
PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - September 1997

THIS ISSUE

**NEWS: Inter-club Quiz,
up-and-coming extended tramps
for this summer, and book reviews**

**TRIP REPORTS:
Ruahine Winter "Sawtooth" Classic,
Snowcraft, Holdsworth, Rangī,
and what the Thursday trampers
have been up to...**

CLUB NIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 11	"Outdoor Adventures"	Ross Laird
SEPTEMBER 25	"Botany of South Africa"	Jill Rapson
OCTOBER 2	Committee meeting	@ Liz Flint's place
OCTOBER 9	"Canada"	Liz Flint
OCTOBER 30	"Intro to Summer Trips"	

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.

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.

Beginners should start with Easy Grade trips.

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 Club’s 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 are: \$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 views 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 through the bush past Field 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.

Sept 27-28 Waterfall Hut F
Mick Leyland 358-3183

Depart 6am. This is a magic location right in the heart of the Ruahines. Mick has a choice of routes depending on the weather. If its really fine, we’ll come in from the west over the Hikurangi Range, via Purity. The alternative is over Waipawa & Rangi Saddles from the Sunrise roadend to the northeast, possibly meeting up with the day-trampers on our way out on Sunday.

Sept 28 Sunrise Hut E/M
Heather Gatehouse 356-5805

Depart 7:30 am A well graded track up through Beech forest, to a new-ish hut, just on the bush line in the eastern Ruahines. (The track was actually put in by the army.) Great views across to the inland ridges of the Ruahines, and back over southern Hawkes Bay. Heather will take you further up if weather and conditions permit.

Oct 1-3 Thursday trampers
Peter Carver 354-4479

-
- Oct 2 Committee meeting
Liz Flint's 43 Long Melford Road
Warren Wheeler 356-1998
Depart 8 am. Into Mitre Flats in the Waingawa Valley, eastern Tararuas, behind Masterton. An easy walk for a relax in and about the hut. Sunday we will head up onto Mitre Peak via track through forest and onto the open tops. Those not keen on the climb can relax at the hut before heading out with the others.
- Oct 4-5 Longview Hut E/M
Dave Larsen 329-8054
Depart 8 am. Into the eastern Ruahines, via open farmland, forest and tussock ridge to the hut for the night. On Sunday a wander further onto the tops before returning the quicker way along the old forestry road.
- Oct 5 Titahi Rock all, I
Zoe Hart 353-0774
Depart 7:30 am. Zoe will be mustering some instructors for this intro to rock climbing. Titahi Bay lends itself to top-roping on easy grades so that everyone is welcome. And remember, for those of you that are budding mountaineers, rock climbing skills are just as important as snowcraft skills.
- Oct 9 Thursday trampers
Phil Pearce 354-6687
- Oct 9 Club night**
“Canada vacation” Liz Flint
Club member Liz Flint visited North America during June and July 1997, and did several tramps with friends in the Rocky Mountains of Canada and Montana. She took several colour slides, and will present them to us with tales of her travels.
- Oct 12-13 Oriwa Lake M/F
Tony Gates 357-7439
Depart Friday night. Lake Oriwa, a famous maori historic place is a small shallow lake in the Big Bush Country of the Waitewaewae in the western Tararuas. Come along with Tony for some good navigation to this seldom visited place.
- Oct 12 Ohau Shelter E
Margaret Riorden 356-7460
Depart 9:00am for the Ohau river valley behind Levin in the western Tararuas. Take a nice easy walk up the valley through the bush. Have lunch on the river edge just past the decrepit Ohau shelter then amble back to civilisation. Suitable for the whole family.
- Oct 16 Thursday trampers
Neil Gutry 354-0284
- Oct 18-19 Mitre Peak M/F
- Oct 19 Top Maropea M
Neil Campbell 359-5048
Depart 7:00am for the eastern Ruahines behind Tikokino. After a short stretch of farmland you follow a great track through forest, climbing up to Sunrise hut on the bushline. Time for a break then up and over the Ruahine range via Armstrong Saddle, dropping down to Top Maropea hut in the headwaters of the Maropea catchment. After lunch you will trace your steps back, mostly downhill, to the carpark.
- Oct 23 Thursday trampers
Merv Matthews 357-2858
- Labour weekend
Oct 25-27 Middle Range, Kaimanawas
M/F Barry Scott 354-0510
Depart 6am from PN on Saturday 25th and travel via the Desert Road to Kaimanawa road end. On Saturday you will climb up Umakarikari (1592m) then follow the ridge NE, dropping down to the Waipakihi hut for the night. Climbing up onto the Middle range on Sunday the route follows SW over Thunderbolt before dropping back into a campsite on the mid Waipakihi. Day three takes you back over the tops to the road end. This tramp should provide an interesting variety of scenery from beech forest at the lower altitudes up to the tussock tops, with the opportunity of spectacular views of the Central Plateau mountains and Lake Taupo.
- Oct 25-27 Seaward Kaikouras F/FE
Dave Henwood 06-326-8892
Depart PN Friday 24 at 6:00pm for a 10:30pm ferry crossing Wellington to Picton. Drive south to the Hapuku river just before Kaikoura and camp. Dave will lead you up Manakau, the highest peak in the Seaward Kaikouras at 2610m and a big grunt from sea level, traverse the ridge south to Uwerau and then return to sea level via the south branch of the Hapuku river. But think of the views across the Pacific on one hand and
-

