



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - November 1998

*****THIS ISSUE*****

NEWS:

**Summer trips, Possum control in the Tararuas,
Xmas club BBQ, and final map order for summer**

TRIP REPORTS:

**SAR Leon Kinvig, Ngauruhoe versions 1 and 2,
Seaward Kaikouras, Kime Hut, Tongariro Circuit,
Tama Peak, Kahuterawa**

CLUB NIGHTS

NOVEMBER 12	“Garden of Eden, and more . . .”	Gary Goldsworthy
NOVEMBER 26	“Navigation evening”	Laurence Gatehouse
DECEMBER 3	Committee meeting	Andy Backhouse’s place
DECEMBER 10	END-OF-YEAR B-B-Q	Brian Lawrence’s

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**. All club nights commence at 7:45 pm, winter or summer. 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.

Meet at the Ashhurst Domain public shelter Saturday 10am. Navigation: A short practical compass exercise to lead into Sunday's activity. Also to warm you up for the River Safety practical.

Saturday 1 pm at the Ashhurst Domain. River Safety Practical: Correct river crossing methods are essential for most trampers. This practical session is under the guidance of an instructor from the Manawatu branch of the NZ Mountain Safety Council. Meet at the Ashhurst Domain public shelter. So come with your normal tramping gear: boots, polyprop, and a pack containing a load approximating a weekend trip - well done up in watertight plastic bag.

Note: For Saturday's activities, drive into the Ashhurst Domain using the main drive off State Highway 3 - don't get confused with the WINDFARM open day activities which are also based at the Domain - they will be using an entrance from the Ashhurst Rd.

Sunday depart 7am. Navigation practice: Somewhere in the Tararua ranges. A full day activity, in pleasant bush surrounds and some interesting features. Everyone can benefit from this, novice trumper or experienced bush navigator.

All should be enjoyable and worthwhile. Contact Terry for details.

Dec 3 Thursday trampers
Cath Lyttle 329-8608

Dec 3 Committee meeting
Laurence Gatehouse's

Dec 5-6(Navigation 3) Lake Oriwa M
Tony Gates 357-7439

Depart 7am. Lake Oriwa (or should we say "Swamp" Oriwa) is in the head of the heavily bushed Otaki catchment near a small DoC bivvy. Tramp up there from the Ohau River, navigating our way to the lake, then descend down the Makaretu. Some good Tararua bush country.

Dec 6 Ventura crash & Mick M
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

Depart 7.30 am. No, don't panic, this has nothing do with any accident involving our own Mick. It involves a walk up the Waitohu Stream, just north of Otaki Forks, and up past the crash site of a Ventura aircraft and on to a little knob in the ranges named Mick. Then follow a blazed trail south a little before dropping off down a ridge or

stream on The Mid-Fold Traverse. Depending on time we may climb back up along the Mid-Fold to the ridge on the west side of the Waitohu or head on down the Waitohu. Yes, this will be a fun trip with wet feet and some bush-bashing, as well as some lovely forest and historic interest involving hazards of the hills!

Dec 10 Thursday trampers
Judy Callesen 357-0192

Dec 10 Club night: End of year BBQ at Brian Lawrence's

This is the last 'club night' for the year and will be a repeat of the tradition of previous years', with a BBQ out in the country at Brian Lawrence's place. From 6-30pm on, bring all your goodies to BBQ and eat and share, as well as your liquid refreshments.

DIRECTIONS: Take the main road in the direction of Sanson/Bulls. Turn left into Penny Road about 200 metres before the Mt Stewart lookout/memorial; Brian's place is about 1 km down on the right hand side. See you there!

Dec 12 Glaciercraft M,T
Andy Backhouse 353-0774

An instructional trip to the Mangaehuehu glacier, near Turoa on Mt Ruapehu. Intended for those who plan a South Island trip this summer, either on a club tramp or your own private climbing trip. You need at least some snowcraft experience as we assume that you have used ice-axe & crampons before. We will depart 6am for a day trip using ropes, harnesses, helmets & karabiners which can all be provided, but you will need prussiks or to buy prussik cord (it's cheap). You will be climbing in & out of crevasses so bring warm waterproof clothing.

