

PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - June 2003

"I was able to first snap the radius, and then within another few minutes snap the ulna at the wrist, and from there I had the knife out and applied the tourniquet and went to task. It was a process that took about an hour." Aron Ralston describing how he amputated his own arm (See Trip Report: "Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place")

Portal to the Past: (Newsletter No2, March 1966)

How much were PNTMC subs back in 1966, when our phone numbers only had 5 digits, and club trips left from the clock tower? "Club subscriptions are £1 for Senior Members, 10/- for Junior Members (at school) and 30/- for married couples." (By the way, subs for 2003 are due. See notices).

CLUB NIGHTS

June 12 Video evening

June 26 Club Photo Competition

July 3 Committee Meeting

July 10 Ascent of Aconcagua

July 31 Alpine Ruahines



Jean Garman

Tony Gates

Club nights are on the second and last Thursday of each month at the **Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North**, at 7:45 pm **sharp**. All welcome!

At the club night: Please sign the visitors book. A 50c door fee includes supper.

- July 12-13 Keretaki Hut E**
Mick Leyland 358 3183
 Up the stream to this hut in the south-eastern Ruahines. We'll take a loop track along the ridge back to the car. Easy trip leaving 8:30am.
- July 13 Cattle Ridge F**
Dave Grant 357 8269
 A bit of adventure in the NE Tararuas. Early start.
- July 17 Thursday Trampers**
Lorraine Green 354 6158
- July 19 Outdoor 1st Aid Revalidation**
Tom Siegenthaler 357 7237
 This is a Mountain Safety Council run exercise to get club members up to scratch (literally) on 1st aid... see notices.
- July 19-20 Tunupo- Iron Gates M/F**
Graham Peters 329 4722
 Up onto the tops, along Ngamoko Range, dropping down to Iron Gates Hut for the night. Leave Foodtown at 7am.
- July 20 Coppermine Creek E**
Ian Harding 06 376 5707
 There's copper in them there hills. This historically interesting tramp is handy to Palmy. 9am start.
- July 24 Thursday Trampers**
Don Maclaime 357 0745
- July 24 Snowcraft applications close**
See notices for details.
- July 26-27 Holly Hut – Pouakai ENP M**
Malcolm Parker 357 5203
 Cruise over to New Zealand's own little "Mt Fuji" in Egmont National Park.
- July 27 Rangi Circuit M**
Peter Wiles 358 6894
 Check out some alternative routes to Rangi now that the regular is slipped out.
- July 29 Snowcraft 1 evening**
(Tues) For those who signed up.
- July 31 Thursday Trampers**
John Ayers 358 3286
- July 31 Club Night**
Alpine Ruahine Tony Gates
 To assist you with preparations for your next Sawtooth Ridge trip, Te Hekenga Crossing, or similar, Tony will discuss a few good routes, and show slides of both winter and summer on the Ruahine alpine tops.

Trip participants:

If interested in going on a trip, please contact the leader at least three days in advance. Trips leave from Foodtown carpark. A charge for transport will be collected on the day. Leaders should be able to give an estimate in advance. For general info or any suggestions for future tramps please contact Terry Crippen (356-3588), Janet Wilson (329-4722) or Andrew Lynch (325-8779).

Trip leaders: Please advise a trip coordinator, as soon as possible, if 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)

Swiss Army Knives are a Cut above the Rest

How important is quality to you? Are you brand conscious (and could you do this month's "brand awareness" crossword)? Aron Ralston amputated his own arm with a multi-tool knife. Aron said his knife wasn't top of the line but "The type of thing that you'd get if you bought a \$15 flashlight and got a free multi-tool knife, which I think is what I did." I got to wondering if Aron (yes, just one letter "a" since the amputation) might have suffered less had he carried a genuine Swiss Army Knife. These knives are used by Swiss officers and by Swiss cheese makers, but are also popular with outdoors people. I did a little research on the web and learned the following:

The Swiss army knife is the only weapon used by the Swiss army.

Effective June 1, 2003, you will actually have to enlist in the Swiss Army to get a Swiss Army Knife.

Some men have been likened to a Swiss Army Knife... even though it appears useful for a whole variety of purposes, it spends most of its time just opening bottles.

While the Swiss Army Knife has been popular for years, the Swiss Navy Knife has remained largely unheralded. Its single blade functions as a tiny canoe paddle.

Although ideal for plane hijacking, your Swiss Army Knife will actually be confiscated if you try to take it on board a plane. You have been warned.

Wouldn't Miss it for the World

♣ Don't miss the annual photo competition where we all get to see quality photography (yours?), as well as receive some tips from a professional photographer, Murray Woodcock.

♣ Don't miss Jean's "Ascent of Aconcagua," from the continent where children play Anacondas and Aconcaguas rather than snakes and ladders.

♣ Don't miss Tony's alpine talk. Tony knows the contours of the hills better than we know the contours of our own bicycle saddles.

* Snowcraft is coming up, and you can build a Trotsky snowman and reenact his death from the blow of an iceaxe.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Firstly, the solution for last months crossword:

1	2	3	4	5
P	N	T	M	C

This month's crossword is actually a form of subliminal advertising. Most of the answers involve relating the clue to well-known brand names that have some vague relationship to tramping.

Examples:

- The brand of baking powder Sir Edmund Hillary would use. (Answer: Edmonds)
- Type of reduced milk used at high altitudes. (Answer: Highlander)
- A brand of coffee popular with trampers. (Answer: Blue Mountain)
- German word for "stone" found in beer. (Answer: Stein)
- Backpack for Mackintosh's toffees (Macpak)
- Dogs wear and eat it for dinner. (Tux)

Get the idea? Here you go then:

