



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - March 2004

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.

Feb 26 City Rock 217 Featherston St (see Feb newsletter)

Mar 11 SAR & Digital Mapping
Matt Farrelly

Matt will be outlining the application of new fangled modern technology to improve the management and planning of Search and Rescue operations.

Mar 18 Committee Meeting at Doug's.

Mar 25 AGM & Auction
Warren Wheeler

The Annual General Meeting will start at 7.45pm and features the State of the Nation Address by the President, a fiscal and finance report by the Treasurer. Nominations for the Executive and Committee will be accepted by the Secretary no later than immediately prior to election on the night. The Gear Auction will follow the AGM - yes, the Gear Auction is back. This is the opportunity you've been waiting for to finally dispose of your surplus or pre-loved gear to a good home, or to purchase the same. A nominal commission on a donation basis for the Club Gear Fund will be extracted from the sellers.

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

Feb 28-29 Jumbo-Holdsworth,
Feb 29 Titahi Bay Rock (see Feb. newsletter)

Mar 6-7 Maropea Forks **M**
Nigel Gregory **354 8124**

We will leave from Foodtown carpark at 7:30 am Sat morning. Tramp in to Maropea Forks hut via Sunrise and Top Maropea huts. There is good camping available as well. Definitely a wet feet day Saturday!! The plan is to try to make a loop out of the trip on Sunday, but we will play it by ear.

Mar 6-7 Risk Management (MSC) **I**
Noel Bigwood **357 0116**

This course starts on Fri evening, and runs all weekend. It aims to give you the tools to identify and eliminate risk, or at least assess and manage it. The course starts with a theory intro, leading into practical exercises in teams (e.g. could be a rope or rescue exercise), followed by a debriefing. The venue for this Mountain Safety Council run course is likely to be within an hour's drive of P.N. Of course, you will need equipment (sunscreen, coat etc) for the practical scenarios held outdoors. You can register your interest by phoning Sheryl (358 3300) or Noel.

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

TRIPS contd

Mar 7 **Waipawa Saddle** **M**
 Dave Grant **357 8269**

Leave Foodtown carpark at 8am. Head up the Waipawa River to the saddle for lunch, and then amble back. Waipawa Saddle is in the eastern Ruahines, a little south of the popular Sunrise Hut.

Mar 13-14 **Lake Dive ENP** **E**
 Elaine Herve **354 2499**

Lake Dive Hut is most easily accessed from Dawson falls road end. The plan is to spend a relaxed night at this hut. The lake can offer wonderful reflections of the mount. Weather permitting we will make it a circular tramp using the lower bush track and the higher track that can offer good views. Plan to leave town at 8.00am.

Mar 14 **Mid-Pohangina Hut** **F**
 Nigel Gregory **354 8124**

In from the Pohangina side of the Ruahines. We'll make it a loop trip by going up the track to the hut, and coming out down the river. Not a lot of climbing, but a long day. 7am from Foodtown.

Mar 20-21 **Whakapapaiti Hut** **E**
 Liz Morrison **357 6532**

Leaving 7am. An easy/family/beginner grade trip. It's only 1hr to the hut from the carpark, which is just below the Top of the Bruce on Mt Ruapehu. This allows ample time for coffee, seeing the visitors' centre, exploring the stream near the hut. It's a neat hut, and not crowded as most people just pass through. Good view up the stream to Ruapehu. The route out on Sunday takes 3-4hrs.

Mar 19/20-21 **SAREX**
 Terry Crippen **356 3588**

This is the annual Search and Rescue Exercise in the region and is limited to club SAR team members. (Numbers are restricted). However other active club members with suitable experience and competence who want to get involved in search and rescue need to undergo specific training on such skills as "Track and Clue" Awareness, Search Methods. They should contact Terry.