Dec 12-13 Rangitri-Triangle (combo)
M Liz Flint 356-7654

Depart 8am. Up to Rangitri Hut for morning tea then on up to the Mangahuia Range for lunch. We have the option of a shorter afternoon down to Triangle Hut for the night, or on to Iron Gates where there are more tent sites. Out along the bush track down the Oroua valley on Sunday.

Dec 13 Paretaitonga climb F,T
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

Depart 6.30 am. The absence of snow means that this is hardly a full-on Technical trip. Crampons are optional. If it is too icy then Dome and the crater lake still make this trip very worthwhile. Up

from the Turoa side via the glacier, hopefully with a good slide down! For anyone wanting to practice their climbing, the south face of Pare should still be interesting.

Dec17 Thursday trampers Christmas Party
Liz Flint 356-7654
A luncheon BBQ at John Rockell's, 6 Harvest Court, Paraparaumu. A map will be sent to those who wish to attend. Ring Liz, or John direct on (04) 298-1440 for details.

Dec 19-20 Pre Christmas special M
Richard Lockett 323-0948
Depart 8am for who knows where! Come along prepared for an overnight stay & see what Richard has in store to see the 1998 club trip calendar out.

Extended summer trips

North Island

Late Dec - early New Year Kaweka Loop M
Mick Leyland 358-3183
See details in "Up & Coming Trips" this issue.
See Mick soon to register your interest.

South Island

Early-mid Jan Tasman - Franz F, T
Terry Crippen 356-3588
See October newsletter for details. Closing date for bookings: last club night in November (26th).

Mid-Jan Rees Valley ANP F, T
Peter Wiles 358-6894
See details in "Up & Coming Trips" this issue.
See Peter soon to register your interest.

Trip leaders:

Please discuss with the trips co-ordinator (Terry Crippen 356-3588, 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 Terry Crippen (356-3588) or Liz Flint (356-7654).

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

Enquiries to: Mick Leyland (358-3183), Liz Flint (356-7654), or Laurence Gatehouse (356-5805)

NOTICES

FROM THE EDITOR

All kinds of articles, whether trip reports, interesting information & anecdotes, book reviews, or even a product review, are welcome for inclusion in this newsletter. If it is a small article, hand-written is okay (deliver to John Phillips, 87 Victoria Avenue) but if handwriting is all you can do, don't let it put you off even large articles.

If you *do* have access to a computer, it does make my job a bit easier if larger articles are on disc. However, more and more people are e-mailing articles to me. If you have the facilities at home

or at work, this is a very quick & convenient way to do it. My e-mail address is:

john.phillips@mwrc.govt.nz

However, if you are e-mailing scanned photos, send your scan files to:

postmaster@mwrc.govt.nz

where all incoming scan files are processed by a software package and forwarded on to me. **Any photo scan files e-mailed directly to me will be automatically rejected** by the system, so make

sure you send them to the 'postmaster' address at my work.

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.

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

THE JANUARY-JUNE 1999 EVENTS CARD

Terry C, Liz F, & Lawrence G

The next events card is underway. It will come out with the December - January Newsletter. It's now the time for you to suggest where you want Club trips to be going to, and what Club evenings you want, for the first half of 1999. If some of you prospective leaders haven't been contacted yet give Terry Crippen (356-3588) or Liz Flint (356-7654) a call before they phone you, for those great trips you want to lead. What about some trips to the top of the South Island? For suggestions for Thursday night speakers and activities, Laurence Gatehouse (356-5805) is now waiting for your ideas.

EXTENDED TRIPS THIS SUMMER

The club is running three scheduled extended (longer) trips this summer holiday period.

1. Late Dec - early New Year: Kaweka Loop (Medium grade) Mick Leyland 358-3183 leader. Somewhat modified from the original Trip Card description, this will be a 4-day loop in the Kawekas due to transport difficulties with a Kaimanawa crossing. Exact details depend on interest of members, but at this stage plan to set out from Pinks Hut to Venison Tops, then loop back to Te Puia Springs.

2. Early to mid Jan: Murchison & Tasman Valleys, Mt Cook National Park (Note: changed place & date from what was on events card) Fit & Technical grade. Terry Crippen 356-3588 leader. See October newsletter for details. Closing date with deposit of \$100 will be the last club night in November (26th).