inland over the stark Clarence valley to Tapuaenuku and the Inland Kaikouras on the other. Fantastic!! You will spend Saturday night in a high camp on the slopes of Manakau, and Sunday night in the headwaters of the Hapuku. An ice axe and crampons will be required for the high traverse. Return to Wellington on Monday 27 via the 6:30pm ferry ex Picton. *Please register early to allow ferry bookings to be made.*

Labour w/end Day trip?

Place and leader required. Can you help?

Contact Trip co-ordinators; Dave Grant (357-8269) or Liz Flint (356-7654)

Oct 30 Thursday trampers
John Rockell 358-3513

Oct 30 Club night: Intro to club extended summer trips

PNTMC's very own trip leaders get their opportunity to advertise their future trips. This is a good chance to learn about some areas in the Southern Alps. I think that there is a fair chance that Arthurs Pass will feature, maybe also Mount Aspiring area, who knows? Stay tuned.

Trip leaders:

Please discuss with the trips convenor (Dave Grant 357-8269, or Liz Flint 356-7654), 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.

For general information on the scheduled or alternative tramps please contact one of the trip co-ordinators Dave Grant (357-8269) or Liz Flint (356-7654).

*** OVERDUE TRIPS ***

Enquiries to: Mick Leyland (358-3183), Liz Flint (356-7654), 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.GOV.NZ.

I use Microsoft Word Version 7.0. 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, try sending any files as an ".RTF" (Rich Text Format) file, which can sometimes be easily converted from one software format to another, or the safest bet is to just cut-and-paste your text directly into your e-mail message.

As you may have observed from our first photocopied newsletter in August, photographs turn out quite well so **report writers or other trip participants are welcome to send me photos for inclusion in the newsletter.** These add a great deal to the newsletter's interest and appeal.

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

TRIP INFORMATION, TRIP CO-ORDINATOR, OVERDUE TRIP CONTACT

A message from Terry Crippen

For all your enquires regarding scheduled and other trips, contact either Dave Grant (357-8269) or Liz Flint (356-7654). I'm going to be out of the country mid-September to mid-November, so Dave has taken over my job as one of the Trips Coordinators for that period with Liz remaining as the other one.

LEADERS: Dave will do the phoning around to get your blurbs for your forthcoming trips, Liz will look after the trip lists on the Club night notice board, AND don't forget to contact Dave or Liz if you are wanting to change scheduled trips. Liz will be a **OVERDUE TRIPS CONTACT** along with Mick Leyland and Sue & Lawson Pither.

