



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - December 2001

I felt that only by following my father up the mountain, by standing where he had stood, by climbing where he had climbed, could I truly learn about him. I wanted to know what it was that drove him and what it was he had learned.

"I guess I *have to*", I said groping.

If only my father had been a carpenter or a plumber, I thought, I wouldn't have been looking up at Mt Everest with such a passion to climb it.

From "TOUCHING MY FATHER'S SOUL" in the footsteps of Sherpa Tensing, by Jamling Tenzing Norgay (2001).

CHRISTMAS ISSUE

NEWS:

Annual Awards

Search and Rescue on Dundas Range

TRIP REPORTS:

Kahuterawa trails; Waipawa Saddle- Waikamaka;
Fun & games along Sawtooth Ridge; Lost Party Report

CLUB NIGHTS

JANUARY 31

BBQ Horseshoe Bend, Tokomaru

FEBRUARY 7

Committee Meeting, Terry's place.

FEBRUARY 14

Navigation, Warren Wheeler

FEBRUARY 28

City Rock, Terry Crippen

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 **sharp**, 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. A 50c door fee includes supper.

UP AND COMING TRIPS & EVENTS

Trip Grades

Trip grades can depend on many factors, especially the weather. As a guide, a reasonably proficient tramper can be expected to cover the graded trips in 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.

Dec 15 Ruapehu climb M,T
 Terry Crippen 356-3588

I'll be away. Check with Bruce, regarding 16th Glaciercraft, if that is still going, and if he would want to organize the climbing day, or someone else lead it, in conjunction, otherwise put it down as: 15th December Ruapehu climb; postponed till February 2001.

Dec 16 Glaciercraft M/I
 Bruce van Brunt 328-4761

This instruction course will take place on the Mangaehuehu Glacier, on the southern slopes of Mt Ruapehu. It is a one day introduction to glacier travel, and is essential for those heading into the Southern Alps. This is open to those who have the requisite alpine skills, such as those taught on Snowcraft. Ice and rope equipment essential. The departure time will be early.

Jan 12-13 PNTMC 2002 TNP M/F
 Janet Wilson 329-4722

Depart Friday night (probably). This is the world famous (in NZ) trip in Tongariro National Park. First inaugurated in Y2K as the PNTMC 2000 trip this year will be a little higher with a 2002m climb over 2 days. Day one is Pukekaikiore and Ngauruhoe, Day 2 is Tongariro, 'Merald lakes, Central Crater. Probably stay at Eivins Lodge rather than Mangatepopo – similar cost, there are showers, and you might get a trout from a fisherman (yeah, right).

Jan 13 Herepai Hut E/M
 Neil Campbell 359-5048

Deaprt 8.00am. Behind Eketahuna and into the headwaters of the Mangatainoka River, this trip is a typical Tararua bush trip up onto the tops. We

will go a bit further up past the hut for great views from Herepai itself.

Jan 19-29 Siberia, Aspiring NP F,T
 Terry Crippen 356-3588

This trip has been cancelled, instead Terry is leading an extended trip into Mt Hooker in early January. Places are full, sorry – check with Terry for a cancellation if you really want to go.

Anniversay weekend 2002

Jan 19-21 Otaki - YTTY M
 Warren Wheeler 356-1998

Depart 7.30am. From Otaki Forks we will go to Waitewaewae Hut and on up the Otaki River to our first campsite and a swim. Next day we climb over into the Waitewaewae and the last day we wander out down the stream back to the Forks.

Jan 21 (Mon) Stanfield Hut E
 Duncan Hedderley 355 1820

Depart 8.15 for the Tamaki River valley behind Dannevirke. A pleasant walk in to a tidy hut, and then back out along the river.

Jan 26-27 Makahu Saddle, Kawekas E/M
 Dennis Moore 357-5651

This is a good spot at the main Kaweka road-end, with plenty of options for day walks from the carpark including a climb up onto the spectacular Kaweka Main Range.

Jan 27 Day Rangi-Howletts FE
 Mick Leyland 358-3183

One day crossing of the Ruahine Forest Park via Te Hekenga . Come prepared for a hot trip over the tops.