Mar 21 **Coppermine Creek** **E**
 Ian Harding **06 376 5707**

There's copper in them there hills. This historically interesting tramp, not far beyond the Manawatu Gorge, offers ore-some lessons in geology. 9am start.

Mar 27-28 **Contorta Slaughter, TNP**
 Janet Wilson **3294 722**

Pinus contorta, also known as lodgepole pine or #@|&! , would have taken over the native vegetation in Tongariro National Park were it not for the efforts of organisations like DOC, schools, tramping clubs, Forest and Bird Society over the past few decades. Volunteers systematically scour the alpine zone, pulling out pine seedlings, and cutting down or ring-barking the larger ones. The wind-borne seed has spread far and wide. The last of the Kariori forest, the original source of this seed, will soon be completely milled. However, seeds will continue to germinate for some years. Slowly, the battle against this foreign invader is being won. This weekend is the PNTMC's chance to help DOC in the eradication effort, and ensure that *Dracophyllum*, *hebes*, *toatoa*, and other natives don't get replaced by *Pinus contorta*. We want a good turn out this weekend, so no other trips are scheduled. At the time of writing, the start time and exact location of the event is unknown. Contact Janet for the latest news. We'll be camping, and you should definitely bring gardening gloves.

Apr 3-4 **Cattle Ck Crossing** **E/M**
 Mick Leyland **358 3183**

A Ruahine crossing. Tramp in to Mid-Pohangina Hut. The next day, complete the crossing via Cattle Creek and Stanfield huts. Quite a bit of time will be spent walking in water, following the river. 7:30 start. Also this weekend...

Apr 4 **Cattle Ck Hut** **M**
 Llew Pritchard **358 2217**

In to Cattle Creek Hut via Stanfield. As Mick's group will be coming the other way, this provides options. The planned trip is to go to Cattle Ck and back. However, a subgroup could splinter off, swap keys with Mick, and do a fit southern Ruahine Crossing day trip.

Apr 8-13 **South Island Climbing** **F, T**
(Easter Week) **Terry Crippen** **3563-588**

A six day or more trip to probably Nelson Lakes, but could be elsewhere, with some peaks to be attempted. I've got various things in mind. Climbing and rope skills needed. Probably leaving PN about midnight on the 7th and getting back at a similar late time! Contact me ASAP for ferry bookings.

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

May 1968 newsletter:

An extract from the National Park, Waihothonu Hut trip report:

"The wisdom of purchasing the Club's own first aid kit came to mind when a member came staggering through the door with a broken trouser fly zipper." Anon.

Recipe for Ian's Heavenly Cathedral Cake

Ian's cake has proven so popular, that he has provided us with the recipe. It is actually an Alison Holst creation.

The cake consists mainly of nuts and crystallised or glace fruit, held together with an eggy mixture which contains no butter or oil.

It keeps for months, ideal if you get lost for a few weeks in the mountains. It's best served in thin slices, cut with a serrated knife. When you hold up a slice, it is translucent, like the stained glass of a cathedral.

For a 20cm ring cake, or 2 small loaves:

3C Brazil nuts (or mixture Brazil & macadamia)
 1C blanched almonds
 1C cashews or pecans
 1C red glace cherries
 0.5 C green glace cherries (optional)
 About 4C glace (crystallised) fruit (e.g. pineapple, mango, papaya, rock melon)
 1 C sultanas
 1C raisins or currants
 4 large eggs
 1C brown sugar
 1t vanilla
 1.5C plain flour
 1t baking powder
 0.5t salt

Heat oven to 130C (120C fanbake), with the baking rack below the middle. Completely line a 20cm or 30cm ring pan (or 2 medium-sized loaf pans) with baking paper (cover all surfaces as this cake mixture sticks badly).

Measure out the fruits and nuts, putting some aside for decorating the top. Cut up large pieces of fruit, but leave some long thin pieces if desired.

In a large bowl, mix eggs, sugar and vanilla. Mix in the sifted flour, baking powder and salt till smooth. Add nuts and fruit and mix thoroughly by hand.