THE JANUARY-JUNE 1997 EVENTS CARD

The next events card is being planned now. (A bit earlier this year.) I've started the phoning, but it's now in the hands of Dave Grant (357-8269) or Liz Flint (356-7654). Its time to decide what trips we want, be they easy, medium or fit tramps, rock or snow climbing trips, or other events, for a day, weekend or longer. Give Liz or Dave a call. For suggestions for Thursday night speakers and activities, Laurence Gatehouse 356-5805 is now waiting for your ideas.

Terry

EXTENDED TRIPS THIS SUMMER

The club is running two scheduled extended (longer) trips this summer holiday period, along similar lines to the two run last summer:

1. Matemateaonga Walkway Xmas/New Year
Medium Leader: Malcolm Parker

The club usually organises a number of trips over the Christmas / new year period to cater for the interests and degrees of fitness of a broad range of participants. If you are looking for a nice, relaxing four day trip, where you don't have to spend 8 hours a day with a pack on your back but would rather spend half that time kicking back

and enjoying the bush, staying in comfortable huts in an area that is not crowded with heaps of other trampers doing the same as you, then think about this trip some more.

This is a holiday trip where the emphasis is on relaxing and enjoying. A similar trip was on the calendar last year and proved to be very popular. This year the trip leader would actually like to complete it !!

The track and the area are steeped in fascinating history. And on the last day we take a jet boat trip up to have a look at the Bridge to Nowhere then follow the River Road down to Wanganui.

If you are interested give Malcolm Parker a call on Ph 357 5203 or M-P.Parker@xtra.co.nz

2. Arthur's Pass January 10 - 24, 1998

F, T Leader: Terry Crippen

This is a two week combination of a 9 day trans-alpine tramping trip, and a shorter spell of some technical climbing. It is based along similar lines as the club trips to Arthur's Pass of the last 3 summers. This trip is graded Fit + Technical, ie: Snowcraft III skills and experience, some rock climbing skills, and the ability to carry a 9-day pack, usually 8 hours a day, but with the odd 13-plus hour day.

The 9 day tramp will probably be: Waimakariri Valley, Taipoiti Stm, Harman Pass, Julia Valley, Popes Pass, Wilberforce and Bristed Valleys, Half Moon Saddle, Avoca Valley, Waimak. We will set up camp in a couple of places and attempt some climbs en-route. Back to Arthur's Pass and the comfort of the NZAC hut, for a rest day or two, then some more technical climbing.

Maps required are NZMS 260: K33 Otira, K34 Wilberforce (put a map order in now with the club to get the 30% discount). Cost will be about \$200-\$250 and includes transport down, all party food (breakfasts, dinners and brews), DoC fees, NZAC hut accommodation, and the odd luxury in AP. We will be travelling down by car, so a full car load is necessary. People can make their own way back (suggest the red eye flight!) or head off for further tramping and climbing.

Note: I'll be away till mid November but there will be info sheets at the club night about summer trips. Or quiz Barry or Nigel Scott, Chris Saunders or Kristen Stokes, they have been on

previous ones. So planning and transport can be organised, the closing date for applications is last club night in November (27th), with deposit of \$150.

Terry

NEW MEMBER

The club has one new member this month:
Bill Cohen, 74 Buick Crescent, PN. 353-6537.
Welcome to the club, Bill.

ALPINE 1998 CALENDARS

Laurence will be placing the club order after final takers on the September 11 club night. So those who ordered can look forward to receiving their calendars in the near future.

MAP ORDERS

Its time to think about ordering maps for those summer tramps, whether in the North or South Island. As club members you get great discounts (30% off) compared to off-the-shelf prices, because we place a bulk order through FMC. So get your order in now while you have the chance.

FOR SALE

Reflex Jacket (Wilderness "Rainjacket" model). Very little use (only a few days' actual use), so in new condition. Size L, going for **\$160**. Contact John Phillips: Ph 357-9009 (work) or 358-1874 (home).