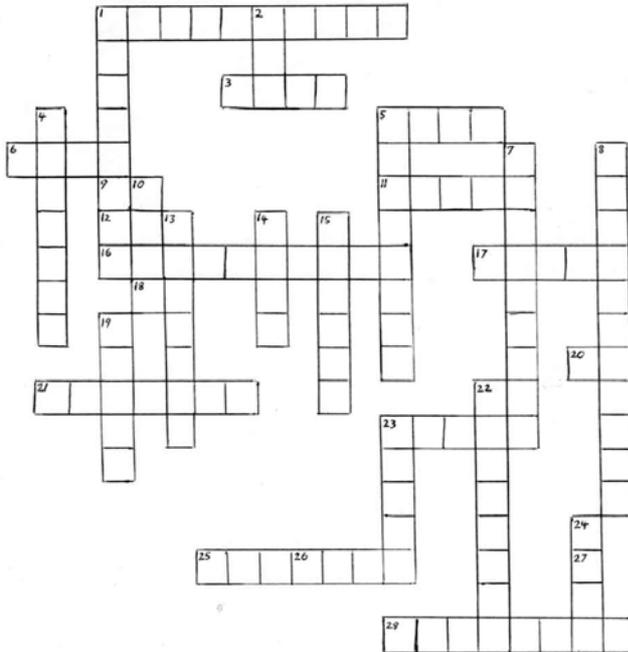
Clues Across

1. Trampers find this band's music superb. (10)
3. Shoe polish popular with ornithologists. (4)
5. German word for mountain found in bread. (4)
6. The preferred film of mountaineers. (4)
9. Abbreviation for Great Britain. (2)
11. A good colour for a compass. (5)
12. ___ the tentpeg. (3)
16. Play equipment trampers line-up for? (10)
17. The cheese brand you take on snowcraft weekends. (5)
18. Abbreviation for doctor. (2)
20. A big trip overseas. (2)
21. Who publishes our bird guides? (7)
22. South-west (2)
23. The kind of camera hunters shoot with. (5)
25. Chocolate dog biscuits you might take on a tramp. (7)
28. A brand of butter popular among botanists. (8)

Clues Down

1. Get too much of this soap in your eyes and you'll be blinded. (8)
2. The beer ornithologists drink. (3)
4. If mountaineers smoked after descending a mountain, it would have to be this brand. (7)
5. Drink this brand of coffee in the bush. (8)
7. Don't want to go to Picton by plane, so take the _____, and pack a sleeping bag. (9)
8. The brand of soup you take to Europe. (11)
10. A blue duck eats blue ___ chippies. (4)
13. A brand of butter popular with trampers. (7)
14. The kind of car you can cross rivers in. (4)
15. Eat this kind of ice cream after attaining the summit. (6)
19. What trampers cook on. (5)
- 22 & 23 Health insurance for navigators (8, 5).
24. Shoes worn by cougars (mountain lions). (4)
26. It's in water. (1)
27. Japanese word that means "horse." (3)

CRYPTIC X-WORD #2



This World of Ours

Region	Coastline (km)	Land Area (sq km)
Antarctica	17,968	14 million
Australia	25,760	7,686,850
Canada	202,080	9,976,140
Germany	2,389	357,021
Iraq	58	437,072
Japan	29,751	377,835

Region	Coastline (km)	Land Area (sq km)
Mongolia	0	1,565,000
Nepal	0	140,800
New Zealand	15,134	268,680
Thailand	3,219	514,000
UK	12,429	244,820
USA	19,924	9,629,091

Quotable Quote

"If just a few years earlier the public perceived climbing as an odd activity practiced by a strange group of drably dressed bearded men, now it seemed they saw it as dynamic, athletic, and glamorous. Climbing had become sexy."

From "The Flame of Adventure" By Simon Yates (2001)

(Simon was Joe Simpson's climbing partner in "Touching the Void")

Submitted by Tony Gates

NOTICES

Subs are Due!, Snowcraft, Events Card, Photo Competition, Bridges Reopened, Outdoor 1st Aid Courses.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES can be e-mailed to doug.strachan@xtra.co.nz or delivered to 1 Worsfold Lane, PN

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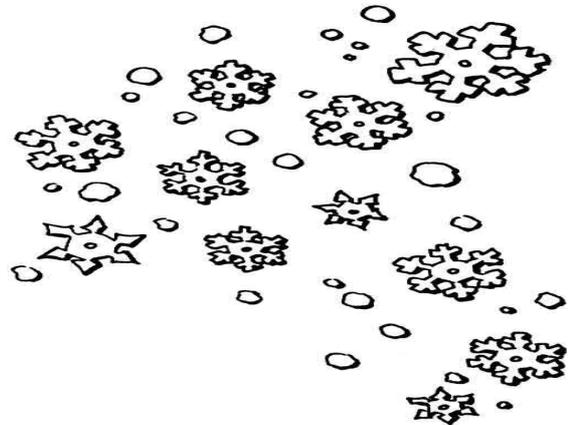
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This programme is designed to equip club members and other trampers with basic and intermediate skills so they can safely get out into snow on winter trips, and alpine trips down south over summer; from straight forward walking on snow slopes to simple snow climbing and aspects of technical mountaineering. A progressive approach is used beginning with Snowcraft 1 assuming nil or only minor previous snow experience. The instruction consists of three weekends away, a fortnight apart, two at Mt Ruapehu and one at Mt Egmont, and three week night evenings (one prior to each weekend).

Numbers are limited, so be in early.
Application close **Thursday 24 July** (note; this is not a club night)

DATES and FEES:

Snowcraft 1 \$120 (\$125*)
Weekend: 2-3 August (evening: Tues 29 July)

Snowcraft 2 \$130 (\$135*)
Weekend: 16-17 August (evening: Wed Aug 13)

Snowcraft 3 \$120 (\$125*)
Weekend: 30-31 August (evening: Wed Aug 27)

One off discounted fee for the full programme:
\$355 (\$370*)
(* non PNTMC member rate)

Terry.

For further info and registration form: contact
Terry Crippen 3563-588

REMINDER; SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

Subscriptions for 2003/04 are due now. The fee is the same as last year.

\$30 adult
\$35 family
\$15 junior.

A junior subscription is available for donation to a needy person by our club Patron, Lawson Pither, if so required.

WANTED TO BUY

Tramping pack, size 3 Macpac, or similar. Contact
Tony Claire, 06 355 1721

SNOWCRAFT INSTRUCTION 2003

NEXT EVENTS CARD IS OUT

The Events Card for the next six months July -Dec is out. Thank you Andrew and Janet. There are lots of trips and activities being offered with tons of scope for tramping on those excellent winter days. With winter, some snowcraft skills are often essential, hence the Snowcraft Course. But there is still plenty of variety for those who are not into the snow and ice. Winter and spring is the time to do as much tramping as possible so when summer comes you are fit and ready for those longer summer trips. Included are some courses run locally by the NZ Mountain Safety Council - check these out - they compliment the clubs instruction programme.