Press evenly into the prepared pan/s (if pan is lined with baking paper, coat evenly with non-stick spray just before use). If adding strips of crystallised fruit, put them in place after adding part of the mixture, then cover with remaining mixture. Press reserved fruit and nuts into the top for decoration.

Bake 2-3hrs, till cake feels firm when pressed in the middle. Cool, remove from pan, peel away liners. Brush all over with rum, brandy or whisky. Brush the top with a light coating of oil for a shine. Store at room temp. in greaseproof paper or cellophane, or refrigerate in a plastic bag. May be kept lightly wrapped in a cool, dark place for several months. After long storage, brush again with spirits, leave to stand in a plastic bag 24-48hrs before eating.

(Suggestion: replace yukky glace cherries with other crystallised fruit, and bake the cake in a TEFLON-coated tin.)

NOTICES

Doc Notices, New Member, June Sowerby, Message from the Heaps

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

DOC NOTICES

Maungahuka Hut closed for repairs 20th – 22nd Feb 2004 (NZMS 260 S26 066301). Work is weather dependant.

Anderson Memorial Hut closed for repair 27th Feb – 4th March 2004 (NZMS 260 S26 086376) Work is weather dependant.

Current Track Maintenance – delays possible, track workers will signal safe passage. Track workers will use relevant huts for accommodation.

Anderson Memorial Hut to Maungahuka Hut.
Penn Creek Hut to Table Top Junction.
Penn Ck Hut to highpoint 973m, Pakihore Ridge.

Bridge Construction No. 3 Bridge, Burn Track (NZMS 260 S25 223642) Construction, in stages, between 9th – 27th Feb 2004. Builders will signal safe passage.

Mitre Flats Bridge is Closed (NZMS 260 S26 191 391) The Mitre Flats swing bridge across the Waingawa River is damaged and unsafe. There is no 'all weather' access from the Upper Waingawa Rd end.

Cattle Ridge Hut – The 'Pot Belly' wood burner has been permanently removed. The wood burner will not be replaced (NZMS 260 S25 215498)

Derrick Field, Area Manager, Wairarapa Area Office, Masterton Ph. (06) 377 0700

Wayne Boness, Programme Manager – Visitor Assets, Kapiti Area Office, Ph (04) 296 1112 or 027 628-9240

NEW MEMBER

Rohan Taunton ph (06) 323 2174
Welcome to the PNTMC Rohan!

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.

FAREWELL TO JUNE SOWERBY

June Sowerby, 58, was last seen about 8pm on Christmas Eve in Turangi. She disappeared after leaving a relative's home to walk the 600m along a riverbank walkway to a lodge...

It is with sadness we record the loss of our fellow Friend and Trumper. We have special memories of June, who loved the outdoors and all animal and birds so much, and enjoyed the fellowship of her tramping friends. Her knowledge of all areas in N. Z. was amazing, also of our flora and fauna, being a very active Member of Forest and Bird Society.

June, while not being a Member of the PNTMC, was a foundation Member of the Tararua Tramping Club, and has been with our Thursday Tramping Group for many years. June kept us entertained with humorous stories of her Tramping days; there was always much laughter with June about. June also was very active with a Saturday walking group.

Farewell Friend and Fellow Trumper from Thursday and Wednesday Trampers, Tinkerbel and Chopper.

TRAMPING HEAPS

9/2/04 from Graham and Hilda Heap in the UK.

Hi
Finally we got our act together and managed to get up early enough to go for a tramp this Sunday morning. We all met up at 0930 hours and drove for twelve minutes before setting off on our arduous trek that lasted all of two and a half hours. We imagine there is not a category of easiness to label this walk that PNTMC would recognise. We were exhausted!! The steepest hill was flat, completely flat!!!!!!!!!!