FOR SALE

1 Pair MacPac Snow Gaiters, small size \$35.00 ono. Ph Nick work 3584024 or home 3590651.

REPORTS & REVIEWS

INTERCLUB QUIZ NIGHT

On the evening of August 28th the battle for the coveted Trevor Bissel Memorial Billy Trophy was a tenacious one, fought by the four clubs amidst torrid conditions of a half-packed hall (of PNTMC supporters), embarrassing club nick-names and highly dubious adjudication. Our quiz host, Warren Wheeler, entertained in his usual chatty style, ruled with an iron fist, and judged with the consistency of a well-cooked porridge (ie. a bit tough & didn't go down well with some). With co-host Tony Gates, Warren cut loose with teasing questions like "how many sides has a triangular bandage?" [Answer: 2. It has 3 edges, not sides] Or: How did Rockslide Biv get its

name? [Answer: unknown, so any answer will be accepted!]

The winners were Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club (the "Empty Esky's" ... M-T-S-C's ... get it?) with 19 points. The "Pentiums" (PNTMC) narrowly missed out with 17 points - great effort, team. Last year's winners, Mountain Equipment (the "Minties"), also finished with 17 points, while MUAC (Massey University Alpine Club) finished with 12 points.

"IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT ON THE NIGHT"
by Co-Quiz Master, Warren Wheeler

Whew, the Quiz is all over - it was Organised Chaos, yes, but it turned out all right.

Sure there was some last minute hitches (where's the trophy Kieran?) but they sorted themselves out (don't worry, its coming...).

Sure Fate played a lucky part in proceedings - not only with the questions each team was given but also with the organisation - there would have been no thought of prizes (Snickers, Milky Bars and Kinder Surprises, the last on the shelf) unless Sarah hadn't asked me to purchase the supper goodies.

Sure there was some last minute decisions (one team question per turn instead of three) and some ad hoc rule changes (no points deducted if you get the wrong answer), but these were made in the interests of audience (and team) enjoyment.

Sure there were the inevitable false starts and stumbling (I left my introductory spiel at home) but then "that Noble House, Mountain Equipment" is a bit over the top really isn't it?

Sure it took almost twice as long as expected but time passes quickly when you're having fun (sorry Clive, I hope you didn't miss too much of your friends going away party down at the pub).

Sure we used up only half our carefully researched questions but that's better than running out half way through - anyway we may yet see them put to good use by MTSC for the Quiz next year (In the movie Batman and Robin who *does* play Mr Freeze?).

Sure there was debate over the odd answer, but nobody said it was going to be fair did they? (How many sides does a triangular bandage have? Two...it has three *edges*, sorry Kieran!).

Sure some of the questions were a bit esoteric, but that was to make up for the easy ones (Which direction does the toilet door face at Maungahuka Hut?).

Sure there were far too many biscuits left over after supper but if you weren't there what can you expect?

Sure it was challenging, sure it was fun, and despite protestations the best team won. Congratulations to Peter Rawlins and the team from MTSC (the Empty Eski Team, *craw, craaaawww!!*) - it was a shame that more of your Club members were not there to see you in action. The competition was very close with the defending champions Mountain Equipment (the Minties, *ee-aaww!*) and the Pentium Team (PNTMC, *woof!*) only two points behind the Empty Eski team. And MUAC (*mieow*) made up lost ground in the Equaliser round to come a respectable last only five points behind.

Thanks to those who made the Quiz a top night out - timekeeper (Metho-gnome) Terry Crippen, scorekeeper John Phillips for standing in for Lava Coffcough (she refused our invitation....still has the pip from not being asked last year), and special thanks to Tony Gates for organising the event and preparing most of the questions. As co-Quiz Master I enjoyed making up some of the questions and helping give Tony's voice a break. I look forward to a strong turn-out of Pentium supporters at next years Quiz. One of the main reasons for having the Quiz is to encourage good-natured competition between the Clubs at an eye-ball to eye-ball level - with of course the after-match function as important as for other more overtly gladiatorial sports. In the meantime, I am sure that those who were present will agree that the 1997 Quiz will gain its rightful place in the Interclub Quiz Hall of Fame.

