

PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - October 2003

CLUB NIGHTS

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

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

Sept 25 Interclub Photo Competition (See Sept. newsletter)

Oct 9 De La Beche or Bust Bruce van Brunt

Look mom! No planes or helicopters! Bruce talks about a recent crossing of the main divide. The trip entailed a walk up the Tasman glacier, a climb up to the Minarets via the de la Beche ridge, and a decent down to the Franz Joseph glacier (with a crossing of the Franz glacier and decent of the Fox glacier thrown in for good measure). A first class tour of Mount Cook and Westland Parks.

Oct 30 Climbing, City Rock 356 3588 Terry Crippen

A chance to learn some new skills on 'inside rock,' or practice old ones, in preparation for outdoor rock climbing activities coming up. Instruction and gear supplied, just bring suitable cloths and footwear (rock shoes can be hired). Enjoyable and worthwhile. Cost \$7. City Rock, 217 Featherston St, phone 357-4552, behind Phil Turnbull Motors just along from the Rangitiki St intersection.

Nov 6 Committee meets at Dave's.

E-mail articles to doug.strachan@xtra.co.nz
or post to 1 Worsfold Lane, Palm. North
(by 20th of month)

TRIPS

Please contact the leader at least three days in advance. Trips leave from Foodtown carpark. A reasonably proficient trumper can be expected to do the trips in the following times:

Easy (E): 3-4 hrs Technical skills reqd (T)
Medium (M): 5-6 hrs Instructional (I)
Fit (F): about 8 hrs
Fitness Essential (FE): >8 hrs

Sept 28 Waiopahu Hut. (See Sept. newsletter)

Oct 4-5 Tongariro-Ngaruahoe M/F,T Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Depart 6.00pm Friday night to stay at Mangatepopo Hut, 20 minutes from the carpark. This trip will include a climb up to Tongariro and across North Crater to frozen Blue Lake and steamy Red Crater, and an anniversary ascent of the west side of Ngauruhoe (crampons and ice axe required) to the Grandstand View where a club group saw Ruapehu erupt in 1996. An early departure from PN on Saturday morning is an option and daytrippers are welcome.

Oct 5 Top Gorge Hut M/F Nigel Gregory 354 8124

Go past Scandinavia (Norsewood) and through India (Kashmir Rd) to get to this hut in the eastern Ruahines. We'll pop into Longview Hut, then drop into the Pohangina River. Down the river to Top Gorge Hut for lunch before returning along the same route. The terrain is reasonably easy going. Highlights include a couple of pretty waterfalls.

For lots more photos & trips, check out
www.pntmc.org.nz

TRIPS contd

Oct 11-12 Longview Hut E
Lance Gray 356 6454

A very easy trip for people just emerging from winter hibernation. Start 10am Saturday for this eastern Ruahine hut. We might go up onto the tops on Sunday.

Oct 12 Rangī Loop M
Stephen Liddall 357 6978

Up Deadman's Track to Rangī Hut in the western Ruahines, then out down the main track. Good views. 8am start.

Oct 18-19 Trains Hut E/M
Malcolm Leary 06 322 8533

The track starts up the Waitotara Valley, over on the other side of Wanganui. Train's Hut track joins onto the Matemateonga Track in Whanganui NP. For more info, see the January issue of Wilderness Magazine. Stay at Train's Hut, a sleeper's paradise.

Oct 19 Field Hut Table Top M
Jo+Laurence O'Halloran 353 0300

Into the Tararuas from Otaki Forks. Good track up the ridge to Field Hut, which has been spruced up. We might go up to Table Top if the weather's good and people are keen. Depart 0800hrs.

Oct 23-28 Labour Week(end)) M/F
(Thurs-Tues) Kahurangi National Park
Terry Crippen 356 3588

A 5-6 day tramp in the Mt Arthur area of Kahurangi National Park. A number of possibilities; along the marble and karst landscapes of the Mt Arthur Range, and/or the forests of the Leslie and Baton Rivers. Will fly direct to Nelson from PN (currently \$202 return) and shuttle van to and from the road ends (approx \$60 return pp). Need to book both early, so contact Terry NOW if interested.

Oct 27 Stanfield Hut E
Duncan Hedderley 355 1820

An 8.00 start for a daytrip into the near-eastern Ruahines. Good bush and a decent little hut. Not much up-and-down, but expect to get your feet wet coming back down the stream. Plan is to go Monday, unless the weather looks like it will be much better on the Sunday.