3. Mid to late Jan: Rees Valley, Aspiring National Park (Fit & Technical Grade). Peter

Wiles 358-6894 leader. No bookings have been made for this trip so far. The concept is to spend 7-10 days in the general area of the Rees Valley (50 km west of Queenstown at the head of Lake Wakatipu) doing a mixture of tramping (off the beaten tracks for the most part) and climbing. There is no shortage of peaks to attract one's attention. Skill level will be Snowcraft III, or thereabouts - nothing too strenuous or difficult. Distances not too large and not miles of boulder bashing. Aim is for late January - after the completion of Terry's trip.

POSSUM CONTROL IN THE TARARUAS

DoC will be carrying out possum control operations in the lower Waiohine and Tauherenikau catchments this summer (from Mt Holdsworth south to Smith Creek Shelter). Aerial work will focus on 1080 baiting in the higher altitude forested areas, and is scheduled to proceed during a period of fine weather between 13 October and end-November this year. The more accessible lower altitude forests will be done by ground control, which will include bait stations, leg hold traps and cyanide poison. The ground work will be completed by April next year.

Dogs are not permitted in the area until all carcasses have decomposed, three months after baiting. Information leaflets are available in DoC offices, and warning signs will be placed at access points into this area of the park. For further info contact DoC Wairarapa, Masterton, Ph. (06) 377-0700.

NO FUEL AT MT COOK HUTS

DoC have notified that, from 15th October 1998, the Alpine Huts in Mt Cook and Westland National Parks will no longer have fuel or cookers supplied. Alpine hut users should carry in cookers and sufficient fuel for their visit. No surplus fuel is to be left behind in the huts.

Main reasons are: safety concerns about delivery and bulk storage of highly combustible fuels; new service standards identify alpine hut users as self-contained anyway; and easier access by aircraft and use of modern light climbing gear has freed up climbers to carry in their own fuel. Hut fees will remain unchanged.

FINAL MAP ORDERS

This special map order is for those who have summer trips planned. Closing date Monday 16th November so get your order in pronto.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Sarah Todd and Dave Simcock have now moved to:

77 York St, Ashhurst
Phone 326-9265

FOR SALE

Woodman tramping boots, Size 8, near new. \$120. Ring Allison 323-3686.

TRIP REPORTS

SAR REPORT - Leon Kinvig Hut, July 1998

On Saturday 26 July 1998, a family group of mother, father, two boys (8 & 10) and a dog tramped to Leon Kinvig Hut from Sixtus Lodge. They had no problems en route.

Sunday dawned pretty wet. They packed up by 9.00am, ready to depart the hut. The father carried virtually all of the equipment in his pack, and crossed the Pohangina River at the obvious crossing point just upstream from the hut with the dog. His pack was left on the western river bank. He then returned to the hut to collect his wife and two boys (NB there is nothing in the report about the whereabouts of the dog). When approaching the river for the second time, with one of the boys in tow, he slipped, then decided not to attempt to re-cross. By then the river was a raging torrent. The entire family then returned to the hut with limited equipment to wait one day and one night before being rescued by helicopter. I assume that the dog was with them at this stage. The father did plan to tramp out to the Norsewood side (the Apiti Track), but thankfully, he didn't attempt the route - it is a long way.

This happened to be at the time when Palmerston North's land telephones were down yet again, so communications were a real problem. However, the Police sorted things out Sunday evening, and PNTMC was notified and our search team was put on standby, ready to go for Monday morning. It was decided to initially use a helicopter. The Tranzrail rescue helicopter flew in atrocious weather to Leon Kinvig Hut and successfully collected them all at 2.00 PM Monday afternoon. So the search teams were stood down, they never even got their boots on!

Comments: The main pack was not recovered, and has not been reported since. The police SAR do encourage more people to carry a mountain radio to avoid problems - a quick radio schedule

could have notified the outside world that the party was OK just delayed by the river.

NGAURUHOE - Version I

Sunday, 20th September

by Peter Wiles

We got away at 5 am in Warren's van from Foodtown bound for Mangatepopo road end, Tongariro NP. At the carpark we had arranged to meet up with Maree and Wayne Beggs (Wayne 1) between 7.30 and 8.00 am. However, there was no sign of them when he arrived shortly before 8.00 am. The morning was perfect, calm, clear and the remnants of a good frost melting in the strong sunshine. It was strikingly evident that there was very little snow on Ngauruhoe - nothing of significance on the northern side until the crater rim 2,200 m.