Jan 31 Club Night: BBQ Horseshoe Bend

Our traditional start to the year – hopefully without the traditional thunderstorms and rain this time? BYO swimming togs, food and drink and gas BBQ if you have one. Turn left at the sign in Tokomaru. If you can bring a BBQ or need a ride out please contact Warren 356-1998.

Feb 2-3 Cattle Ck Ngamoko Hut M/F
 Llew Pritchard 358-2217

Contact Llew for details of this trip into the Pohangina River, in the Ruahine Ranges.

Feb 3 Te Atuparapara M/F
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

This trip is to one of the highest points in the northern Ruahine Range beyond Sunrise Hut. It includes bush, tussock and rock-hopping down the Waipawa Stream. The alpine plants will still be in flower and 360 degree views including Ruapehu have been booked, so come prepared for a hot day out.

Feb 6 (Waitangi Day) Ruapehu climb M/T
Terry Crippen 3563-588

Leaving PN well before dawn, it should see us on the Turoa slopes of Ruapehu, with plenty of time for a climb of Tahurangi or Girdlestone, or whatever else you want to do.

Feb 7 Thursday trampers
Judy Callesen 357-0192

**Feb 7 Committee Meeting
Terry's place, 7.30pm.**

Feb 9-10 Waikamaka Hut M
Martin Lawrence 357-1695

Depart 7.30am. Up the scenic Waipawa Stream in the NE Ruahines, over the Waipawa Saddle and down to the hut for a swim in the Kawhatau River. Return over the tops if fine.

Feb 10 Rangi Hut E
Laurence Gatehouse 356-5805

Depart 8.30am. One of the nicest easy trips up through Ruahine forest onto the tops with rewarding views.

Feb 14 Thursday trampers
Don Maclaine 357-0745

**Feb 14 Club Night: Navigation
with Warren Wheeler**

A fun and informative evening with maps and compasses and hidden treasure to find.

Feb 16-17 Waiohine Gorge Tube
Tony Gates 357-7439

This is a classic, historic, and hard tramp into the seldom trodden central Tararua Ranges. We will cruise in from Kiriwhakapapa to Arete Forks, then over to the headwaters of the mighty Waiohine River. Going down valley to Mid Waiohine Hut,

Totara Flats, then Walls Whare, will take at least two days. This is an incredibly scenic valley, and with good water levels, makes one of the best tramps ever. Come prepared.

Feb 17 Oroua - Iron Gates E/M
Peter Darragh 358-8744

Depart 8.30am. Up the Oroua River side track for a swim before returning down the river to the Iron Gates Gorge. A fun trip – expect more than wet feet.

Feb 21 Thursday trampers Sue &
Lawson Pither 357-3033

Feb 23-24 Full Pohangina M/F
Terry Crippen 356-3588

Leaving Friday night or early Sat morning; into the head of the Pohangina near Longview Hut, on the east of the Ruahines, following the river SE out to the western side. This time of the year it should be pleasant river travel: some river flats, some boulder sections and good huts. Meet up with the day trip for transport home. Let Terry know in plenty of time so transport to the start can be arranged.

Feb 23- 24 Kaweka Challenge F
The highest Endurance Race for teams and individuals. Contact Mick Leyland, 358-3183 or Janet Wilson 329-4722 for tips.

Feb 24 Centre Creek E
Pete McGregor (bus) 356-7154

Depart 8.30am. An easy introduction to the Pohangina River area with a visit to Centre Creek Biv and return down the river to cool off.

Feb 28 Thursday trampers
Peter Carver 354-4479

**Feb 28 Club Night: Indoor Rock Climbing
with Terry Crippen**

This will be at City Rock in town here. Climbing gear (ropes, harnesses etc) and instruction will be supplied, just wear/bring suitable gear/footwear for scrambling about on the wall. 7:30pm. City Rock is in the process of moving (again). The new place is in Featherston St about 100 yards from the intersection with Rangitiki St. (It not far from the 55 Taonui St place). Check with Terry in case, ph 356-3588. Cost \$7 per person.

Trip participants:

If you are interested in going on a trip, please contact the leader at least three days in advance. Trips usually leave from the Foodtown carpark in Fergusson Street with transport provided by car-pooling. 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 or any suggestions for future tramps please contact one of the trip co-ordinators Terry Crippen (356-3588), Janet Wilson (329-4722) or Stephen Liddall (357-69).