BOOK REVIEWS By Tony Gates

"Into Thin Air - A Personal Account Of The Everest Disaster" by Jon Krakauer (1997)
Published by MacMillan, London

This is a fantastic book. Buy it. It is gripping reading of an impending disaster on Mt Everest of May 10 1996 written by a journalist who was there. Only news of the Paris car smash could tear me away from it!

The story covers in great detail the people, the history, the place, and the reason why they are there. It progressively moves from the home of the author in the United States to Kathmandu, to base camp, then slowly up the glaciers and slopes to the top of the great mountain itself, then back down. Well known Palmerston North

mountaineer Clive Jones was in the area immediately after the disaster, and I remember him speaking of it with considerable emotion at a club evening last year.

The author was sent to Everest on assignment, to write on the growth of guided climbs there, and associated problems. He fulfilled his contract with his magazine last year, but then enlarged it to book size after some of the emotion of the tragedy died down. And he wanted to re write some parts of the story, to try to present the correct series of events.

The book is, as the title states, a personal account, so it both praises and criticises many people. There have been many controversies on Everest, and this discusses the latest tragedy, and tries to answer "why"? The answer is really a combination and cumulation of several crucial aspects high up on the mountain, and a group of expeditions, both guided and not, that contributed to overcrowding. That slowed down the climbers, then, when the bad weather struck, there was little chance for survival for some of them.

There is frequent mention of a person's physical state, and the debilitating effects of altitude, and the fine line between safety and tragedy. There was naturally much organisation, and Rob Hall was obviously a superb organiser, but there were a lot of tensions due to the crowds, and some groups not pulling their weight (for example plugging the trail, or fixing ropes that are shared between groups). During the tragedy, some groups not prepared to help the dead and dying with radio batteries, oxygen, shelter, medical or physical assistance, although most of course did so. Codes of ethics vary between nationalities!

I do not recall either god or praying (in the western sense) were ever mentioned in the book. Some may believe that divine intervention saved some lives, but the author certainly isn't one on them. There is much more mention of the local sherpa beliefs, eg flying prayer flags at base camp and on the mountain summit, and ensuring that Sagaramantha "Goddess of mother earth" (ie Mt Everest) is kept happy, (and not unhappy) by various means.

Throughout the book, as the author meets various people, he describes them and their history, as well as some that were not there in 1996, but played an important role, eg Mallory and Irvine.

There are various quotes, a few photos (I frequently wished for more photos, and a good map), and expedition personnel lists. I found myself constantly referring to the latter, as the author referred to the various expedition guides, clients, and sherpas moving about the mountain. It was important to know who was where, and when.

"4wd North Island - 80 Off Road Adventures"
by Andy Cockcroft (1997). Published by Shoal Bay Press

Trampers may look with some disdain at four wheel drive vehicles touring the back country, but they often help you get closer to the hills, and can give you an exciting time getting there. And this is an excellent book about that. There is another similar and popular book out about off road trips in the South Island that has yet to hit my home bookshelf.

When the book says "off road" it means off the main road, but keeping in your vehicle! It discusses four wheel drive vehicles in general, and some of their features (tyres, transmission, techniques etc), "how to do it" (including camping and survival tips) then places to go, which forms the bulk of the book. 80 different routes are described, with a somewhat brief description, landmarks at "x" kilometres, simple line maps, and pictures displaying cell phone coverage, and type of vehicle that the route is OK for (light 4WD, grunty 4WD, or 4WD car).

There are a lot of routes around the Urewera/ East Cape ranges discussed, and a scattering throughout the North Island. Which of course includes our beloved Ruahines and Tararuas, with Takapari Road, the road to No Mans, The Makaroro River, North Range road, Waiotauru Road, and Himatangi Beach included. I was disappointed to see no photographs, but the writing was good, with numerous cartoons, and driving tips.