We headed rapidly up the track and stopped for a snack just before the climb up the rib to South Crater. At South Crater we had another stop and snack, before contemplating the frustrations of the loose scoria. There was no snow in South Crater, which is very rare for this time of year - more like January. We followed the track - well worn path up the scoria, until it steepens considerably and becomes difficult to make progress on before sidling onto a rocky section that makes itself available just at the right moment. Wayne Bennett (Wayne 2) demonstrated his fitness, by powering on up through the field leaving us considerably behind.

We reached the rim of the inner crater at about 11.30 and felt that lunch was necessary. Shortly we caught sight of two making their way up below us. Maree and Wayne 1 arrived to join us about half an hour later.

The lack of snow was evident in the crater with the rocks about the rim mostly clear of snow/ice and the bluffs in the main crater were black and impressive. After admiring the extensive view,

we walked around the outer crater rim to the eastern side, before returning to the western rim and taking a cross country route directly down the western side. The first 200 m or so were on tongues of snow where some excellent glissading was obtained. Then it was down several hundred metres of loose scoria. At the "bottom", some returned to the main track while others continued on the lava flows across country. We were back at the cars by 3 pm, having enjoyed a wonderful day.

Party: Wayne (1) and Wayne (2), Warren Soufflot, Maree Limpus, Nicky Smith, Warren Wheeler and Peter Wiles.

KIME HUT 3-4 October by Harley Betts

Setting off on a mild, overcast morning, seven of us ascended Judd Ridge from Otaki Forks towards Kime Hut, above the bushline a couple of hours beyond Field Hut. To begin with the track passed through patchy scrub, a legacy of the over-ambitious farming practices of the early settlers. However, this soon gave way to luxuriant lowland forest as we continued up into the mist towards Field Hut.

We reached Kime Hut in the mid-afternoon, and, to our surprise, found Warren Soufflot already there. And, again to our surprise, we were soon joined by Maree Limpus and Wayne Begg. So now we were ten. Although conditions weren't exactly perfect, the day could not end without an assault on nearby Mt Hector. And our perseverance paid off - the cloud eventually drew back like a giant curtain as we neared the peak, rewarding us with glorious views of golden tussock slopes below us, glowing warmly in the afternoon sun. Fantastic. Further out we could see Lake Wairarapa, Wellington, the Kaikouras, northwest Nelson, Kapiti Island, Egmont, Ruapehu..... the list goes on! Never mind that it was windy and the temperature just one degree, it was a visual feast

of banquet proportions and we were all duly impressed.

Once back in the hut, we began assembling another banquet of the more edible type. Warren W. earned himself a whole heap of brownie points by supplementing the meal with a bottle of Alpine Warmer a la Primus - damn good it was too. Unfortunately my attempt at matching his offer with red wine a la Primus wasn't quite so palatable - consumed more out of politeness and sympathy than enjoyment?

The next morning brought deteriorating weather on the back of a rising northwesterly, so we broke camp early and headed on out as the rain began. Passing back through the forest below Field Hut was a great cleansing experience with the rain sluicing down through the canopy: the entire forest was alive with the sound of rain, and every

leaf glistened brightly through a film of fresh water. Probably one of my more memorable soakings!

We arrived back at Otaki Forks by lunchtime, taking time out for an ice cream stop at Otaki before returning to Palmerston North. We were: Warren Wheeler (leader), Warren Soufflot, Terry Crippen, Mick and Marion Leyland, Llew and Jenny Pritchard, Maree Limpus, Wayne Begg and Harley Betts (scribe).

TOP MAROPEA HUT

11th October by Neil Campbell

Last year in October I led a trip to Top Maropea and it was wet. This year it rained softly (and at times less than softly) for virtually the entire trip. Given the less than ideal conditions, we decided not to go beyond Sunrise Hut. The other members of the party had to be assured that there really are excellent views to be had from the area around Sunrise Hut.

We left PN at about 7:00am, started walking at about 9:00am, had an early lunch at Sunrise Hut and were back to the car by about 1:30pm. The track was in truly excellent condition.

We were: Neil Campbell, Roz Wilson, Matt Day and Kirsten Henderson.

