some port, Richard had some Canterbury Cream liqueur and after-dinner mints for his 28th birthday and Janet had more Brie. It was a well equipped party that

set off on Saturday morning and climbed to the Pinnacles lookout, then onward and upward on an easy-ish climb to just below surf trig at 740m. A change of direction and a knee-knacking descent from 600m to 200m at an average of 30° to Washpool Hut for lunch. After lunch a slightly easier ascent to 760m before descending (more gently thank goodness) to Pararaki Hut at 200m for the night and our gourmet delights for Richard's Birthday.

Sunday was supposed to be an easier, more poetic day with a "subtle saddle" giving a "smidgen of a view" before a "nettling sidle" - all before morning tea at Kawakawa Hut. Continuing, we dallied in a "pretty and intimate stream" before an intimidating "brute of a spur" to a sidle that "slips unnoticed over a saddle, dropping furtively under fern trees" into the Mangatoetoe Stream. Here the track "experiments with both sides of the stream, making an idle path through kawakawa and kanuka terraces." Lunch was at Mangatoetoe Hut with 2 dead pigs.

From there it was a brisk walk down a 4WD track to the coastal road to where Terry's group had driven Tony's car. A quick drive to the lighthouse and a chance for Yvette to photograph the seals before driving back to the Pinnacles to the other car, then home.

We were: Richard Lovell, Peter Burgess, Tony Gates, Yvette Cotton, Janet Wilson & Graham Peters.

TUNUPO July 5-6 by Richard Lovell

Following an early morning down trou' session to don our polyprops, Peter brought us all to life with a warm coffee. Setting off in the nice crisp morning air we soon gained height as we travelled through the vegetation admiring the epiphyte nests along route. Initially we felt robbed by driving to a tad over 700 metres but this turned out to be quite fortuitous given the shorter daylength of winter.

Moving higher through noticeable changes along a vegetation gradient the first signs of a hoar frost gave an indication of what lay ahead. Onward past the marvellously gnarled forms of mountain cedar we passed through the frozen leatherwood and stopped briefly to put on our raincoats to keep out the chill wind that tickled our faces. Soon we

arrived at Tunupo where Terry gave us some basic instructions on snow travel and self arresting.

In the lee of Tunupo the wind dropped and the visibility improved noticeably. Terry offered the task of navigation for tender to those whose skills needed brushing off. Led by the neophyte (me) we made our way along the tops through the iced snowgrass and after a minor deviation stopped at 'the corner' for a hasty lunch stop. With the inexorable advance of night ever present in our minds we pressed on eager to reach the hut before nightfall. Stopping briefly to mark the entrance to the track, we soon entered the verdant lushness which provided a marked comparison to the relatively barren tops.

Maintaining a good pace on the descent we managed to reach the Oroua River tributary and the hut just before nightfall, which allowed us to easily establish the base for the night. After a hearty meal we entertained ourselves with Terry's tales of search and rescue, and as we relaxed more lashings of tasteless jokes (PC is dead!!). Plenty of coffee and more biscuits than you could shake a stick at gave a relaxing end to the day.

The next day saw a more civilised start to the day as we sidled along the river negotiating bank collapses along route. We stopped briefly to admire the wonderful upstream sight of Te Hekenga and the surrounding snowcapped ridges. Meanwhile the older hands speculated which routes along the tops would be fun in the snow. After a short but undulating saunter to Heritage Lodge we stopped again for an optional nibble and a compulsory bask in the sunshine. The closing weather gave us the impetus to head back to the vehicles where we jumped into fresh set on clothes. Terry's vehicle took a Tiki tour along the Pohangina valley, while we opted for the more direct route back to sunny (?) Palmerstonia.

We were: Terry Crippen, Peter Darragh, Stuart Hubbard, Trudy Aspden, Harley Betts, Richard Lovell.