Please let the leader know EARLIER rather than later that you want to go on a trip - otherwise the leader may cancel the trip and go to the beach. Please read the comments, regarding the grading of trips and participating on these, printed on the events card and in the Newsletter.

The club always welcomes feedback on its Trips and Evenings. Available at club nights are "Trip feedback forms" you may want to use to give comments (positive or negative) back to the club. Or approach a Trips coordinator or committee member directly.

For further info on trips contact the various leaders or the trip coordinators: Janet, Andrew or Terry (see elsewhere in Newsletter for phone numbers etc).

PLEASE IF YOU ARE A TRIP LEADER - stick to the original date, place and grade, unless an unavoidable change is necessary. These are scheduled Club trips not private trips so the club has overall responsibility for them. ALWAYS discuss it with one of the Trips Coordinators (there are three of us) as soon as possible. They have the final say in the end regarding Club trips. And if you have forgotten your responsibilities - pick up and digest a "Guide for Trips leaders" - available at Club nights, together with the "Pink Help" and "Trip Feedback" forms.

The club evenings have been organised, and are looked after, by Warren: with members and outside speakers giving presentations. Come along to them, and encourage new bods also. Terry.

ANNUAL PHOTO COMPETITION

It's time to sort through your slides, pull out the crème de la crème, and bring them along to the club's annual photo competition on Thursday, June 26. The usual rules for the competition

apply:

- Entries must not have been entered previously.
- All entries must be related to tramping, climbing, or the natural environment.
- All slides must have a cross on the bottom left-hand corner of the mount (ie. top right-hand corner when loaded into the carousel).
- Slides and photos labelled with photographers name and entry category.
- Limit of 3 slides per person per category, but no limit on prints.

Categories:

1. Alpine (NZ). Predominantly alpine scenery in NZ (ie. Above the bushline)
2. Scenic (NZ). Pictorial interest in NZ hills etc. (ie. predominantly below the bushline)
3. Natural History (NZ). NZ flora & fauna or detail, eg. geology, ice formations, etc.
4. Topical (NZ). People in tramping, climbing, or skiing related activities in NZ.
5. Overseas Alpine or Scenic. Related to tramping, etc. overseas or Scenic.
6. Overseas People. Climbers or people met while tramping, climbing overseas.

The formats are; slides, b/w prints, and colour prints. Prints can be digital images, and do not need to be mounted. The system for judging winners is a democratic one – a show of hands, after the guiding advice of our guest judge, Murray Woodcock of Extraeye Photography.

There will be another interclub photo competition later this year, between MUAC and MTSC to think about. Consider yourself warned.

BRIDGES REOPENED

The following bridges in the Tararuas are now open to the public.

Tauherenikau Suspension Bridge

(Grid reference S26 043182)

Replaces the old Tauherenikau swing bridge on the Tauherenikau River, 1.5km south of the Tutuwai Hut, on the south-eastern side of the Tararua Ranges. The old bridge has been removed.

Cow Creek Suspension Bridge

(Grid Reference S25 202446)

Replaces the old Cow Creek cableway on the Waingawa River, near the Cow Creek Hut, on the north-eastern side of the Tararua Ranges. The old cableway has been removed.

Wairarapa Area Office, Department of Conservation, Masterton. Ph. (06) 377 0700

To report hazards on land managed by the department, please contact the Safety Watch: call free phone; 0800 999 005

OUTDOOR 1st AID REVALIDATION

This is a Mountain Safety Council run exercise to get club members up to scratch (literally) on 1st aid. If your outdoor 1st aid certificate is not more than 2yrs old (3mth grace period), this is a one day course to renew it. Your current certificate must be for outdoor 1st aid, not a regular St. John's one. It's O.K. if you've lost your certificate, because you will be on their records. The one day revalidation course will be held in Levin on July 19th. The cost is \$35. You have to pay in advance of the course. Call Tom Siegenthaler on 357 7237 to register interest.

ANOTHER OUTDOOR 1st AID COURSE

If you are not a current outdoor first aid certificate holder, but want to be, there will be a full weekend course on August 2nd & 3rd. It runs from Fri 7:30pm till 3 or 4pm Sunday afternoon. It costs about \$100. They need to know the final number of participants a week beforehand so they can organise catering etc... Call Tom Siegenthaler on 357 7237 if you want to sign up for the course.

WEDNESDAY TRAMPING GROUP

We go out every second Wednesday on easy tramps. Come and join us. For more information, please phone Judy 357 0192, Jennifer, 323 3914, or June 355 2690.

INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DAY

April 22 was the day to focus on biodiversity.

I was relief teaching at school that day, and first up we had an assembly. A teacher held up a tree branch and asked the audience if they could identify it? Many students correctly came up with the names Eucalyptus and gum tree. Next up was an oak branch, and again it was widely recognised. Not quite so many students recognised the kowhai, but many did. However, not a single student could identify the fourth and final branch, despite it being the most common tree in NZ, covering many of our mountainsides.

It's estimated that there are 12 million or so species on this planet, although only around 2 million have been described. We have to encourage youth to think beyond gums and roses, and develop an appreciation for our native biota, such as the humble beech tree.

Ed.

DAYS OF OUR LIVES

There are actually more international days of this and that than there are species on Earth. Today happens to be International Day of the Lesser Spotted Giant Squid, so rare that its existence is only theoretical.