TAMA PEAK 18th October by Neil Campbell

We left PN at 6.00am and reached the small car park, just off the Desert Road, by about 8.00am. The weather was fine with blue skies and excellent views. The bridge across the Ohinepango Stream was conspicuous by its absence and so it was case wading across. By about 9.30am we reached the New Waihohonu Hut. We then followed the track up through the forest. Once we reached the open ridge top, we left the tack, and headed directly toward Tama peak. We reached it in time for an early lunch.

There were good views of the Upper Tama Lake and we could see across to the Chateau. Up on the tops the wind had a definite bite. We then walked along the top (heading south) descending to meet up with the Waihohonu Track. We were careful to avoid the forested area (the densely forested area!). Once we had reached the track we had the wind at our back and made our way back to the car. We were back in PN by a-bit-after-5pm.

Thanks to Peter for leading a great trip. We were Peter Wiles and Neil Campbell.

TONGARIRO 24-26th October
by Richard Lockett

Having decided to join Warren's Tongariro National Park trip during Labour Weekend, I thought a more thorough preparation was in order than for my usual Sunday day-trips. After searching under beds, sofas, chairs, car seats and

in various cupboards my full kit of polyprop was obtained. A rummage through my pack found an assortment of chocolate bars, muesli bars, packets of soup etc and a litre bottle of water which I had (unknown to me) been hauling around in preparation for this 3 day trip.

An early start and an uneventful journey north saw us at the Whakapapa village car park by mid-morning where we were advised that the Great Walk season had been delayed, so annual hut passes would do (something about gas in the huts, too much!). So off we set along the Waihohonu track with lunch being taken somewhere after the Taranaki Falls in perfect sunshine and little wind.

Upon reaching the junction of the Tama Lakes track various route options were muttered by the trip leader and, by the time the Upper Tama Lake was reached, a cunning plan to go straight to Oturere hut missing out Waihohonu hut. Not knowing where I was heading to anyway I readily agreed to this suggestion with the comment "it doesn't get dark till 8 o'clock anyway". Upper Tama Lake to Oturere hut follow me, scoot around the lake to the south and east keeping up high as and up and over the ridge coming off Tama peak into a valley which feeds the Upper Tama Lake. Walking up this valley we are heading straight towards Mt Ngauruhoe and keeping Tama Peak to our right we turned east and swung in a great arc around the base of Ngauruhoe across the catchment of the Waihohonu Stream heading towards the Oturere valley which was just over the next ridge, the next ridge, the next ridge, you know how it is.

Anyway high up on a ridge overlooking a to-be-crossed watercourse Warren spied a tent which had been pitched beside the stream. No sign of life. Upon reaching the Oturere valley we had to head in the opposite direction to the hut towards red crater to find a convenient scree slope to get down to the valley floor and then about a two km walk down the moonscape style valley across gravel, rocks, sand/grit and snow to Oturere hut. Yes snow - a fresh dumping had fallen on the previous two nights, "Lovely snow" exclaimed Warren, myself not being a connoisseur.

She was a pretty full hut by the time we arrived at 6 o'clock with four tents pitched out front as well and everyone trying to cook dinner at the same time. But bunk space was found by Warren using his skills in diplomacy.

With a late get-up next morning so we could breakfast in peace, we were greeted with low cloud, rain and wind as we set off back up the Oturere Valley at 10am. Lunch was had on the shores of the Emerald Lake sheltered behind a large rock from the wind and then up onto and across the snow covered Central Crater. Upon reaching the Blue Lake we left track and headed east around the lake which had become visible the cloud having lifted a few metres - "very nice" - our mission to check out the Te Mari Craters.

A descent was made down into the head waters of the Mangahouhounui Steam via a long rock-strewn ridge, across the stream and up onto the Te Mari Crater. The wind was getting pretty strong by this stage so it was decided to drop over the side and sidle around the crater which with clearing skies gave good views of Lakes Taupo and Rotoaira. Afternoon tea was taken sheltering behind a large rock overlooking the Explosion Craters and another large unnamed crater to the north of TeMari. Ketetahi Hut could be seen to the west but how to get there, a sidle was made along the scree slopes of Te Mari and Rotopaunga peaks trying to stay high so as to pick up the zig zags of track above the hut