RUAPEHU SUMMIT VIA TUROA SKIFIELD
Sunday, 27 July by Keith Charlton

Warren & Warren, Nigel & Nigel, Peter & Peter, Wayne, Keith, Brent, Lynn, Terry and Patrick.

We had an 6.30am start last Sunday meeting at the usual venue Foodtown carpark. We were at Turoa by ten and seven of us decided to get a tourist lift pass and get up to the top with more time and energy to spend at the summit. There were lots of people skiing and it took us an hour to get to the cafe at the top of the Giant Treble Chairlift. We ran into a DoC worker coming down the High Noon T-Bar who had already been further up the slopes to check the conditions and keep an eye on the skifield operators. He warned us that it was quite icy up ahead and there was a small "river" of flowing ice chunks. We crossed this about ten minutes later and it made me appreciate just how an avalanche might be.

There was only a slight breeze and the sun was out all morning to provide perfect climbing conditions. We caught up to several other parties of climbers, passed them and reached the summit ridge at 1.15pm. Two climbers were heading down from the summit peak and it turned out to be Derek Sharp and a friend. We had lunch at the top of Tahurangi at 2797m with a great view of the steaming crater. There was another large group from Auckland who were coming across the Pare Traverse from the Whakapapa side of the mountain.

We down-climbed the steepest slopes from the summit till we could traverse to the saddle to the left of the summit. From there it was an easy walk down on ice which was easily broken through with crampons. The clouds had closed in on the skifield. We were back in the carpark by 4.00pm.

Thankfully we had climbed Mt Ruapehu without having to rescue anyone. (As happened twice last year on previous trips).

RUAPEHU SUMMIT (VERSION 2)

27 July by Peter Burgess

As we drove through showers and beneath an overcast sky there were some complaints about the weather forecast which had been for fine weather. However, as we neared the mountain we could see that the slopes visible through the cloud were in the sun. This was a good sign! Sure enough the day turned out to be perfectly fine and sunny with only light winds.

As we set off at around 10am from the car park we divided into two groups, with the "hard men" walking all the way and the "wimps" taking the

chair lift. Others might have characterised these two as "tight-fisted" versus "sensible". The hard men quickly found that they needed their crampons, as there was a hard crust of melted and refrozen snow. At the direction of the ski patrol, we skirted around the left hand side of the ski-field as we made our way up. At one point we encountered Andy Backhouse on his telemark skis, who informed us that he had just fallen on his face. Thanks Andy, it's nice to know you're not infallible.

Near the top of the ski-field we pondered which route to take. The more direct way would have us crossing under some potential avalanche hazards, but was favoured by some. We soon noticed, however, that a significant amount of debris was cascading down from these slopes, so we decided to play safe and cross the top of the ski-field to take the Skyline Ridge. Crossing the streams of ice fragments was rather like wading through a slow-motion river and we were quite glad to reach the relative security of the ridge. As we climbed we soon found the source of all that falling debris. The upper slopes were covered with large sastrugi ice, which broke off quite readily as the sun softened the snow underneath. This stuff made progress rather slow but fortunately quite a few others had already been up ahead of us and there was a reasonable trail of footsteps, until near the top, where summit fever seemed to have taken over!

We stopped for lunch at about 1pm, with 300m to go to the top, but didn't stop for long due to a cold breeze. Shortly after this Warren decided to turn back as he wasn't feeling himself. The rest of us carried on and made the top, not much after 2pm. Just as we traversed the summit ridge, we waved to the other group who were "pigeon toeing" around the steep snow slope below. Once on top the views were fantastic, though the smell was not so great. We met a couple of other groups at the top including one extremely bright person in fluorescent yellow. The other group apparently also met Derek Sharp, but he had left by the time we got there. The descent was considerably faster than the ascent, with the sastrugi covered snow having the consistency of a scree run. We got back shortly after 4pm.

The teams were: Hard men: Warren Wheeler, Nigel Scott, Patrick Janssen, Peter Daragh and Peter Burgess. Wimps: Warren Soufflot, Wayne

Beggs, Keith Charlton, Nigel Green, Terry Crippen, Lyn Murphy and Brent.