Here are some more green dates to mark on your PNTMC calendar:

World Wetland Day	Feb 2
Seaweek	March 8-16
World Water Day	March 22
World Meteorological Day	March 23
Earth Day	April 22
International Biodiversity Day	May 22
World Environment Day	June 5
Arbor Day	June 5
World Oceans Day	June 8
World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought	June 17
Conservation Week	Aug. 4-10
Clean up the World/NZ Week	Sept. 15-21
International Day for Preservation of the Ozone Layer	Sept. 16
International Day of Peace	Sept. 16
World Rainforest Week	Oct. 3
World Habitat Day	Oct. 5

CHANGE OF PHONE NUMBER

Heather Bewick 025 655 3983

Judith Kidd 359 3363

(Tel. No. in May newsletter was incorrect)

DROP A LOAD

Shoulders sore? Struggling up the hills? Pack oversized and cumbersome? Perhaps you need to rethink what you pack. Bryan Dudley offers some tips on how to lighten the load. Check out www.tramplight.co.nz

HAIKU

These Japanese poems are usually 3 lines long, with the first line having 5 syllables, the second 7, the third 5. Fell free to submit some. e.g.

Dewdrops on the ground
Glistening in the sunlight
Each a tiny prism

**Biography of Ed (Edmund, not Editor)
By Ed (Editor, not Edmund)**

Sir Ed, the man with the \$5 smile, was born in 1919 and grew up in Auckland. He worked as a beekeeper before the lure of the mountains took him. He has climbed 11 Himalayan peaks. Hillary and Tenzing's summiting of Everest (11:30am, May 29, 1953) came after seven major expeditions by others, from 1920–1952, had failed to attain this goal. George Mallory, who climbed Everest "because it is there," didn't make it back from his 1924 attempt. The year before Hillary and Tenzing's success, a Swiss team had made it all the way to South Peak, 1000ft below the summit, before being forced to turn back. Englishmen Charles Evans and Tom Bordillon, who were part of the same expedition as Hillary and Tenzing, had first crack at the summit. They were within a few hundred feet of the top before they gave up. Conquering Everest was seen as the jewel in the crown of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation. A knighthood was in order.

After Everest, Hillary's quest for adventure saw him reach the South Pole (Jan. 4th 1958) on the first mechanised expedition.

A jet boat expedition from the sea to the source of the Ganges drew great interest in India, where it was considered a spiritual pilgrimage.

The people of Nepal have grown to love Sir Ed due to his commitment to build schools and hospitals in Nepal, and rebuild monasteries. He also built airstrips, but became concerned when these led to an influx of tourists and climbers whose hot showers led to deforestation. Hillary was instrumental in the Nepalese government passing laws to protect the environment, including making the Everest region a national park. He also twisted the arm of the NZ government to provide the necessary financial assistance.

Hillary's wife and one of his daughters were killed in a plane crash in 1975. He remarried, and continues his environmental and humanitarian work.

Published works by Sir Ed:
The Ascent of Everest.
Nothing Venture, Nothing Win (autobiography)
From the Ocean to the Sky (Ganges expedition)

"We got some footage of climbing the Hillary step, and with the drops on either side of that ridge—well, it's better not to think about it too much because if you fall up there, you fall into different countries,"
(Peter Hillary after climbing Everest on the 50th anniversary of his father's ascent.)

"We didn't know if it was humanly possible to reach the top of Mt. Everest. And even using oxygen as we were, if we did get to the top, we weren't at all sure whether we wouldn't drop dead or something of that nature."
(Sir Edmund Hillary)

**Impressions:
Kahuterawa Valley & Harding Park
By Judith Kidd**

Walls of moss and roots
Up and down slippery tracks
Rushing stream below

Mist covered ranges
Await us at the viewpoint
Heading toward Red Rocks

Under canopy
Musty smells engulf us with
Ponga overhead

Up and under logs
Twisted vines tease us through the
Knee-high bracken ferns

Emerging on top
Wind whipping into waves of
Horopito scrub

TRIP REPORTS

Blyth Hut, Heaphy Track, Duke of Edinburgh, Digger's Hut, Ruahine Corner, Pohangina Walkways, Holdsworth – Jumbo, Sledge Track, Abel Tasman, Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place.

Blyth Hut , April 12 By Doug Strachan

Neil Campbell, Mary Crow (leader), Terry Crippen, Yuko Watanabe, Wara Teeranititankul, Ian Harding, Doug Strachan.

We parked near the MUAC hut in Tongariro National Park, leaving the second vehicle at a carpark down the road. The idea was to head east until we struck the poled route down to Blyth Hut, and from the hut head out to the car.

We made our way east through still air, low vegetation and ash deposits. Terry found a *Pinus contorta* plant and uprooted it in zero time. He then got a knife out and turned it into *Pinus mutilatus*, which came into being and became extinct all in a few flashes of the knife. News of the event must have spread rapidly, as we didn't see another noxious weed the whole trip.

Upon reaching Blyth Hut we had a chin-wag with some other day-trippers. Then we left some English, Thai, and Japanese in the hut book and headed out towards the road. We made a slight detour to the waterfalls, still impressive despite the drought. After the slight detour we made a major detour, opting to following an old route back to the MUAC Hut. We had indicated in the Blyth Hut log book that we might do this. The start of the old track was indistinct, but Terry knew of it's existence, so he guided us. Further along, the track became a deep groove, cut by water action. At some point we had to leave the groove and veer left. Periodically Terry would say "you stay in the groove, and I'll check things out over here." He was the broken record repeating it, and I was the needle stuck in the groove. Eventually I got out of the groove and started on a new "track."

We found the remains of the old Blyth hut, and straightened up a lichen-encrusted sign that pointed us back to where we started. After negotiating a slip, then pausing at a stream, we were soon back at the MUAC Hut. Mary and Terry went to fetch the other car, while the rest of us ambled down the road, rather than wait at the car park.

Heaphy Track, Easter By Christine Scott

Terry Crippen, Elaine Herve, Yuko Watanabe, Barry & Christine Scott.

Impressions: red tussock plains; subtropical forest with Nikau palms; a very well graded track with no serious uphill, comfortable huts, flush toilets, limestone rock formations, 80km of gravel track (ouch), waves breaking on the coast; abundant birdlife (including a bossy peacock).

Day 1

Five of us met at Nelson airport and boarded the shuttle for the 3 hour journey to the beginning of the Heaphy Track. Transport is the biggest issue when walking the Heaphy Track. There is a regular bus service leaving Nelson every morning but for those of us flying into Nelson in the afternoon this didn't suit so we hired a private shuttle with Kahurangi Bus Service. The West Coast end is even more difficult with the regular bus service meaning a night in Karamea, so again we opted for a shuttle – this time with Trek Express who picked us up at the end of the track and had us back in Nelson in 6 hours. The other option is a private plane which will fly you from Karamea to Nelson (slightly more expensive!).