Ketetahi Hut was reached at about 4pm, and another foolish hut at that. After a brew and bite a tour was made of a well known piece of private land near by. Also staying at Ketetahi that night were a father and son, part of a larger group from Auckland who provided the humour for the evening. They had all the gear including a GPS but not including shades for father and son both of whom were suffering from snow blindness. This group had come up from Mangatepopo Hut heading to Oturere Hut by circling Ngauruhoe in an anti clockwise direction but, in the low cloud conditions, had "turned left" before Ngauruhoe instead of after it. Did we know of something to help with the sore eyes? I said that its probably similar to arc eye which foolish welders sometimes suffer from and that bathing ones eyes in milk or urine (preferably your own) can help. He must have been suffering because he was keen to give the milk at least a go and I couldn't vouch for powdered milk ever.

Monday dawned cloudless with little wind and by eight we were walking up the zig-zag track to where it sidles around North Crater. There we left it to climb straight up the side and across the

flat top the crater itself, up and over part of its remaining rim - which involved the use of Warren's ice axe - across another flat then up onto Tongariro itself. By this stage I was beginning to enjoy this "lovely snow" especially with the warm sun shining directly on my back.

After enjoying the views and having a bite it was straight over the side and down onto the long ridge which descends down to the Mangatepopo road end. When opposite Mangatepopo Hut we dropped over the side and across the stream to the hut. It didn't look that far looking down but looking back up was a different story. All that remained now was the three-plus hour walk back to Whakapapa to be greeted by a flat tyre on the Renault and with an ice cream, coffee and sticky bun at the camp store, a beer at the National Park pub, pork chops and chips in Taihape our weekend was complete.

We were Warren Wheeler and Richard Lockett.

UWERAU IS IN THE KAIKOURA MOUNTAINS by Tony Gates

The Seaward Kaikoura Mountains are found in Marlborough, about half way between Christchurch and Wellington. They have several easy access points for trampers and climbers, and are becoming more popular these days. There is a lot of scree, scrub, and rough farmland, but many areas of delightful forest and river flats. Manakau, at 2610 metres, is the highest piece of rock found there, and its close neighbour Uwerau reaches 2230 m. The Hapuku-Kowhai saddle route is a well trodden path for medium trampers, and the summit of Manakau is often frequented by mountaineers.

The plan was to traverse both Urewau and Manakau during Labour Weekend 1998, starting up the south branch of the Hapuku River, and exiting down the more usual North branch route. Here is our story:

SEAWARD KAIKOURAS
Labour Weekend 1998
by Warren Soufflot

Warren and the 'mega van' turned up at Wayne's to find Wayne standing in the middle of his lounge listening to "Grunge Music" (very loud). Apparently this is a good way to relax. After closing down the noise and loading up, it was off to pick up K-9 Doc (Nigel) who was running about 1/2 hour late. Onwards to Wellington to meet up with Tony Gates who had been in Wellington all afternoon. With our tums full of curry we hopped onto the Ferry which left 3/4 hour late. Was the entire weekend going to run 3/4 hours late? Arriving at Picton about 2am we drove to a Picnic Area just after Blenheim for a couple of hours sleep.

We set off at 6am heading for Kaikoura Bakery for those last minute vitamins. From here we could see our challenge, Manakau (2608 meters). A quick drive into the quiet back country region where we ran into about 20 other keen bush people from Wellington Tramping Club. Dressed to kill we ambled up the Hapuku River avoiding the renowned killer Kamikaze falcons and lunched at the Hapuku Hut. Energy restored, we headed off up the nearest scree slope heading for Uwerau 1800 metres above. (Wayne's continual gaseous eruptions aided in our upward ascent). It was a hot exhausting climb up the slope with 1 step forward and 2 slides back. We eventually found a somewhat unsuitable campsite on an area not quite 45° slope. Some minor excavation by our CAT specialist left us with a suitable flat area for 1 tent, 2 bivvy bags, a portaloos and a kitchen. Our spectacular views included Kaikoura, southwards towards Christchurch, a few humpback whales (with a good imagination) and the snow capped ranges stretching towards Cook.

Dawn came none too soon due to the increased wind velocity and lowered ambient temperatures. Tony cooked a gut-stodging porridge for brekky, after which we resumed our onward and upward struggle against the forces of nature (and Wayne's by-now-serious flatulence problem).