Trip leaders: Please discuss with the trip co-ordinators, 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.

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

Enquiries to: Mick Leyland (358-3183), Terry Crippen (356-3588), or Janet Wilson (329 4722)

NOTICES

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES can be Emailed to tony.gates@horizons.govt.nz, or stuff can be delivered to him at home or work.

c/- horizons.mw

11-15 Victoria Ave, PN

If you're e-mailing, we'd prefer you to include your article as an attachment (please use Microsoft Word Version 7.0 or Rich Text Format), unless it is quite a small article, which can be typed it directly into the e-mail.

Note that e-mails with certain attachments (particularly scanned photos) will be filtered by a "quarantine" system. you will get an e-mail reply from the horizons 'postmaster', confirming this. Don't worry about this, all material gets through to us once it is checked for viruses etc. by horizons' staff.

The deadline for anything for the Newsletter is the **FIRST THURSDAY** of the month.

FOR SALE

Koflach Viva plastic climbing boots, "Lady Soft" model, size 6 (US 8), very good nick. \$150
Contact Dave Henwood, at 06 326 8892

FOR SALE Three items from Chris Boyle, phone 021 434 614, or Home 06 353 3646.

1. Macpac Neve XL sleeping bag. Used about ten times, in great condition. \$390. (new retail price is \$680)

2. Macpac Renegade anorak jacket, XL, Reflex, Teal and Purple, as new condition (retail \$430), I want \$300 for this one.

3. A specialized 2001 Full Suspension Shaun Palmer 'replica' Elite frame (black, large). Manitou XVert DC 2001 forks, Fox Vanilla TC rear shock, XTR rear deraulier, XT 'v' brake rear with XTR lever, XT front deraulier, XT crank, XT Cluster, Alex rims, Selle Italia XO seat, Profile design bars, Magura Post Mount Louise front disk/hub/caliper. Assembled and maintained by Jason at Outer Limits in Palmerston North. Awesome bike. \$3900.

WANTED TO BUY

A light weight, medium sized woman's pack for tramping. (A little larger than a day pack.) Phone Pamela at 06 358 0136.

SEARCH AND RESCUES.

Some successful Search and Rescues have recently gained positive media attention. Two women attempted the Tararua Southern Crossing, and retreated down into Penn Creek due to adverse weather. The track proved impassable (DOC had closed it several years ago). They sat tight, then the helicopter found them.

Again in the Tararuas, a mother and child on a day walk over-nighted at Donnelly's Flat, near Holdsworth Lodge. SAR teams urgently searched all night. The successful conclusion there was due in no small way to them sitting tight once again, keeping warm, and waiting for the SAR teams in the morning.

On Mt Aspiring, two climbers bivvied out, and required rescue. They had travelled lightly, encountered bad weather, then proved the benefits of cell phones, and of sitting tight.

And most recently a fellow club-member became disorientated in cloud on the Dundas Range. He wisely sat tight in his tent and used his cell-phone to seek help (see Article).

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEER MEDALS TO SAR MEMBERS

At the long line training, and end of year function, for the PN Land SAR organization, a number of PNTMC members along with people from other clubs in the Manawatu and Levin areas were presented with Police Medallions acknowledging the contribution in time and effort of search and rescue volunteers. This was part of the celebration of the International Year of Volunteers. It was a suitably fitting occasion as some of the people had been involved in a successful SAR operation which had just concluded that afternoon.

EVENTS CARD JANUARY-JUNE 2002

Terry Crippen

The Events Card for Jan to June 2002 is out. Lots of trips, three to the Kawekas. Thank you leaders who have committed yourselves to lead trips. Nice to see some new faces. Encourage other club members, flatmates, partners, parents, family and friends to come on these trips.

For newcomers please read the comments regarding the grading of trips printed on the events card and in the Newsletter.

REMEMBER if you want to go on a trip, to contact the leaders at least 3 days in advance - phoning up Friday night for a weekend trip is a bit too late!