The shuttle dropped us off at Brown House, at the beginning of the track, which meant we got a nice early start for the gradual 5 hour climb up to the saddle and a very relaxed lunch at Perry Saddle Hut. Once over the saddle the bush gave way to the red tussock plains of the Gouland Downs (once grazed by sheep) stretching away into the distance. A further 2 hours and we found the old Gouland Downs hut hidden amongst bush with limestone arches and remnants of old caves. The outside of the hut belies the polished wooden floors, fire place and comfortable beds to be found inside.

Day 2

Day 2 (5 hours) led us across the red tussock downs, beautiful but featureless, to Saxon Hut and on towards McKay Hut which is located on the edge of the McKay Downs before the streams tumble down to the Heaphy River. A view point above the hut gave magnificent views from the West Coast, to the Dragons Teeth jutting up above one of the saddles.

Day 3

From McKay Hut the track descended gradually through Beech forest, rata, rimu then finally into subtropical Nikau Palms on the banks of the Heaphy River. A lunch stop complete with sandflies on the opposite bank to the Lewis Hut was followed by perhaps the most beautiful section of the track as we walked through Nikau Palms and sandstone outcrops along the bank of the Heaphy River. Another 5 hour day was topped off with a quick plunge into the Heaphy River just before it reaches the sea below the Heaphy Hut.

Day 4

Day 4 led us along the coast with the track alternating between beach views and bush full of Nikau Palms. A brief stop at Katipo Shelter where a peacock tried to scrounge food and then up and over Kohaihai Saddle, the hardest climb on the whole trip, to the carpark where Rory met us and drove us back to Nelson.

Duke of Edinburgh, May 3 By Andrew Lynch

This year the club has been active in helping St. Peters college students achieve their expedition requirement for the "Duke of Edinburgh scheme" at bronze level. In return for our expertise and time we have received a handy sum of money in the form of a donation and the satisfaction of teaching young people how to be safe in our natural environment. Those of us who were involved were delighted with the progress that these students made, their excellent behaviour, and the very positive experience they had on the expedition.

The program included a day of theory at class room level, a weekend out doors training in the Ashurst domain (which included a tramp over the gorge track) and an over night trip into Totora flats

A big thanks go to Heather, Elaine, Warren, Terry, and Andrew for their time in getting these young people equipped with some basic skills for a life time of enjoyable safe tramping.

Here are a few extracts from the students written reports:

"We arrived at Mt Holdsworth at 9.00 after a 2-hour drive. We assembled in our groups and after planning and setting out our route we took off at a steady pace. We followed our planned course and had frequent stops because a member of our group was not feeling 100%"

"It was really windy in the night, and a lot of the tents came partially apart, including ours. We got up at about 5.00 am to fix the problem"

"We got up at 7.00 am and packed up our things. When putting the tent away I noticed that one of the carbon fibre rods had split from the southerly gale during the night. We set off by about 8.00.

The tramp back was quite different as the weather was very windy and when we had to cross the suspension bridge several people had to kneel down as it tipped on its side in the southerly gale"

"By the time we made it to the cars we could barely move. We were so relieved to see the cars when we made it back. The part I most enjoyed was the end because I have never been so tired so when you finish something that hard you are filled with such pride"

"Things we did differently from the training tramp; we packed less for sure and also spread thing out more evenly throughout the packs. Went at a steadier pace instead of going really fast then going really slow etc. Everyone was much fitter. We all had much better packs. Bought less food. Took food that was easier to pack"

"We all enjoyed this tramp and it definitely encouraged us to do more of this type of thing. Next time we will be way more prepared and know what we are getting ourselves into"

"OVERALL I HAD A REALLY COOL TIME AND HAD LOTS OF FUN"

Well done and good on them

Andrew

Digger's Hut , 4 May 2003 By Lance Gray

Yuko & Warra, Llew and Jenny Pritchard, Mick and Marion Leyland, Pauline and Barbara, Anja

Scholz and Lance Gray, Duncan Hedderley, Nigel and Suzanne Gregory.

Diggers Hut is one of those tramping trips where you really appreciate the local knowledge of the trip-leader (Mick). On the map it looks relatively straight-forward, and in walking terms it really is. The reality however is quite different. You roll up in your car up the Pohangina Valley, noting the beautiful autumn colours, before turning off up a short metalled section of road that leads you to a farm gate that essentially means you are parking on the farmers front door-step. Frank is a nice man and appreciates a phone-call to know who will be walking through his farm to the start of the track. Access here as you can imagine is dependant on the goodwill of the farmer as the track doesn't keep to the edges of the farm but plows straight through the middle of it.

On this fine Sunday a veritable gaggle of 14 PNTMC stalwarts wandered through Franks farm up to the Ruahine Forest park boundary where we looked vainly for a hidden bivvy and Mick and Llew took sustenance from their cancer sticks. After a pleasant few minutes of bush walking we descended down into the Makawakawa Stream and Diggers Hut. A tough walk of two hours necessitated lunch around 10:30am. I can really get into these easy/medium trips. We reminded trip-leader of Warren's annual report and were determined to keep strictly to how long an easy/medium walk was meant to be. As if this was a challenge to their manhood Nigel and Llew decided to take the Stream back to the cars and we were told it may take 2 hours longer and so car keys were exchanged etc ...(see you later honey). The rest of us lazed in the sunshine and listened to Mick's reminiscing ... ah the good old days.

After our powernap we returned the way we came with the main challenge of trying to cross the stream without getting our feet wet. We arrived back at our cars around 1pm, which was an amazing achievement by any standard, and to top it off we had no sooner removed our boots when Llew and Nigel arrived looking like they had completed the Southern Traverse by swimming the last section. As trip length auditor I can confirm that the stated trip grade was a true and accurate reflection of the day's walk.

Ruahine Corner, May 16/17-18. By Nigel Gregory.

We were Llew Pritchard, Mick Leyland and myself.