Nov 1-2 Mangahao Flats M
Alan Bee 323 4582

Start at the top dam in behind Shannon. It's about a 6hr tramp to Mangahao Flats Hut, walking up the valley. No rush. Nothing too steep, but might be muddy. 8am start. Date might change.

Nov 2 Rock Climbing Titahi Bay I
Terry Crippen 356 3588

Now that you have had an intro at City Rock, here is your chance to develop your skills on some proper rock (greywacke - what the southern alps are made of) at the coast behind Porirua. The climbing ranges from very easy to as-hard-as-you-like. Equipment will be supplied if you don't have it. Should be an enjoyable day. Check with Terry for departure time.

Trip participants:

Contact the leader at least 3 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)

Portal to the Past

SAREX. An extract from **newsletter No.14, 1967:**
 "...The two 'missing' persons were found on the first day and set off to get lost again. On Sunday, they were found twice more and so from the search point of view the practice was successful."

Chi

Chi is a type of energy. Sharp corners in a tent are poor in that they attract negative chi, while a curved surface will attract positive chi. Thus geodesic tents are to be preferred over ridge tents as negative energy will cause many sleepless nights and general early morning apathy. Source: <http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/1758/fmgfengs.html>

NOTICES

SAR, Inter-club Quiz Results, New Member, Topo Maps & Guide Books for Sale

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

SEARCH & RESCUE ACTIVITY

Club SAR team members were put on standby recently for a river bank search. I passed the buck for the phoning round onto Warren, as I was about to head off up Ruapehu, with two of the other local Land SAR advisors, Hugh Wilde and Peter Rawlins (both MTSC). Good job it wasn't a major search! As is often, the case after a lot of phoning and people getting their gear ready, the teams were stood down. The "Lost" person was found. Thanks to Warren and those who responded to the call.

Recent SAR training has included winching and stretcher carrying. Forthcoming training includes:
 Sun 5 Oct: low angle rope work.
 Sat 22 Nov: Round robin activities.
 Wed 3 Dec: Helo safety and EOY get together.
 Contact Terry for details.

INTER-CLUB QUIZ RESULTS

Tony Gates, Janet Wilson, Andrew Lynch, and Doug Strachan represented the PNTMC. The 3 opposing teams were the Manawatu Tramping & Skiing Club, Mountain Equipment, and Massey University Alpine Club.

In round one, the fastest team to beat a billy with a spoon could have a crack at answering. I had never taken part in an inter-club quiz before and spent most of the time waiting for them to ask "Who climbed Mt Everest in 1953." I had spent the previous day memorising the answer and was a little disturbed when my question never came up. Nonetheless, at the end of the round, MTSC's billy ended up with just 3 more dents in it than ours.

MUAC and Mountain Equipment fared better in the knot-tying event, supporting their claim that they were practical-minded. They proved they were faster at tying knots while wearing gloves.

By round 3, the gloves were off. We looked at slides and had to identify the hut or location shown. We did very well in this section.

In the next round we listened to bird calls and tried to ID the bird. People who listen to National Radio had the advantage here.

A member from each team brought along a loaded pack for the next section. The hot water bottle and tin of cat food in Tony's pack lost us points on essential items, but helped get our pack closest to the ideal weight for a weekend pack (15 or 17kg depending on gender).

In the final round (1st Aid), we had to splint a fractured leg, with points being awarded for speed and quality.

MTSC ended up taking home the Trevor Bissell Memorial Trophy, but not by a margin that allows them to rest on their laurels. Mountain Equipment came in 3rd, and MUAC 4th. Doug.

NEW MEMBER

Carole Brungar, tel. (06) 376 6442
 A warm welcome to you, Carole!

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.

THURSDAY TRAMPERS

We go for a tramp every Thursday. If you wish to join us, contact Merv Matthews 357 2858, or Liz Flint 356 7654.

The solution for last month's crossword:

Down

1. This shapely hut has the name of a musical instrument. (Triangle)

Across

2.&4. Had a wild party here the night before his wedding (Roaring Stag)

3. Has the name of a fragrant plant. (Daphne)

5. Australians stay in this hut. (Diggers)

TRIP REPORTS

Snowcrafts 1 and 3, Around Mt Taranaki, Howletts, Longview Hut

Huskies Report on Snowcraft 1 (aka Crippen-van Brunt Boot Camp) August 2-3 By Judith Kidd

Members attending: Ash, Wara, Judith, Terry C.