ALSO, if you are a LEADER, let a Trips Coordinator know as soon as you know you can't lead a trip or want to change place/time - this saves problems at club night and possible problems in case there is a search. Remember the trip is a club trip, NOT a private trip, and so PNTMC has overall responsibility.

Club Nights: first one, the traditional BBQ at Horse Shoe Bend. Please try to come along to this and as many of the other club nights as possible. As well as the excellent selection of topics being presented, club nights are a good chance for a chat & hear what others have been up

to. Our Club night organizer is Warren Wheeler, phone 356-1998 for further info.

"GUIDE FOR TRIP LEADER", PINK "HELP" FORM, AND TRIP FEEDBACK FORM

These three forms are always available at club nights - either up the back by the servery or on our bookcase. Trip leaders don't forget your responsibilities when planning and leading trips. Make use of the Guide for Trip Leaders. Please take a copy or two - take one with you on each tramp you lead for continuing reference.

The pink "Help" form is put out by the NZ Mountain Safety Council for possible Search and Rescue purposes. Trip leaders take some copies and fill in or use it as a guide to compile details, prior to the trip's departure.

The Trip Feedback form is designed for getting feedback, either positive or negative, from those trips you go on, so the club can enhance your future outdoor experiences.

QUEST FOR K2.

The summer of 1986 saw 27 climbers reach the summit of K2, and 13 deaths. I was enthralled and moved at a recent National Geographic TV film of these tragic, yet triumphant events. It was a great show, extending the boundaries of modern mountaineering. Tony Gates.

HOWLETTS HUT COAL

Howletts Hut should be much more welcoming thanks to DoC helicoptoring in a load of coal that Derek Sharp had organised. Derek is hoping to get in there soon to stack the coal tidily and undertake some minor repairs that the Heretaunga Tramping Club had not got around to yet.

BBQ - ANNUAL AWARDS

The End of Year BBQ at Ashhurst Domain was the venue once again for the presentation of the PNTMC Annual Awards. The wet weather may have put some people off but 10 members enjoyed a Fry Up in the Green Shelter as the rain drizzled and the birds twittered. The BBQ apparently arrived but then left again when Lance couldn't find us - déjà vu, Lance?

The Awards announced by Warren Wheeler were:

The Dave Hodges Award for Excellence in Pursuit of Forgetfulness (our most prestigious ward) – Derek Sharp, for forgetting to take his camera off the roof of his car before leaving Rangī Carpark AND forgetting to fill up with petrol before leaving home to return to find it, somehow untangling himself with the help of Wellington Police and a can of petrol from Waiouru to Taihape after midnight – he did find his camera though, even it was a bit battered. Runners-Up included Heather Bewick for forgetting her ice axe outside the Giant Café toilet at Turoa, and Nigel Scott for forgetting a snow shovel at Travers Hut – both items were also duly recovered with some effort.

The Iron Lady Award - Janet Wilson, for walking the St James Walkway despite a broken rib received from a fall while she was racing her classic motorbike.

The Legally Blonde Award - Heather Bewick, for her performance on Snowcraft III, Egmont. Not only did she get stuck after falling through a deep hole in the snow on the track, she spilt the pudding she was mixing all over the floor, and finally set fire to the spiced port heating on the gas stove.

The Newcastle Award - Tony Gates, for leading his merry band of coal carriers up to Hinuera Hut, then back down again because high wind made Sawtooth Ridge impassable, then up the Tukituki River and up eventually to their destination at Howletts Hut.

The Cover Bloke of the Year Award – Dave Henwood, for his photo in the Evening Standard with Derek Sharp on TeHekenga.

The Indominatable Southern Man – Bruce Van Brunt, for persistence not being rewarded with a good climb – 2 alpine trips cancelled due to bad weather without even leaving PN, and when he finally decided to go anyway he was hut bound for all but half a day.

The Kodak Conservation Award – Andrew Lynch, for taking lots of shots on a wonderful Kaikoura trip without the film rolling on.

Salad Days SAR Team Award – Dave Grant, for leading his team to the Eketahuna Pub for a Salad Bar Steak before heading up to Herepai Hut for the night.

The Cross-Dressing Award – Terry Crippen, for his purchase of trousers from the Ladies Rack because “they’ll do anyway”.