Llew had organized for us to hire a helicopter to fly in to Ruahine Corner and walk out over the weekend. We left Palmerston North on Friday morning at 8:30 am to meet our ride at 11:00 am at Mokai station. The helicopter arrived right on time and after mucking around trying to land on the sloping car park, the pilot decided to land down on the flat farmland.

As we came in to land at Ruahine corner hut, we could see a great pile of gear out front. We thought maybe the hut was full, but it turned out to be a DOC crew that had been working in the area and were going out on the return flight, making for a profitable day for the helicopter operator. Before the DOC guy's left, they got the aircraft to pick up a decent sized stag they had shot a short distance from the hut, down a large steep slip. They only wanted the legs (or whatever the proper name is!!) and so let us (Llew) get the filet steaks out of the beast. Since I had not had fresh wild venison before, my tramping partners graciously let me keep the meat to bring home. All in all we thought this was a pretty good start to the weekend. We poked around the area a bit that afternoon, under a gloriously clear blue sky, snow on Ruapehu, before retiring to the hut to cook dinner. It was a cool night but we had plenty of wood and coal, and were not in the least bit cold.

A frosty but brilliant Saturday morning greeted us. No rush, we had all day to make our way to Iron Bark hut via Potae and Colenso hut. The track from Ruahine Corner hut up to Potae is a good one, well marked and traveled. We paused on Potae under a crystal clear sky to admire the views. This is a beautiful part of the Ruahines, well worth visiting. Llew and Mick were discussing likely places for deer to hang out, although they agreed that there was not much sign about at all. One thing that struck me about this area was the almost total lack of bird life. The result of 1080?? Perhaps also this is the reason for a lack of deer sign??

The track from Potae to Colenso is good for a short time but after about 30 mins you get into a stream and the going gets a lot slower. It was cold (lack of sun in the stream bed) and wet from dew.

After what seemed to be too long we arrived at a fork (Mangatera???) and continued downstream.

The stream from Colenso meets the stream we were heading down and we were supposed to turn up the side stream to Colenso. Mick felt it would be more fun to ignore this direct route and wade waist deep in cold water down through a gorgy?? section of river. "Mick have you come this way before" "Oh yeah, heaps of times" he replies. Llew and I remain unconvinced. "Mick, I don't remember this bit?" "No worries" Mick answers. "Hang on, I remember now, we came this way before and it took HOURS, sorry guy's." Oh well no damage done and the water was refreshing on the return trip up to the turn off for Colenso.

We were cold at Colenso and so got moving pretty quick after a break. The hut doesn't seem to get much winter sun. The track from Colenso to Iron bark is very good and well marked. There is a small climb of about 250-300M, but nothing really hard. As we were descending into the Whakaorekou River, we stopped for a break and were discussing how great it would be to have a cold beer just then.

Arriving at Iron Bark hut we found two fly fishermen from Wellington, on the veranda lounging in deck chairs!! They greeted us with "Hi guys, who wants a beer!!" We had a superb evening of beer, fine wine (\$200 bottle??), both red and dessert wine as well as gin and tonics and rum. Grilled steak and vegetables, Stilton cheese on crackers with pear slices rounded out the evening. In the morning we had a huge pot of Dilmah tea as well. I don't think anyone has experienced this much hospitality in a tramping hut before. These fishermen insisted on us finishing off all they had brought as they were also leaving the following day, Sunday.

The next problem we faced was the aftermath of too much drink the next morning. Mick and I had forgotten (were too drunk??) to bring in our socks and boots and so they were frozen solid. Cold feet and a sore head, another great day for tramping. Fortunately we had all day to get to the car at Mokai station and so after getting intimate with all the Manuka scrub (who wants to climb up hills with a sore head anyway!!) we arrived at the car.

On the way back to Palmy we stopped to pick some mushrooms (went great with the venison) near Bunnythorpe. We had a great weekend that included perfect weather, good company and some excellent food.

Pohangina Walkways, 18 May By Duncan Hedderley

Twas autumn and the pintimsees
Did ramble down Pohangina way
All golden were the willow trees,
In warming sun at start of day

Observe the Fern Walk my son;
The signs that guide, the steps, the seats
The sylvan vistas facing one;
Those squawking Aussie parakeets

But even with long morning tea
That will not fill a walker's day
So prudent would a leader be
To seek another walk-way

The Old Coach Road is near at hand,
An easy loop the leader says
And there they did, on river's strand,
Eat their luncheon sandwiches

Round and back, round and back,
Along the post-lunch path they strode
Till at end a second track
They found signed 'Old Coach Road'

"Two Old Coach Roads - how Irish!
We must celebrate
By stopping at the Waterford,
For coffee and carrot cake"

["Is that the time? said Alice "I must be going."
"But wait," the mutton-bird cried "I haven't told you
how they had to get the water tanker to come to
make coffee" "Yes you have, just now. Goodbye"
And with that, Alice hurried down the path...]

[Thanks to Barbara, Neil, Catherine, Elaine, Wara,
Yuko, Terry, Monica and Warren for a pleasant,
low-key day out, and Lewis Carroll for a very
distinctive meter]

Holdsworth – Jumbo, May 24 & 25 By Doug Strachan

Elaine Herve, Wara Teeranititamkul,
Terry Crippen, Doug Strachan.

The 4 of us took 2 vehicles because Terry and Wara planned to spend Sunday night at Jumbo, while Elaine and I were just staying Saturday night at Powell and then turning around and returning to the road end.

At 11:30am, we started the climb up to mountain house. The next bit up to Powell Hut was steep,

low gear stuff. We discussed huts that have blown down, and the scientific explanation of quicksand, which Terry told us is found in S.I. schist country. Somehow the topics merged and we decided it would be a major bummer if the hut blew down and you crawled out of the wreckage as the sole survivor, then made your way down a river only to get caught in quicksand and die a slow death.

Surprisingly, when we arrived at Powell Hut it was empty, and a mother and daughter were the only others to arrive later. The crew from the WTMC bus in the car park had gone to the new Totara Flats Hut. For dinner, Elaine cooked a fresh chicken 'n' veges stir fry, which was followed by Aunt Dolly's chocolate pud. It was a cold night, and I willed it to snow, but the next day seemed warmer. There were some early morning views, but the mist soon rose and obscured all.