TRIP REPORTS

Lewis Pass - Arthur's Pass, Snowy & Hector Rivers, Waiopahu Hut, Tubing (Not), Stanfield Hut, First Aid & River Safety; + Markets, Tramping Physics

Lewis Pass – Arthurs Pass, 2–9 Jan. By Anja Scholz

(Warren Wheeler (trip leader), Craig Allerby, Peter Wiles, Anja Scholz)

See the Feb newsletter for the first half of this report. Now for the exciting conclusion:

As the weather looked bleak the next morning, a muffled “this is lay-over day” escaped from the trip leader’s sleeping bag around 8 am. The day was spent with lazing, sleeping, eating, water collecting and perusing every page of somebody’s “New Idea” magazine, featuring the “cleavage of the year”. And every page of Peter’s “Listener”. And every page of the two Wilderness magazines resident in the hut. Eventually another trumper appeared who had come down the Townsend Creek route, and according to his description and some hut book entries this might form a ‘fitness essential’ trip at some point...

On day six the weather looked most excellent again. It was decided to skip Otehake hot springs/Lake Kaurapataka and go all the way to Goat Pass Hut instead. I learnt a new multi day tramping trip rule that day: ***If thou artst on a “medium” trip, and thou artst allowed a rest day, thou mussest do two medium days on the following day.*** We commenced our travels at 7 am and easy river flats travel saw us at the road after crossing the Taramakau and the Otira at about 10 am. Another ½ hour took us to the bridge over the Otira and start of the Deception Valley (with several keen mountain runners about, training for the Coast to Coast). Again good river flats travel propelled us up the river, with river crossings providing good cooling down and also relief for blistered feet (mine). About half an hour before the Upper Deception Hut the river had narrowed considerably, and negotiating small bush tracks, scrambling up boulders and crossing the river shorts-deep made for slower going. For my part the going was getting tough enough. We pushed on for Goat Pass Hut, with much clambering up in the final side creek, and the hut situated just under the pass was a welcome sight after 11 hours on the

track (okay, okay, including breaks, that is). Still, we dropped our packs and raced up the small hill in front of it to get even better views. Amazingly, we had spacious and clean Goat Pass Hut to ourselves – where was everybody? This was meant to be the height of the tramping season! While we peeled ourselves out of socks and polyprops, a breeze came up which in the course of the evening turned into quite a strong wind, and late at night horizontal heavy drizzle started.

The next and according to plan last day started with heavy winds, rain, and was generally not very pleasant. We slept in, and, as the weather looked somewhat ominous, used the mountain radio to call DOC re forecast. Apparently heavy rain was to set in at midday for 24 hours, then easing. After a short “what now” discussion it was decided to try and make a dash for it before we got closed in completely. We packed in record time, donned our raincoats and made for the pass. From the pass the track leads via lots of boardwalks down to where the Mingha River must be crossed. After about 15 minutes we reached the first side stream, coming from Lake Mavis, and it looked pretty impressive – more rain must have been falling overnight than we had realized. Yet, Warren took several steps and safely negotiated it, and Craig followed. Next it was my turn, and I also stepped bravely into the torrent. I had one foot nearly at the other side and thought I was safely across, when I either slipped or my second foot was caught in the current – either way, within a split second I had fallen into the creek, been carried a couple of metres downstream and was lodged between two rocks at the brink of a small waterfall. The fact that the stream here started to cascade down into a ravine in a series of waterfalls bore not thinking about. In a daring and dashing mission, however, the three Musketeers got me out of my more than precarious situation, whereby Peter found himself in some very ‘deep water’ but managed to pull himself out. Phew !!

We then went further to have a look at the Mingha crossing, which looked like purgatory’s washing machine, so the retreat whistle sounded. On our way back to the hut, the creek of horrors was crossed without further ado and soon we were spreading our gear all over the hut to dry.