KAHURANGI NATIONAL PARK

Easter 1997 by Lynn Murphy

I was already a fan of North West Nelson, now part of Kahurangi National Park, when Brent and I went there on a quick two day trip just before Easter. I'm even more so now. We'd been to the Mount Arthur - Cobb Valley - Leslie River areas in the past. This time we went into the Marino Mountains and up Mount Owen, which at 1875m is the highest peak in the new park.

You walk in from Courthouse Flat, once the site of an old goldmining town and have two choices of track that link up after a while. We chose the Blue Creek route because it has some old relics along the way but both involve a significant uphill grunt. The Billies Knob track, which we came back on, is more open. Ours was pleasantly flat at first but we paid for it later with a steep, rather boggy climb up a not very well used track that I felt had not been well described in 101 Great Tramps. It takes four to five hours to get to

granity Pass Hut in Ghost Valley through varied and interesting country. You go down a steep track called the Staircase into a spectacular canyon, past an old gold shanty from the 1930s now rapidly disappearing into the bush, walk along dry river beds and wade through the droppings of a dracophyllum (pineapple tree) forest. Like many of the huts in North West Nelson, Granity Pass is homely (but quite small) and well sited as a base for day trips. There are also plenty of places nearby to camp. This is bandit country, rocky territory with lots of caves, keas and echoes that does have an eerie feel about it. Rock climbers and cavers could fill in days here.

We walked up Mt Owen from the hut early the following day (it's about four hours return) and then out to the car which was blue and proving very popular with bumble bees. Mt Owen is a strange mountain, not particularly high above the surrounding area but covered with rocks and sink holes that make the route up a bit of a maze. I thought this was one of the most interesting short tramps I've ever been on and that the area was well worth a second trip.

Current Membership List as at 1 August 1997:

| | | | |
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| Trudy Aspden | 1/268 Park Road | 354-9996 | Palmerston North |
| Rose Aston | 521a Church Street | 356-4595 | Palmerston North |
| Andy & Zoe Backhouse / Hart | 50 Hillcrest Drive | 353-0774 | Palmerston North |
| Nigel Barrett | 33 Wyndham Street | 326-8847 | Ashhurst |
| Alan Bee | 124 Tremaine Avenue | 354-9180 | Palmerston North |
| Wayne Beggs | 67 Savage Crescent | 358-8546 | Palmerston North |
| Harley Betts | 34 Newbury Line (RD 8) | 354-1582 | Palmerston North |
| Peter Burgess | 4 / 41 Lancaster Street | 354-3533 | Palmerston North |
| Neil Campbell | 7 Milverton Avenue | 359-5048 | Palmerston North |
| Monica Cantwell | Innerwell Lane (RD 10) | 326-9691 | Palmerston North |
| Marion Carey | 7 Kingston Street | 358-2544 | Palmerston North |
| Keith Charlton | 26 Mazengarb Road | 04-298-2560 | Paraparaumu |
| Pauline Coy | 211a College Street | 354-9126 | Palmerston North |
| Terry Crippen | 11 Pahiatua Street | 356-3588 | Palmerston North |
| Peter Darragh | 118 Denbigh Street | 323-4498 | Feilding |
| Margaret Easton | P O Box 5299 | 357-8645 | Palmerston North |
| Tricia Eder | 57 Fiars Road | 357-0122 | Palmerston North |
| Catherine Farquhar | 2/40 Fitchett Street | 356-8295 | Palmerston North |
| Gina Fermor | 6 Ward Street | 354-7675 | Palmerston North |
| Liz Flint | 43 Long Melford Road | 356-7654 | Palmerston North |
| Laurence & Heather Gatehouse | 12 Galway Avenue | 356-5805 | Palmerston North |
| Tony Gates | 24 Springdale Crescent | 357-7439 | Palmerston North |