Being newcomers to the PNTMC, this innocent band of "Huskies" had never visited the MTC Hut and the accompanying logistics of getting from car park to the hut. Arriving late Friday night under the cover of darkness, crampons and ice axes in tow, we felt as if we were on a trampers' Mystery Weekend. As we tackled the slippery icy footpath we began to wonder if this treachery was an omen of things to come. But, No fears! *The hut turned out to be a pleasant surprise, with all the Mod-Cons, save for Internet connections!!*

Life was sweet!! We snuggled into out warm beds like kiddies on Christmas Eve.

The next day dawned somewhat less than ideal, but Terry's enthusiasm allayed any thoughts of hanging back to "wait and see". We charged forth and within a few "short" hundred meters we were learning the basics of walking on ice, axing our way across 70 degree slopes, and holding our own against gale force winds---what a better way to spend a winter Saturday morning?? Fortunately, we were all adequately clothed and prepared for the challenges that lay ahead! Within a few hours, under Terry's expert leadership and training skills, he had us self-arresting down icy slopes in every imaginable position. My favourite was head first, no ice axe, on my back, and blind-folded (well, I'm exaggerating a bit!)...and by the end of the day we were all impressed at just how gracefully we could fall and stop ourselves in the nick of time. I still have bruises on each shoulder to prove it!

Stopping for only a couple of short breaks (emphasis on "short") we managed to master all of the snowcraft objectives for Day One and head back to the hut just as the storm clouds rolled in and wind speed doubled. The other group under Sergeant van Brunt had not yet arrived and we set ourselves to work in the kitchen, after hot showers and new dry socks. Open the wine!

The evening in the hut is best described as "mellow" and the Sergeant's' futile attempts at a

lecture on avalanche danger was all we needed to lull us into an idyllic sleep (hey, it was good psychology!!). Nevermind, we all slept well, except for a few strange voices during the night from non-PNTMC revellers, obviously not there on serious business, such as we were.

Sunday was a gift from the gods---the wind had calmed, the sun shone brightly in a flawless sky, and we all got out our cameras for postcard pixes to send home. Suddenly our energy levels soared, the snow softened, and life was again worth living!! We spent the entire day up on top of Whakapapa (at least it seemed like the top!) and perfected our self-arresting (sans blind-folds!) and became incredibly adept at axing our way up dubious icy rock faces. In fact, according to our ever-driven leader Terry, we surpassed the Snowcraft I objectives, and began forging our way through Snowcraft II (or was that just another psychological ploy to get us to enrol in the next course?).

In any case, we all felt great and tired by the end of the day, thankful to the gods, and to our Sergeants who kept us safe and pushed us to limits we probably would never had known---great stuff, both physically and psychologically.



Club Member Under Arrest



Thorn Between 2 Roses

Snowcraft 3, August 30-31 By Ashok Dahya

Snowcraft 3 on Egmont/Taranaki, was enjoyed by 7 of us; Elaine Herve and Heike Hahn finishing the course from the year before; and Craig Allerby, Edith Leary and Ash Dahya who did the earlier weekends this year. Peter Darragh and Terry Crippen were the instructors.

Mount Taranaki weather was perfect, with no wind and glimpses of bright sky and views but overcast enough to be comfortable not hot. And there was ample snow. While there were others enjoying the mountain, it seemed we had the mountain to ourselves; certainly different from the crowded slopes of Ruapehu. Perfect for congenial company and camaraderie. Also perfect for getting a wide variety of new skills learned and those from earlier parts of the course practiced a little more.

Konini lodge (DoC) at Dawson falls was a late sojourn on Friday night without the benefits of snorex, before an early morning uphill tramp, overloaded with climbing gear, to Kapuni lodge (EAC) where the food was nice and hot. There was a chance to practice a variety of belays, putting in runners, and sorting out how to climb three on a rope, the 3rd person using the prusik being one way. It was a good opportunity to climb steeper and longer slopes with plenty of step cutting, as well as some icy surfaces with crampons and flat footing. There seemed to be a bit of ballet involved as well though this wasn't in any of the manuals.

It was impossible to tarry, or avoid *Terry whose watchful eye spotted gloveless hands*, and Peter reminding us to avoid getting trapped in soft snow -ouch! (Peters knee has now recovered hopefully).

Some of us managed to get up to Fanthams Peak and Syme Hut after lots of rope work - a worthy "summit" with impressive views and slopes still above us to keep in mind for another day.

Thank you to our instructors for sharing their varied experiences and making us feel safe. Can't think of any way to improve the programme, and I hope it will continue to be available to many in the future.

Around Mt Taranaki – September 1-2 By Janet Wilson

We were a mixed group – mostly trampers and cavers: Graham Peters and Janet Wilson (PNTMC & MSG), Jean Garman (leader) and Jenny McCarthy (PNTMC, MSG and MTSC), Ivan Reinks, Arran de Malmache & Yvette Cottam (MSG & MTSC), Gary and Adam (MTSC).