The Cloud Nine Award – Lance Gray, for being rescued after getting lost in the clag on the Dundas Range.

The Tararua Trophy - Logan Westwood, for his Mt Hector Debriefing in the October Newsletter.

To those who were not there to receive their awards, thank you from those present who enjoyed your Kinder Surprises on your behalf (!).

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Thank to Tony for putting most of this newsletter together before going to Holland for Christmas – it made my job as co-opted editor much easier. I know of 2 other members travelling to visit family in the UK and I myself will be putting the X-factor back into X-mas with a visit to friends in Sweden. September 11 seems a long time ago.

If you are down south, spare a thought for the behind-the-scenes goings on that allow us to enjoy our Wilderness Heritage. Peter Wiles has drafted up a Club submission for the Mt Cook/Aoraki National Park Management Plan with input also from Bruce van Brunt, Tony Gates and Terry Crippen – concerns have been raised that the Draft Plan puts little emphasis on the needs of mountaineers and over-emphasises Ngai Tahu issues which have little to do with the Park. Thanks for your efforts guys.

As 2001 draws to a close I wish everyone Safe Travels, a very Merry Christmas and Good Tramping over the Summer holidays.

Warren Wheeler
President and Co-Editor

TRIP REPORTS

KAHUTERAWA - OTANGANE Nov. 4.

By Tony Gates.

After some pretty wet weather, including a real downpour on Saturday evening, I wondered about the state of the mud up in the Kahuterawa-Otangane area. The weather and mud wasn't too bad after all. With Terry guiding us, it ended up being a reasonably pleasant day's tramp.

Firstly, we assisted Ian Argyle with carrying some timber up the track. He is progressing well, with steps and hand rails in places. Past Ross Stream, we climbed on the new track up to the main ridge, appreciating a few views around the place. Once into the Otangane catchment, the track was much more rudimentary, as we followed Terry and Merv Matthew's markers.

It didn't take long to reach our lunch spot, a grassy knob with good views all around. Then we joined the Council road, following that nearly to the farmland. A chilly southerly breeze kept us moving. We looked for the legendary platinum mines, finding only a scrubby hillside, and a couple of muddy holes.

Later, we met a deer hunter who gave us accurate directions for next time. It didn't seem to take long to return to the car park from there. The total loop had taken us about 8 hours.

We were Terry Crippen, Peter Fouhy, Warren Wheeler, and Tony Gates.

WAIPAWA SADDLE - WAIKAMAKA HUT November 11.

We left Palmerston North at 7am. The drive to the walk involves following State Highway 2 past Norsewood then turning off on to State Highway 50, then turning left on to Wakarara Road (past the Ongaonga turnoff), and then finally turning left on to North Block Road. The car park itself is a little bit further down the 'road' than the Sunrise Hut car park. It is just before the road leads down into the Waipawa River.

We left the car at a bit before 9am and started walking up the river bed with nice forest on both sides. As we got closer to the saddle we saw the spectacular sight of rocks (some of them big rocks) streaming down one of the gullies. We found the track that goes through the belt of trees and scrub. This took us up to the saddle itself.

It was pretty windy on the top. The views were very nice. For lunch we made our way to

Waikamaka Hut, first following the track and then the creek. We reached the hut a bit before 1pm. The area the hut is situated in is very pleasant, and was sheltered from the wind.

Following lunch we returned to the car via the same route. We all enjoyed our ice creams, or whatever, from the Norsewood dairy. We arrived back in Palmerston North a little after 7pm.

Thanks to Peter for leading an excellent walk. The party consisted of: Neil Campbell (scribe), Graham and Hilda Heap (UK), Elaine Hervé, and Peter Wiles.



Elaine, Graham, Peter, and Hilda at Waikamaka Hut. [Neil Campbell].

HOWLETTS HUT - SAWTOOTH RIDGE - BLACK RIDGE. November 17-18.