| | | | |
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| David Grant | 6 Earl Place | 357-8269 | Palmerston North |
| Duncan Grant | 452 Ruahine Street | 354-8252 | Palmerston North |
| Marlene Henderson | 15a Jensen Street | 358-5232 | Palmerston North |
| Dave Henwood | 333 Albert Street | 353-2370 | Palmerston North |
| Michael Hewett | 35 Longmelford Road | 354-6853 | Palmerston North |
| Stuart Hubbard | 12 Ascot Avenue | 356-8782 | Palmerston North |
| Patrick Janssen | 27 Rainforth Street | 356-3116 | Palmerston North |
| Leal Jones | 6 Waltham Court | 354-3468 | Palmerston North |
| Chris Kelly | 108 Salisbury Street | 326-8039 | Ashhurst |
| Laurie Kennedy | 6 Dittmer Drive | 357-4360 | Palmerston North |
| Donald Kerr | C/- Plant Biology, Massey University | | Palmerston North |
| David Larsen | P O Box 4361 | 329-8054 | Palmerston North |
| Martin Lawrence | 44 Dahlia Street | 357-1695 | Palmerston North |
| Brian Lawrence | Penny Road, No 9 (RD) | 324-8552 | Palmerston North |
| Mick Leyland | 38 Pahiatua Street | 358-3183 | Palmerston North |
| Maree Limpus | Telecom Tech/Sci Roadshow Po Box 598 | 025-595-958 | Wellington |
| Richard Lockett | 24 Dewe Avenue | 323-0948 | Feilding |
| Richard Lovell | 270 Featherston Street | 358-4423 | Palmerston North |
| Clive Marsh | 117b Linton Street | 359-5220 | Palmerston North |
| Merv Matthews | 19 Redwood Grove | 357-2858 | Palmerston North |
| Dennis Moore | Forest Hill Road, Aokoutere | 357-5651 | Palmerston North |
| Liz Morrison | 5 Leslie Avenue | 357-6532 | Palmerston North |
| Lyn Murphy | 1a Baden Road, Hataitai | 04-386-3334 | Wellington |
| Malcolm Parker | 64 Pahiatua Street | 357-5203 | Palmerston North |
| Kevin Pearce | 38 Waterloo Crescent | 357-0217 | Palmerston North |
| Graham Peters | Utuwai Road, Pohangina Valley West Rd. | 329-4722 | Ashhurst |
| John Phillips | 87 Victoria Avenue | 358-1874 | Palmerston North |
| Lawson & Sue Pither | 4 Athlone Place | 357-3033 | Palmerston North |
| Llew & Jenny Pritchard | 10 Gainsborough Grove | 358-2217 | Palmerston North |
| Nick Pringle | 27 Miro Street | 359-0651 | Palmerston North |
| Graeme Roberts | 21 Liverpool Street | 357-8567 | Palmerston North |
| Daryl & Linda Rowan | 5 Williams Terrace | 356-4655 | Palmerston North |
| Chris Saunders | 96 Brightwater Terrace | 358-4899 | Palmerston North |
| Barry Scott | 95 Moonshine Valley Road (RD 1) | 354-0510 | Palmerston North |
| Nigel Scott | 639 Eltham Road (RD 21) | 06-764-8536 | Stratford |
| Derek Sharp | 144 Oxford Street | 326-8178 | Ashhurst |
| David Simcock | 20 Kent Cresc, Riverdale | 357-0612 | Palmerston North |
| Warren Soufflot | 12 Kaimanawa Street | 353-0224 | Palmerston North |
| Sarah Todd | 20 Kent Crescent | 357-0612 | Palmerston North |
| Arthur & Lis Todd | 2 Heayns Place | 323-6246 | Feilding |
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| Vice President | : Terry Crippen | 356-3588 |
| Secretary | : Sarah Todd | 357-0612 |
| Treasurer | : Peter Wiles | 358-6894 |
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