So the remainder of day seven, and all of day eight, was spent at Goat Pass hut, while around us the storm stormed, the rain lashed, the hut

shook, *the waterfalls grew, new waterfalls appeared, the new waterfalls grew, and the resident "New Idea" magazine (no kidding, someone had left another one) was perused.*

Thankfully, a copy of "English Short Stories of the 18th and 19th century" was also in the hut library. (Edgar Allen Poe while marooned in a hutmildly depressing) Meanwhile the food rationing programme had been successful. Some hidden depots had come to light, so a packet of spaghetti from Peter, and a chocolatey Christmas Log from Warren, plus bits and pieces to make surprise desserts. We even still had muesli bar rations each for the final day.

The rain had subsided somewhat by evening and stopped over night. On the morning of day nine we made our earliest start yet, 5:40 am, just in time for sunrise. It was cool, and big clouds were still sailing overhead, but it promised to be a beautiful day once more. All the creeks and rivers had come down to a manageable level, but we could still see where the water had been the day before – creepers! As the Mingha side of the track is the easier one, it took us just under 3 ½ hours of track and riverbed travel (with several new photo opportunities) to the main road, and even the Bealey river was easily crossed. While we waited in blazing sunshine at Greyney's Shelter for the bus to pick up Peter, we learnt from some people there that one hell of a storm had hit Arthurs Pass, Lewis Pass and surrounds, with the most rainfall in 24 hours in 14 years for Arthurs Pass, and large power poles having been toppled in 200 km/h winds in the Molesworth. And not even leaky building syndrome in the hut, amazing....

Alas, we farewelled Peter, and Warren and Craig went to climb Avalanche Peak in the afternoon, while I nursed my blisters. I was farewelled the morning of the following day (after a good dinner and good night's sleep at AP), with Craig leaving later on the Sunday, and Warren heading off for another 5 days into the mountains. But that is another story.....

Snowy & Hector Rivers, Jan 17-19

By Jean Garman

Four of us drove down to Otaki Forks on Friday evening and walked a wee way up the Waiotauru valley to camp near the old steam engines in

preparation for an early start the next day. The weather was stunning - calm and clear.

Luckily the weather was just the same the next morning when we bounced out of bed at around 6.00am, packed up and headed up the river. It was a very pleasant temperature which made things a little less painful when the water breached shorts level. Before long the swing bridge was sighted and we branched off up the Eastern Waiotauru River aka the Snowy. A little bit later we reached the 'deep pool'. This can be sidled on the true left but it's a bit desperate. Some times it is possible to walk chest deep through the middle but this wasn't one of those times so we hugged the true left side and my feet only came off the bottom once. Several more corners later it was time to visit the Snowy hut for morning tea. While not marked on maps this hut has a couple of bunks, an open fireplace and the holes in the floor have even been fixed. At this stage we hadn't gained much height over Otaki Forks, nor did we gain much height for quite a while after. A pleasant flat was spotted for lunch with an interesting array of bleached bones which provided entertainment as we got sculptural - can't help but feel some of the pieces were missing though. After lunch the gradient started to steepen and finally we were making some height gains. Not long after this the waterfalls were reached. The two biggest are easily climbed on their true rights (the first one can also be climbed on the true left). From here the gradient just kept getting steeper and steeper and we were considerably more in the sun so several rest stops were required in patches of shade to cool off. Eventually the way became narrow and slippery and we almost convinced ourselves that we had made a wrong choice in streams to follow until a horribly familiar pair of waterfalls each side of an unclimbable boulder came into view. At this stage things looked very familiar and it was off to grovel in the wet moss and slime on the true right of the true right waterfall. We had to play pass the pack which was when we found out just how much snack food Garry was carrying as his pack seemed to be twice the weight of everyone else's. The stream carried on narrow and slippery for a while then opened out into some amazing (semi vertical) meadows of alpine flowers. The water disappeared below scree slopes shortly there after so we all filled our bottles and dragged our weary bodies up the final affront. It was after 5.00pm now and a gentle breeze kept us from over heating. On reaching the saddle between Field and Hector peaks we looked around for pleasant camp spots and decided to just drop a little to the east and sleep in our bivy bags amongst the tussock. The views of the ranges were stunning and not a cloud was to be seen.