Thursday's mountain forecast to midnight Saturday mentioned gale force southerlies for the Ruahines with snow to 800 metres and a 1000 metre freezing level. Sunday, however, promised clearing skies for Sawtooth Ridge. With this in mind we headed toward Mill Road with anxious looks to the hills - it looked shitty. Our spirits for the journey were uplifted however by Jonathon's fine taste in music: a compilation of superb bands such as Collective Soul and Pink Floyd. Once again I was carrying items of Tony's; instead of coal I agreed to take up copies of old Howlett's Hut log books as well as a fascinating black and white photo collection (photocopied) dating back to the war. An excellent addition to the hut's reading material to go along with a folder of Tony's more recent photos of the area and some FHM and Loaded magazines: go Anna!

The walk up the Tukituki River was pleasant enough with Jonathon trialling some flash

walking sticks: positively angled he tells me. They did not stop him however doing a graceful submarine impression on the last stretch up to Daphne. He emerged to the surface Rambo like; all that was missing was six inches of steel between his teeth as he did not break his stride, blink an eyelid, or miss a beat. The only damage apart from pride was his GPS, which soaked up the water! After a quick brew at Daphne we wandered easily up to Howletts Hut, which was much easier than a July trip when soft snow made the last section a nightmare of holes and slush.

Given our mid-afternoon arrival we all settled down to a bit of casual reading and card playing. Dinner consisted of two differently flavoured packets of pasta (plus veges) and two differently flavoured packets of dessert. Suitably nourished I got the best sleep I have had in ages as the wind dropped and calm presided. A clearing Sunday appeared to be on the way – yahoo! Leaping out of the pit I opened the hut door to find the tops immersed in cloud - at least it was not windy. After a spartan porridge (no brown sugar) we headed for the famous Sawtooth Ridge that none of us had ever been on.

Navigating our way up onto Tiraha was fun as we made sense of the various spurs and ridges. Just as we made our way onto the tops the cloud magically disappeared and the rugged beauty of the Ruahines revealed itself. Sawtooth Ridge was an anticlimax as we comfortably made our way to Ohuinga in light winds. Heather appeared disappointed not to be engaged in some epic crossing hanging onto tussock with fingertips and the like. She did however find some snow remnants that perked her up no end – snowcraft withdrawal I think! The descent onto Black Ridge is impressive, as from a distance it looks steep yet when you are on it there is few difficulties. Black Ridge itself is fascinating with its mixture of crumbling rock, tarns and tussock. Tarn Bivvy is a must visit with its comfy two bunk accommodation. The bright orange paint job should certainly aid folk in finding it. The grass frontage is also a real treat from which to eat lunch and slip into a soporific snooze. The true head turner is the loo, with its freestanding minimalist tradition: essentially a potty on a butterbox.

The final run down Rosvalls Track to the Tukituki River was gorgeous as the sun came out and the

birds sang. Immediately we hit the river we met two expert anglers who were toying with a trout. They had apparently each caught and released six trout that day! They had also had a chat with a couple of hunters who had shot two deer between them - a bountiful weekend had by all. Heather celebrated the weekend by having a swim while Jonathon and I were more interested in how the All Blacks had gone against Ireland. Needless to say we ended up in a pub in Dannevirke for a beer and a nervous first half. The All Black victory capped off an excellent weekend. Thanks to Jonathon and his car, Heather's limitless energy and Cass's dogged persistence.

We were Lance Gray (scribe), Heather Bewick, Jonathon and Cass Astin.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

3-5 December 2001

THE LOST PARTY PERSPECTIVE

by Lance Gray.

I want to first start by thanking PNTMC members Warren Wheeler, Dave Grant, Peter Darragh and Matt Farrelly (Group 3) for their role in the rescue. They heard me bashing my billy and were only a minute away when Group 1 of Brent Swanson (Shannon), Ian Watson (Feilding) and Warick Price (Levin) found me on top of Walker at 1.30pm Tuesday.

Briefly, I was returning from Dundas Hut along Dundas Ridge towards Herepai Hut and the Putara roadend – a route I had followed the previous day in very hot conditions. I was most concerned about getting off Pukemoremore, West Peak, and Ruapae as these appeared key junctions in my return trip. I was keenly aware that it would be a challenge in claggy weather but had been along this route on at least three other occasions so was not too anxious. I had my map and compass and spent much time observing as much as I could – obviously not enough! After negotiating Pukemoremore I arrived at what I was reasonably sure was Walker and became immediately concerned as I had paid no attention previously to this peak. I took what I thought was the obvious route up on to top of Walker looking for the Northeasterly route off it. In hindsight the track dropping rapidly off to the east immediately you hit the summit was in fact the track I needed to take to West Peak as it quickly turns into a northeasterly sidle. I was overly cautious in not

wanting to head off east down into the dreaded Chamberlain Creek so dismissed it.