TRIP REPORTS

SNOWCRAFT I - Mt Ruapehu
July 19-20 by Harley Betts

This was the first of the three snowcraft courses run by PNTMC over the winter, and, for some of us, our first opportunity for a decent learning experience on snow and ice. With existing skill levels ranging from the Complete Pleb (me) to the Budding Hillary (pretty much everyone else), we were a group all keen and ready to hit the slopes after an introductory evening held at the PN Fire Station on the Tuesday night prior to the course.

After a Friday night stop at the famous Chelsea take-aways in Taihape, a breakdown and various other delays the last few of us arrived at the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club hut at the sobering hour of 2am. Those of us already asleep in Room 4 were reassured they had arrived and had settled in comfortably, going by Clive's amazing snoring rendition of an entire sawmill running to capacity.

The next day dawned brilliantly clear, despite a miserable forecast. We split into groups and, with a leader for each group, we headed upslope from

the hut to learn some basic ice axe techniques. Worthy of mention here is the famous "Trotsky Memorial Ice Axe", a truly "graceful" example of the brutality of Russian engineering. This stout little number, brought along courtesy of Bruce, was clearly designed to be used with a "chop steps first, ask questions later" kind of attitude. Has to be seen to be believed.

Having spent the greater part of the day mastering self arresting (and glissading - if you can't arrest a slide you may as well go out in style!!) we eventually headed back to the hut when our luck with the weather ran out for the day. The evening meal was of banquet proportions (thanks, chefs and chefettes) and most of us were contentedly knackered by the time the trip leaders gave a brief run-down on mountain first aid to round off the day. We all retired relatively early, and again we

Room 4 bods were treated to a sensational snoring symphony from the direction of Clive's bunk - something between the sound of a clothes dryer full of nails and possums fighting on a tin roof. It wasn't long before poor Clive was the only one left in the room, the rest of us abandoning ship and camping out in the lounge for the rest of the night. But there were no hard feelings, despite Richard's cries of "Aaaagh! The devil!" when Clive surfaced the next morning!

Sunday was another brilliant day, again contrary to the forecast and further shredding our confidence in the Met Service. We took advantage of the conditions to gain some experience in cramponing techniques, eventually taking on steep slopes that would have terrified some of us only hours before. Some of the others also experimented with making snow mounds and snow caves, with some pretty impressive 5-star efforts.

With the weather being so good we moved onto some techniques scheduled for Snowcraft II on Egmont, and stayed out until well into the afternoon rehearsing what we had learned over the weekend. We were all slightly had it when the time came to return to Palmerston North, but the course had been excellent and was enjoyed by all those who attended.

JUMBO-HOLDSWORTH

9 August by Peter Burgess

As we drove out of the fog enveloping the northern Wairarapa, we marvelled at the whiteness of the Eastern Tararuas shining in the sun under a clear sky. So cold was the morning that sastrugi built up on the front of the car and wing mirrors! Though it began to melt and spray the windscreen as we drove through Masterton, quite a bit was still there by the time we reached the Holdsworth carpark.

A brisk walk up the Atiwhakatu soon warmed us up and after a short break at the hut we began the abrupt ascent to Jumbo Hut via Rain Gauge Spur. Long before we reached the top of this we were wading through thigh deep snow, which was very taxing.

We ate a quick lunch at the hut and pressed on, not wanting to get too cold. Some good views were to be had on the way up, but unfortunately the weather deteriorated as we reached Jumbo and

proceeded along the main ridge. Visibility dropped to near zero and the wind grew in strength. This combined with some soft snow meant that it took a little longer than I had hoped to reach Holdsworth (about 1½ hours).

We found the large trig marker on Holdsworth half buried and encased in sastrugi ice. It would almost have made a passable emergency shelter! Snow conditions were firmer on the way down and we soon reached a very crowded Powell Hut. After another short break to consume more food, we descended through snow which became increasingly slushy due to melting and large numbers of feet. A few minutes below the hut we met a party with a small child who had only sneakers on and looked very unhappy. We wondered about the wisdom of making the tracks too good. A large proportion of DOC's spending in the Tararuas seems to go into this area.