As this was a combined trip with MTSC we, 9 of us, piled into the MTSC van and left Palmy at 6.30am on the Saturday morning. I dozed, and it seemed like we were at the Hawera hot bread shop very quickly. It was pies for breakfast for most people and a chance to grab some more goodies for the long trip ahead.

We started from Dawson Falls around 10am and headed up the hill, past the Kapuni Lodge turn off, where snow-craft 3 was based for the weekend. There was snow from just below this point. We soon turned onto the Round the Mountain Track and started sidling clockwise and upward. Soon

we needed crampons and it seemed like Fanthoms Peak wasn't very high above us. The track wanders up and down and around numerous gullies and it was soon off with the crampons only to have to put them on again later as we hit harder snow. Fortunately we only did this twice. The views were mostly hidden by cloud, but occasionally the sun shone. We had a quick lunch in a particularly cold spot. After sidling under some spectacular bluffs we headed back downhill into the forest for what seemed like a long, long drop back to about 600m. When we had nearly reached the hut, the track dropped rapidly into the Waiaua Gorge where there was an unbridged river to cross (wet feet for a couple of us) and a rather overconstructed ladder to climb back out again. We reached Waiaua Gorge Hut at about 5pm - it is quite large and we had it to ourselves. Jean organised us into 3 cooking groups and dinners were quickly made. The cloud cleared during the evening and some people took the opportunity to

photograph the mountain. Everyone in bed by about 8pm – looking forward to an earlyish start the next morning.



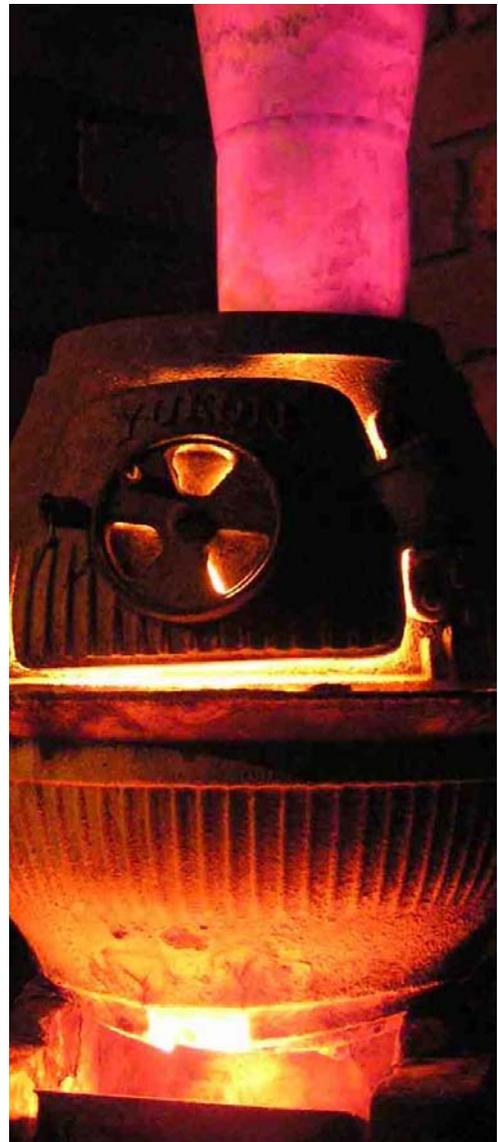
Yvette negotiating the ladder

Sunday am – most people were up before 6.30 and we were on our way not long after 7.30. A lovely clear morning with great views. The track carries on at a low level for a while and there was plenty of wind/snow break to slow us down a little. We soon reached a turn off from where you can go to Holly Hut by either the high or low route. We chose the high and headed upwards towards Kahui Hut, our stop for morning tea. We carried on up and around, sidling high around the steep gullies of Pyramid Stream before heading down to Holly Hut for lunch. Those that arrived last had a quick ½ hour break and then we were off again, aware that we still had a long way to go. A little more cloudy now but still clear views all around. The track beyond Holly Hut is of a high standard and made for easy going. We crossed Boomerang Slip as part of a series of slips on our way to Tahurangi Lodge – not long before here we were back on soft snow. Tahurangi was our high point for the day – we had a quick break here but the wind was very cold and we soon moved on, mostly in snow, to the ski-field where we had more shelter. Afternoon tea here – ***most people produced a packet of chocolate biscuits from their packs and they were gobbled up quickly.*** People were starting to tire a little but we all made good time back to Dawson Falls - everyone there by 5.15 – approx 9 1/2 hour day with a lot of km's covered. A few complaints about sore feet and I believe there were a few tired people the next day!