For the next three or four hours I tried about three or four different spurs off the top of Walker and came to the realisation that I was in the wrong place. By then I was exhausted and decided to put up the tent and regather my thoughts. I rang Terry and asked for his advice and agreed with him to stay put and hope for a clearance. A brief lift revealed the Mangahao to the West and the spurs but nothing else— at the time I lacked the confidence to use this valuable information. On Monday morning I rang Terry again to say there was no improvement and he notified Search and Rescue. At 1pm on Monday I knew I was the centre of a search and rescue operation. I was told to stay put by Dave Dittmer and that they would come and get me. One option was to talk me down but Dave was confident where I was and thought it the safer solution. The plan involved Group 1 coming up the Barra directly onto Walker summit; Group 2 coming up Harris Creek onto West Peak, and PNTMC coming in from Herepai and following the Dundas Range.

At 1.30pm Tuesday I heard a whistle, leapt out of the tent, and bashed away on my billy. Out of the gloom from up the Barra came Group 1 – needless to say I was thrilled. They had spent 5 and half hours bashing their way up a miserable spur from Harris Creek. A decision was taken to go back down to Harris Creek as they wished to get off the tops as quickly as possible – all three were shivering. At 1.50pm we headed off down the Barra to arrive at Harris Creek in full flood at 5pm. The trip down was rugged, to say the least, but impressive as Warwick Price showed what could be done with a map and compass. I thoroughly enjoyed the company of Group 1 and gained a real insight into search and rescue. I only wish I had not done everything back to front – they enjoyed what they were doing and kept telling me not to apologise.

With Harris Creek impassable we reluctantly put up our tents, had a brew, a feed and waited for morning. Wednesday arrived with even more rain so Senior Constable Swanson ordered in the Tranzrail rescue helicopter: ETA 8.30am. Attached to a 30m long-line with full body harnesses, the four of us, and packs could not be lifted due to the downdraft. Our brief experience as a fishing lure required Ian and Warwick to clip

off while Brent and I were hauled out to a better location. Finally three of us with gear plus pilot Scott Weatherall and Sergeant Bill Nicholson took off for the Levin domain followed by a debrief at the Police Station. At the conclusion I was flown back to the hangar at Palmerston North hospital.

“A PASSION FOR ICE”, By Allan Uren. Printed with thanks to the author. From NZ Geographic, No 49, Jan- Feb 2001.

On a journey to Fiordland, Dave, with his trademark erratic driving style, suddenly stopped, grabbed a pair of binocs, and focussed them on the north side of the Remarkables Range. With a secret agent arching of his eyebrow, he handed them to me, and an avid white streak nearly hit me in the face. A frozen waterfall, another object of fierce desire. For four hours we battled uphill to reach it. A late winter sun shone, pleasant warmth and sweat soaked our clothes. When only one gully, and ten minutes of scrub bashing separated us from our goal, we rested. “OK” said Dave after a short break. Standing up to move on, “lets go and have a closer....” His words were drowned by an ice climber’s most feared sound. In an instant, sun and gravity had destroyed our objective. Heaped at the base of the cliff was a pile of melting ice, as if a tower of childrens building blocks had been toppled. Where crystals had sparkled and gargoyles had hung was a dam, dark wall of slime. Without a word, we turned and retraced our steps down to the road.

Climbing that waterfall was like unearthing a precious Ming vase, using it once to display flowers, then seeing it smashed to pieces. It, and the others like it we saw, may never form again in my lifetime. We were immensely fortunate to experience them. Such scarcity is one of the reasons there are so few who climb ice in New Zealand. The pursuit has been described as obscure, the medium fickle.

Club Patron	: Lawson Pither	357-3033
President	: Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Vice President	: Terry Crippen	356-3588
Secretary	: Sarah Todd	354-9933
Treasurer	: Peter Wiles	358-6894
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