Hector River Campsite

After 11 hours walking we snacked out on crackers, cheese and pate before a big pasta brew followed by a home made steam pud and custard. Unfortunately by dessert we were pretty stuffed so Brian got to eat most of the pud for lunch over the next couple of days. We watched several groups admiring the view from the top of Field peak throughout the evening and figured that this was a sign that Kime hut was bursting at the seams. All snuggled up ready for sleep, I had my eyes down for no more than 15 min and when I looked up again all the ranges had disappeared under cloud – not a good sign. The cloud came over us in the night and my dreams of lying there admiring the stars were obliterated. Around 4.00am the cloud lost some of its cohesiveness and started to spit at us.

When it became light, there wasn't much of a view but at least it had stopped raining making packing up considerably more pleasant. *My pitiful pleas that we abandon all hope and head for home were soundly ignored* and we trudged up to the top of Hector in the murk and the wind. We set off down the Neill Winchcombe ridge with Garry on navigation until we dropped out of cloud as we scaled and descended endless precipitous lumps on the ridge. On reaching the shelter of some trees we had a break and then proceeded to scale and descend yet more endless precipitous lumps all the way to Neill. By now we were getting glimpses of the main ranges so the weather was on the improve for a while at least. We found the spur down to Neill Forks and headed down this (old blazed trail) until we hit 900m where it was time for lunch. Now those of us that had a hard weekend the preceding weekend coupled with the long day Saturday and not that great a nights sleep hatched a cunning plan to shortcut our route by taking a bearing off the ridge and dropping straight to where we hoped to find a campsite. Brian was put in charge of the bearing as it was on a bit of a diagonal and there weren't any spurs to follow and stuffing it up could have made life a bit unpleasant. The first 100m was a bit scrubby, the second 100m was pretty normal bush and then we hit a bit of a drop that stretched across the slope. With hindsight, it appeared this was a headwall of an old slip as below it there were widely spaced trees, loose rock and not much else. This made for quite quick travel as long as you didn't send too many loose rocks down on your companions and didn't loose control and tumble head over heels. As luck and good management would have it we dropped directly onto a great campsite and didn't even have to get our feet wet. It was all of 2.00pm after a massive 6 hour day so we set up camp and crawled into bed for a couple of hours kip before soup with hot garlic bread, another big pasta nosh and a gingernut, ginger, cream and chocolate combination for desert. It had started to drizzle occasionally at this stage but once again it wasn't till about 4.00am that the weather packed a sad and started to rain in earnest.

We were ready to go by about 7.00am. It was still raining and in the hour from getting up the river had risen further and was starting to discolour ever so slightly. We headed up the river for about 2min then all stood on top of a big rock, looked at what lay ahead and said in unison "doesn't look like a goer does it?" That decided we were left with no option but to take up plan B which was to retrace our steps of the previous day to Hector then exit by Kime etc. Luckily we now knew exactly how to

climb out of our campsite and soon were back up on Neill. At this stage it was raining steadily and windy with the occasional hideously strong blast. Memories of the precipitous nature of the Neill Winchcombe ridge didn't line up well with our current weather so we opted for the complicated plan C and started heading for Cone. This kept us in the bush which was a heap more pleasant than anything in the open. On Cone we rang Ivan who agreed to go for a bit of a drive and pick us up from Walls Whare. Transport arranged we headed off, having lunch in Cone saddle in light rain, then scooted on down to Walls Whare, arriving after about 7 hours walking. We had time to find what dry clothes we could in our packs and have a brew before Ivan turned up. Back to Palmy and Garry and I got to go home while Adam took Brian for a pleasant drive to Otaki Forks to retrieve his car. Not quite what was planned but a lot of interesting country and some rarely visited areas.