Elaine's formula required she and I to return down the hill if it was cold, wet, and windy, but we could go on to Holdsworth if only 2 of those 3 factors prevailed. Well, it was dead calm, the rain had stopped, and the chill had gone. This easy grade tramp was advertised as a "flexi" tramp, so we decided to turn it into a Fit tramp by accompanying Terry and Wara as far as Jumbo, and then walking out all in the one day. We discussed the ethics of the trip leader changing the trip grading, and decided that since I had requested the leader make the change, and since it was approved by a trip coordinator (Terry), nobody else on the committee could say boo.



Terry and Elaine lost, but Wara noticed the trig.

We had good views of the mist from Mt Holdsworth, and then it was another 2hrs to

Jumbo. Half way to Jumbo, we stopped for elevenses and briefly got a view. The northern end of Kapiti Island played peek-a-boo in the mist. Now you see it, now you don't. Continuing to Jumbo, Terry announced that shortly we would probably see some DOC inspectors. We were struck dumb, wondering how he knew they were coming. Then he asked "Have you heard of them?" We remained dumbstruck. Why would Terry ask us that? Anyway, it turned out he hadn't said DOC inspectors, but rather "Brockenspectres," a phenomenon you can get when light passes through mist.

When we reached Jumbo Hut, we met a couple who were keen to hear SAREX stories. Then it was time for Elaine and I to leave, but Terry and Wara decided to walk out too. Did I mention it was a "flexi-tramp?" Perhaps they didn't like the weather prospects, or perhaps they couldn't handle the idea of not having Elaine there to cook dinner. Perhaps it was those stories about huts and wind. Didn't the old Jumbo Hut blow down?

On the way down the Atiwhakatu track, we passed a gaggle of school girls who were going to spend the night at Jumbo. At this stage Terry and Wara knew they had made the right call in deciding to walk out with Elaine and I.



Wara's twisted tree photo.



Elaine's pack has legs.

Monocle

From Jumbo Hut it took an hour and a half to reach Atiwhakatu Hut, with Wara continuing to keep record of our exploits with his digital camera. Another 2hrs and we were back at the road end. It had been, as they say north of the Arctic Circle in summer, a long day.

Kahuterawa Stream & South Range Loop, Monday, 2 June 2003 **By Judith Kidd**

A small but enthusiastic group of three undertook the new sledge track up the Kahuterawa Stream and the connecting loop around Hardings park, a 869 ha reserve. Led by expert guide and trail blazer, Terry Crippen, new members Wara Teeranitamkul and myself enjoyed a good look at the diverse vegetation and scenery this nearby track has to offer. The weather cooperated in deeming us a comfortable temperature and reasonable visibility at the top, although the wind was stiff enough to warrant parkas and a hasty retreat back into the canopy.

For those who have not yet visited the new sledge track, recently opened by our honorable PM in April, then it is well worth the short drive up the valley, if even for a picnic lunch. The track was obviously a labour of love for the dedicated volunteers and engineers, Terry included, and has already received heavy usage. Most hikers seem to stop at the view point, 2.9 km up the track, while a few go the extra 2 km up to the "Red Rocks" which lead to the abandoned platinum mine shafts. Only the keen hunters and hikers (i.e. PNTMC'ers!) venture into Hardings Park to partake of native bush-whacking and surrounding views. The track is well-marked although not very well-used and it would be easy to lose your bearings in the scrub brush (horopito and toi toi) along the various open places on the loop. It pays to have a knowledgeable guide such as Terry along!

The highlight of the trip was exploring the platinum shafts which are well-marked, accessible and provide a glimpse of cave wetas and possibly glowworms. For the most part, the track is under canopy and heavily vegetated with bracken fern and punga, with the odd evidence of wild pigs and possums. There was a lack of bird activity perhaps due to the time of day. The loop takes about 3.5 hours of steady walking, not including a lunchbreak, which was enjoyed at a protected rock outcrop.

All in all, this was a very comfortable day trip in spite of low visibility on top. The rain began to fall as soon as we approached the car park.

Abel Tasman Walkway **Queens Birthday Weekend 2003** **By Marion Leyland**

CAMP MOTHER: Janet Wilson

THE TEAM: Warren Wheeler, Ian Harding, Katie Peters, Graham Peters, Marion and Mick Leyland, Yuko Watanabe and Nigel Gregory.



The Abel-bodied Crew

Most people congregated at Marion and Mick's house before setting off to Wellington in 2 cars leaving at 10pm. Arrived at the Wellington Ferry Terminus at midnight and Mick and Janet sorted out where the cars were to be parked. Checked in our packs and then boarded the Ferry at 1am for a 1.30am sailing. Sleep was the thought on our minds but there were some people on the boat who had different ideas and very little or no sleep was had by most people. Some people even stripped off (Warren) and got in their sleeping bags.

Arrived at Picton at 4.30am and waited for the Van which picked us up at 6am. There were some

pretty tired people and heads were bobbing up and down pretty frequently except for Janet who kept the van driver awake with lots of talk. Our first stop was at Motueka where Janet sorted out hut passes for everyone and the rest of us visited the bakery, and pies seemed to be the order of the day. Mick was upset because he only got a small pie and the likes of Nigel and Graham rubbed in how good the large ones were. We arrived at Kaiteriteri at 9.30am and caught the boat at 10am, which took us up the coast to Totaranui beach and Education centre, where we hit dry land again. It was cool on the boat but once on the beach it started to warm up and we stripped off a few layers of clothes, had a bite to eat, and headed off up the coastal track to Whariwharangi Hut. Three hours later, after a few ups and downs and some walking on golden sands and looking at beautiful water and bush, we arrived at the hut. No sooner had we arrived and got beds, it was off down to the rocks to get some mussels, which were steamed open and eaten as an entrée. Delicious, so I was told.

Everyone was pretty knackered that night and beds were filled by 8pm and, except for the snorers, not a sound was heard until morning. From here we backtracked and went out to Separation Point where Mick and Janet tried to catch a fish; however, the only things biting were the sandflies and an overly friendly seal. We got back onto the Coastal Track and down to a magical beach of golden sand, sunshine and clean green water. We lolled about on the beach for an hour or so and then headed to Mutton Cove where there is a camping area and water and of course a flush toilet. The track from here headed inland although you could still see the water at certain points. This day we were heading for Awaroa Hut, and we had to time our arrival at the Awaroa Inlet as it is tidal, and we needed to walk across it to reach the hut. Plenty of cockles to be found at the low tide, and so that was the entrée for that night. Again I was told delicious, and I'm sure they were by the way they disappeared.