We arrived back at the car at around 5:30pm, having taken 9 ½ hours for the trip. We were: Peter Burgess, Derek Sharp, and Marie Limpus.

SAWTOOTH CLASSIC

15-17th August by Peter Burgess

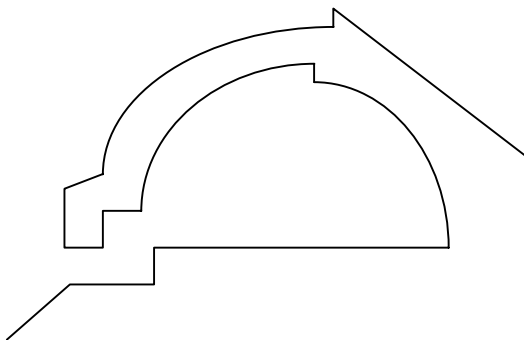
This trip did not start auspiciously as the planned fish and chip stop failed to occur due to a communication breakdown. Nevertheless we were very grateful to Tony for transporting us up to the Rangi car park. Although cold, the rain held off while we got our gear together and scoffed some chocolate to keep the hunger pangs at bay. Keen to get to the hut we raced on up, only stopping to don rain coats when it started to sleet. Luckily we had all brought plenty of food (especially Derek), so we easily had enough for the unplanned meal at the hut and it was quite good to lighten our packs. On arrival, there was only some very slushy snow around the hut, but by next morning some fresh stuff had fallen. This would prove both a blessing, in that we needed to melt it because the tank had frozen up, and a curse because we had to trudge through it.

We left Rangī at about 8:30am and plodded through the aforementioned deep soft snow for quite some time without gaining much height. Eventually as we got on to the steeper slopes leading to Mangahūia, the snow hardened to ice, allowing us to make better progress with crampons.

Unfortunately the wind simultaneously picked up. This was to prove the pattern for the next three days - either soft snow or high winds (and occasionally both). Wind was the greater of the problems - for me at least - and this did not reach its worst until after our lunch stop on Maungamahue, which we reached in less than four hours. At this point Derek confidently predicted another three hours to our planned igloo site between Taumataomekura and Tiraha.

Shortly after this the ridge forks three ways and we took some time in the minimal visibility to work out which was correct. This wasted some time, however, the main problem from here on up to Te Hekenga was the wind. By the top I was completely exhausted and sure I could not make it to Howletts Hut, another three hours away. As it was now 4pm, Derek, therefore decided to continue until the first suitable igloo/snowcave site. This, unfortunately meant traversing the Cheval (sp?) pitch just beyond Te Hekenga, which Richard found quite exciting as his first exposure to front pointing.

There were few gentle snow filled gullies around in which to build our igloo, however we soon



found a cornice under which we could dig out a half snow cave, half igloo. A couple of hours later we were closing off the roof just on dark, soon to be in the comfort of our bivvy bags and sleeping bags.

Next morning when we stepped out of the igloo, the rest of the world seemed to have disappeared! It was a slow start due to our hard first day and

battling the strong winds in the near white-out conditions again quickly took its toll. When we reached Tiraha an hour later we opted for Howletts. On the way down from Tiraha, we found a very impressive lightning hole in the snow which descended several metres.

Howletts Hut was reached in another hour but only after some more soul destroying trudging through soft snow. Once there we relaxed around the fire and spent the rest of the day eating, listening to the wind and watching the clouds race across the tops. Despite our best efforts, we were unable to consume the bulk of our food and would probably have had enough for another 1-2 days.

Next day the conditions were unchanged, so we had another lazy start and then dropped down to Daphne Hut, through some very nice bush. Once down at the river we found conditions to be much more pleasant (almost summery). As we sat in the sun streaming into the hut and fed our faces some more, we were joined by a day-trip party.

Fortunately the Tukituki was not in flood and we negotiated the numerous crossings with little trouble. Unfortunately just at the last Derek's legendary navigational skills deserted him (or perhaps he was just punishing us for not doing Sawtooth) and he led us up a steep slope on the wrong side of the valley from the road end.