Thanks Jean for organising an excellent long walk.



Holly Hutters



The hut's glowing potbelly

Terry & Tony tramp the Tukituki. September 6-7 By Tony Gates

A miserable weather forecast didn't deter us. We had plenty of time and energy for our weekend tramp, and Howletts Hut is one of our favourites- a worthy destination for a medium-ish tramp. Also, it was nice to plan to meet our friends at Longview Hut, and complete a good circuit of the Ruahines.

From the old Moorcocks Base, we followed the old Midges Side Track towards Daphne Hut. We could hear the Tukituki River from far above, and as expected, it was still quite flooded when we got there. The first tributary was OK to cross, but the main river was a different story. One team member wanted to give the river route a go, but the other talked him out of it (thanks Terry). The other method, to have sat and waited for the river level to drop, would have been a good option, just a little boring. We chose the third option, which was what we had originally planned, and that was to climb the very aptly named "Mick Leyland/ Llew Pritchard Ridge" to the Daphne- Longview track, descend to the next side creek at Daphne Hut, then climb Daphne spur via the usual route. Lots of up and down, some off track travel, but a good, reliable wet weather route. (one could also retreat from Daphne Hut in a flood on the other side of the river, but would need to sidle high, like our intended route). So, once back at the base of Daphne Spur, we set off on our fourth big hill climb of the day, this one our highest. The track was good, we still had plenty of energy, and there was plenty of daylight. Some drizzle, mist, and clag higher up. And so to Howletts Hut.

This hut, for those who haven't yet made it there, is quite historic. It is well maintained by the Heretaunga Tramping Club and DOC, and the PNTMC donate coal. Currently, with half a tonne of coal up at Howletts, a warm fire is assured for many months to come. My goodness, we appreciated it then. Overnight use might be 3 or 4 kilograms- half a dollar or less worth of the black stuff for a toasty warm hut for 18 hours.

Sunday dawned a bit misty and chilly. Surprisingly, there was no fresh snow. Some more coal in the fire box soon started to burn, so our hot water supplies were soon back to several litres of near boiling water. After breakkie, we departed south on Daphne Ridge for Longview Hut, planning to make it in time for lunch and to meet the others. It is an open tussock ridge, quite flat, so providing rapid travel when you are fresh. One previous trip last year, I recall staggering along there to Howletts on a stiflingly hot day with a heavy pack, and made really tough work of it. On this morning,

we skittered along easily and enjoyed the views. Two hours to Otumore, nick down the ridge to Pohangina Saddle (a magic spot), and we could see the other PNTMC trip right on cue. We all met up at Longview Hut, then trooped off down the ridge to the cars. Home early.

Longview Hut, Sept.12 By Duncan Hedderley

Many thanks to Mary and John, Trevor, Rohan, Simon and Simone, Barbara, Neil, Waren, Tony and Terry. Duncan Hedderley.

Longview is one of those mythical places in the Ruahines, which I have heard about, but never got into. Last winter we got halfway along the track before deciding that the combination of buffeting wind and big drops alongside the track near the hut was too great a risk. So, obviously the answer was to offer to lead a trip there.

The road in winds, and eventually becomes a gravel rollercoaster. The weather was looking better than the last time I was there, but nonetheless low cloud and drizzly. The first 30-40 minutes of the track are like climbing a slippery, uneven staircase; and the cloud meant there was not even a view. Simon and Somine decided this was not their thing and headed back for a potter in the hills on the other side of the valley.

After 45 minutes it was good to stop, catch breath, look back and realise how much height we had gained. From there on it was rise, flat, rise, flat, walking along the ridge we had been climbing onto. Surprisingly quickly we spotted the hut through the mist, around the curve of the cliff.

Walking to the hut, there was a shout from the hills above us. We knew Tony gates was in the area, and he had asked us to wait at the hut so we could come out together (And give him a lift back to his car at Moorcock base...) But we hadn't expected such good timing. So Tony and Terry Crippen joined us for lunch.

Over lunch the clouds began to lift and we got a bit of a view. *Warren suggested we go back an alternative route, down a stream. I declined.* Heading down, there was a brilliant view of the edge of the clouds as they receded. The clearing view made me more aware of the cliffs beside the track - huge drop-offs of coal-grey scree and rock. But that did not last long and we were soon down into tussock, and soon after that, back at the cars. A good day out, topped off with a stop at State of Art cafe in Dannevirke.