We conquered Uwerau around mid-morning, and admired the awesome views amidst the 60-knot winds and swirling dust. These kodak moments were suitably recorded.

Our plan was to traverse the somewhat precarious ridge heading north to Manukau, but our plans altered due to the severity of the wind. Hence we decided to head down the eastward ridge toward Stace Creek. The initial descent caused us to rename the ridge as Skidmark Ridge. This name was chosen due to the proctological effect of the initial descent. Even the goats traverse this roped up! However, a hair-raising 2 hours later, and with no need for major skin grafts, we arrived at the more undulating and tame section of the ridge.

Bum sliding on the tussock whilst avoiding the Spaniard grass got us another 300 meters lower and then a rapid descent surf-style down a scree shoot. It was here we realised about "Wayne's Big Foot" earth-moving abilities that resulted in at least a tonne of falling rubble with every step. "ROCKS" became a very familiar word, resulting in a rapid dive to safety for the 3 of us unlucky enough to be below him. This scree led us to the beginnings of a tributary of Stace Creek.

An arduous hour of boulder jumping/falling left us at the head of the first of 4 waterfalls. Fortunately descending ropes were provided for the first two, but the second two waterfalls were deemed impassable so we blazed a trail 'with our bare hands' through thick, steep, tropical forest. Two hours later we emerged back on the same creek only about 200 meters downstream. Another hour of rock bouldering left us at a lovely grassy campsite at the Hapuku River forks. A campfire was lit with the traditional back-country firelighter, a feast was prepared, and a perfect but strenuous day came to an end.

Morning dawned a little overcast but warmish so Tony departed for a morning amble up the North branch of the Hapuku for a while and came back for breakfast. We packed up camp and Tony and Nigel headed off down the gorge while Wayne and Warren took the track to rendezvous at the bottom of the gorge. A quiet walk down the river (avoiding the Kamikaze falcons again) and we were at the van. After a quick swim in the Hapuku and some spray on smells it was time to head into Kaikoura for some R and R and junk food.

With time to spare, it was into Blenheim and onto the wineries where we ended up purchasing 4 bottles of wine and 4 empty wine barrels. This posed quite a challenge to fit everything into the van as well as us. There was talk about leaving Wayne behind, but to our surprise we all fitted with not much room to spare, although it was quite cosy. Last seen Tony was asleep in the back cuddling a wine barrel inhaling its fumes.

Shark and Taties in Picton and it was onto the Ferry home, catching up with a party from Wellington who also attempted Manakau but from a different way (also not succeeding due to bad wx).

A blast up the coast saw us arriving home about midnight. A great weekend was had by all.

We were: Warren S, Wayne B, Tony G and Nigel H.

KAHUTERAWA

1st November

by Neil Campbell

This was a exploratory trip into the seldom visited bush in the Kahuterawa Valley adjacent to the top end of the Tararua Forest Park. For this walk we crossed both private farm land and part of the PN City Council Water Reserve, so permission was obtained from both the farmer and the PNCC.

We left Foodtown carpark at a very civilised 9.15am. The start of the walk was just a short distance outside PN at Brown House which is just off Kahuterawa Road. From there we followed the farm tracks up to the top where there were very good views of PN, and plenty of discussion on a range of topics centred round Door knocking, security communications sites nearby, the SIS, the army bases on both sides of the range. etc. We then crossed into the Water Reserve (keeping on the Kahuterawa side of the ridge) and shortly afterwards left the vehicular track to disappear into the bush. Tall tree ferns and Pepperwood on the sheltered lee side but stunted scrubby Pepperwood and Bush Lawyer on the windward side. We headed south along a ridge and for much of the time we were able to follow a rough track (or tracks?).

With map and compass and climbing onto the odd high stump we successfully navigated ourselves along to our turning point. So by early afternoon we started to follow the spur down to a creek that would then join up with the Kahuterawa Stream. Following this spur was slow going because of the jungle vines (Supplejack and Kihikihi). For the final part of the trip we followed the Kahuterawa Stream, with plenty of crossings and the odd deep pool, down to the Black Bridge car park, at the end of Kahuterawa Road. We were back to the car by about 6pm.

A very interesting trip. We were Terry Crippen, Katherine Lauchland-Farquhar, Warren Wheeler and Neil Campbell.

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