It turned out that Nigel had never seen a possum, and one was spied in a tree close to the hut, so what does Nigel do he shakes the tree so hard it fell out and hit the ground with a thud. Quick give me something to hit it with so Graham started swinging the broom around but this possum was too smart and he soon scampered up another tree. Nigel slept out on the verandah that night and even left his light on his head so if the possum came close he could switch on his light and hit it with something. The possum won.

Warren tried to give us a lesson in Astrology while we were sitting outside under the stars and he reckoned you could tell the time by the stars. His explanation went straight over our heads, but we did see the Southern Cross and the Milky Way.

It was an early start the next morning as there was an inlet to be crossed before high tide. We all had our lights on, but it didn't take long for day light to dawn. Past the Awaroa Lodge and up over the Tonga Saddle. The inlet to cross was a bit of a non event and we had no probs. On to a lovely sandy beach and a stop for a cuppa and a bit of gawking (by some party members) at a group of women canoeist (some bikini clad) who were getting ready to hit the tide. When we left the beach, we climbed up over another saddle and into Bark Bay. The hut here is huge, and more like a lodge, and right on the water. From here we carried on to Torrent Bay with some beach walking, and some ups and downs, and it was while doing this we discovered we had a single rich farmer in our midst, namely Ian. It was with much laughter and good humour by Ian that we tried to decide who he would be attracted to, and this is what I have come up with.

Five foot two
Eyes of blue
No Piercings or Tattoo's
Has anyone seen this girl
Must have money and enjoy eating honey
And Milking Cows rainy or sunny
Has anyone seen this girl !!!

I'm sure there is someone out there who fits the bill!!!!!!

We had lunch at Torrent Bay and then walked across the estuary to Anchorage hut, which was very full and overflowing. Spent time looking for oysters on the rocks but no luck so had to be happy with Mussels again. Beautiful long curving beach with golden sand.



▲ Life's a beach!



A golden sandy beach in fact. ▼

Next morning we were picked up by water taxi at 8am and taken to Marahau, where the van duly arrived and took us to Smoked Fish Café at Mapua, which Janet and Graham had been to before and fish was bought as well as coffee and cake. All very yummy after freeze dried food for 3 days.

Next stop the bakery in Picton for more food and then a walk to the Ferry and a 1.30pm sailing. Warren thought platonc could be a good option up on the top deck for a bit of light entertainment. Very crowded Ferry and cool wind.

The only hiccup in the whole trip was when we got back to Wellington our car battery was dead. Tried to jump start it off Janet and Graham's car but no luck. Nigel had an AA card so called them on cellphone (Thank goodness for cell phones eh Graham) and they had it going in 2 mins.

We arrived home at 7.30pm tired and happy after a great tramp and very well organised trip. Thanks Janet for all your effort in organising this tramp for everyone, just great.

Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place , April 26 Bluejohn Canyon Canyonlands NP, Utah By Doug Strachan

Aron Ralston
(Non-PNTMC trip; non-PNTMC member)

On April 26, Aron Ralston was just out for a bit of mountain biking followed by some canyoneering (using rock-climbing gear to travel along canyons). In Bluejohn canyon, he came to a large Easter-egg-shaped boulder, and was climbing down it when the rock shifted, pinning his forearm against the canyon wall. He panicked and thrashed himself against the boulder in an effort to free himself. Soon he realised the futility of that, and his engineer's mind took stock of the

situation. He could count his options on one hand, which was all he had to work with anyway. 1) He could wait for help for as long as he had water. He did that, and the water ran out on day four. 2) He could try and chisel the rock away from around his hand. That didn't work. 3) He could try to shift the rock. He used his engineering background and climbing knowledge to devise pulley systems, but was unable to budge the boulder at all. The climbing gear wasn't totally useless, as he was able to put an anchor above himself and attach his harness to it. He was then able to sit in the harness whenever he tired of standing. He was out of water, and it was freezing at night, so he turned to his option of last resort: 4) amputation of the trapped hand.

His blunt pocket knife, further dulled from chiselling at the rock, would never have cut through bone. Using the torque of his arm, he first snapped his radius, and then his ulna bone, and cut through the flesh with the blunt knife. The operation took about an hour. He used tourniquets to stem the bleeding. For an encore, he single-handedly rappelled about 20m to the canyon floor and had nearly walked out on his own when he met some Dutch trampers, who then waved down a passing helicopter. It is unlikely someone in a helicopter would have spotted Aron had he remained in the canyon that was only about a metre wide.

His courage has been praised in all the media, but if he had bled to death after the amputation, he might have been nominated for a Darwin Award for not telling anyone where he was going, despite his own involvement with search and rescue. This is a golden rule for clubs like the PNTMC, and one might say the rule is even more imperative for people who choose to assume the greater risk of going solo. According to Aron, he usually did tell people his intentions. Perhaps he felt this trip was too easy for precautions to be necessary. Just like Possum Borne was killed in a car while not racing, mountaineers don't have to be in precarious looking places to sustain injuries. Aaron didn't put anyone else in danger, so it was his choice and his risk. Of course, vision is always 20:20 in hindsight, and Aron deeply regrets not telling anyone where he was going. If you're not into risking life and limb, tell people where you are going and for how long, or go with a club like PNTMC where you won't be alone, and leaving a list of party members and intended route is standard practice.

Even without cutting off his own arm, 27yr old

Aaron was destined to become a legend in mountaineering circles. This is a guy who quit his job at Intel because they wouldn't give him 3 weeks off work to climb Mt McKinley in Alaska. Way to go Aron! He has climbed most of Colorado's >4300m peaks in winter. His aim is to be the first to climb them all solo in winter.

Although not a materialistic person, Ralston will surely receive compensation for his lost appendage in the form of biography and movie

rights, and no doubt there will soon be a patent out for a "Ralston" knife, that will become the standard equipment of last resort for all mountain users.