Fortunately we found a farm track which took us around the head of the valley to our destination. Here we found the car which Derek had arranged with John Phillips and Buzz Bee. A note said that their weekend trip had been aborted and they had gone in to Hinerua Hut for the day, so we didn't need to worry about the fact that we hadn't met them as planned at Waterfall Hut to pick up the key. We were a little concerned, since they were due out by 4pm and it was now after 5, but they showed up 45 minutes later and we were on our way home.

The party were: Derek Sharp, Richard Lovell and Peter Burgess.

RANGI 17 August 1997 by Malcolm Parker

This was down as a nice, easy, pleasant wander up to Rangī and enjoy the snow. Well that was the idea. After a leisurely start we headed off up the track. A few in the front felt they might hold up some they perceived to be fitter members and so were initially reluctant to lead. However after

reminding them that we were all here to just enjoy a gentle wander up and back we settled in to a stroll.

And what a pleasant stroll it was. All too often we become engrossed in simply 'getting there' and we overlook the pleasure in just chatting while we walk. We should not overlook it!

Just below the bridge we came across Tony and a companion. They were on their way down. Someone asked Tony why he was carrying a LARGE gas heater in his pack. I have heard of someone carrying a hairdryer with them before (well it was their first tramp and they did think they could just plug it in) and I have been known to carry some strange things myself. But a Heater? As he explained it was the heater from

Rangi. The ignition switch was broken and he was carrying it down for repairs.

We carried on up to the hut and enjoyed a brew and a bite to eat. Refreshed, a couple of us decided to go for a wander up past the hut and have a look around. After about half an hour of struggling through mushy snow we all decided this was a silly idea and why not return to the hut for another brew and something to eat.

Refreshed yet again we wandered on down and headed off for an ice cream. An excellent day out. Nice bush, nice people, nice weather.

We were; Chris, Malcolm, Leal, Marion, Margaret, Penny and Judy.

THURSDAY TRAMPERS by Monica Cantwell

We have been very busy going out every week. Our tramps so far this year have been:

		Leader:
Jan 16, 1997	Blue Range	
Jan 22/23/24	Mangahao Hut	Bev Akers
Jan 30	Field Hut & Kime Hut	Judy Callesen
Feb 13	Tunupo/Toka Loop	Neville Gray
Feb 20	Broadlands Station / Wharite	Jill Spencer
Feb 27	Mt Bruce	Doug Wakeling
March 13/14/15	Kaimanawa Ranges	Sue & Lawson Pither
March 20	Daphne Hut	Liz Flint
March 26/27	Cape Palliser	David Ross
April 3	Longview Hut	John Rockell
April 8/9/10	Bridge to Nowhere	Peter Carver
April 17	Crashed aircraft, Otaki	Phil Pearce
April 24	Callesen Hill Farm	Judy Callesen
May 1	Saddle Rd	Merv Matthews
May 6/7	Mt Ruapehu	Cath Lyttle
May 7	Sunrise Hut	
May 15	Coppermine Loop to Ridge	Russell Johnson
May 22	Rimutaka Incline	Keith Dommett
May 29	Toka Loop	Vina Cottam
June 5	Waitarere Beach	Neil Gutry
June 12	A-Frame	Carolyn Brodie

For any information on our future trips, phone Judy (357-0192) or Monica (326-9691).

Club Patron	: Lawson Pither	357-3033
President	: Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Vice President	: Terry Crippen	356-3588
Secretary	: Sarah Todd	357-0612
Treasurer	: Peter Wiles	358-6894

Membership Enquiries	: Liz Flint	356-7654
	: Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Gear Custodian	: Mick Leyland	358-3183
Newsletter Editor	: John Phillips	357-9009 (work)
deliver articles/disks to:	87 Victoria Avenue, P.N.	358-1874 (home)
e-mail articles to:	phillips@mwrc.govt.nz	
Trip Co-ordinators	: Dave Grant	357-8269
	: Liz Flint	356-7654