We were Garry Grayson, Adam Matich, Brian Webster (MTSC) and Jean Garman (MTSC/PNTMC)

Waiopahu Hut, Jan 25 by Elaine Herve

I was very surprised and pleased with the number of people interested on joining me for this trip. The nine people were Warren Wheeler, Lance Gray, Doug Strachan, Wara Teeranititankul, Duncan Hedderley, Pauline Knuckey, Barbara Mare, Judith Kidd and Christine Cheyne.

An early start and fine weather made it promising for a good day's tramping, which started at 8.30 with a short stretch of farmland. We set off at a fast pace reaching the second Ohau turn off in one hour. We slowed the pace a little, the many patches of mud and bog also ensured our progress was not straight forward. There are very few land marks along this track to help plot progress, or views to enjoy. The bush is regenerating well and has a lot of ferns and some bird life to enjoy.

At various stages Warren and Lance kept us entertained with a theme and variations composition. The theme was 'bog' sung to a wide variety of tunes. It had the desired affect of distracting us from the up hill.

Edwards Shelter is now marked as derelict and is not the most attractive construction ever seen, but still offers protection if caught in severe weather. The next place of interest is the old site of an earlier Waiopahu Hut, but not much to see here.



Lance turning his Back on Edward's Shelter

The new hut is 20 minutes further on. It is very flash and smart looking, no heating though. Christine ventured in to close the windows that had been left open, but no one else could brave taking off very muddy boots to take a closer look. It took us four hours from the road end.



Warren Arriving Late for the Group Photo

During the lunch stop it became clear some wanted to continue further and make a loop and others had done enough. Luckily we could split into two car loads. I headed back down with Duncan, Judith, Pauline and Barbara. *The trip back was much quieter without the Bog Singers* and was uneventful. Surprisingly we were only able to take half an hour off our uphill time. We waited for a while for the others, but decided to head home for a bath to ease sore muscles.

At this point I will hand you over to Doug who can tell you a little about the Gable End track.....



The Crew Minus Two



The Gable End Ridge

At the lunch spot outside Waiopahu Hut, we had ants in our pants. For some, this was literally the case. They sat on a red ants' nest. For others, it was simply an urge to get moving again. Elaine led half the group back down the ridge. The rest of us headed uphill, to the top of Waiopahu. We had a fair bit of gear in our packs this trip as we were aware that one week earlier a fatality occurred just 200m from Waiopahu Hut. No raincoat. We had intended to keep an eye out for Sheba, the missing dog, but had learned from other trampers that the dog was already found.

We carried on to Twin Peak where we had magnificent views, including of the ridge that branches off towards Te Matawai Hut.

About 45 mins after leaving Waiopahu Hut, we were at a point directly across from it. We could see the ridge we had come up, but Elaine and co. were out of sight beneath the canopy.

Compared with the Waiopahu Track that we came up, the Gable End track is more open. It isn't as muddy either. It makes for a bit of vantage, but it

also made it a long day. We got to the cars just after 6pm. According to researches, you should still be able to read this trip report without any problem. Fascinating isn't it? So long as the first and last letters are in the right position, you can read it.

Not the Tararua Tubing Trip 31 Jan – 1 Feb Tony Gates & Lance Gray

When is an official PNTMC club trip not a completed trip and so worthy of a report? Think of the number of trips you have seen on the trip-card that have gone to completely different destinations or have not reached the destination because of inclement weather. Does that disqualify your tramp? Definitely not – things did actually happen. Well does our trip qualify as a completed trip?

First, our packs were fully prepared and sitting at the rear of my car - removed from the boot. Second we were in the Walls Wharf car-park near the Waiohine River behind Greytown. We did not however manage to shoulder our packs – bulging with tubing gear as they were. This is where our adventure began and ended, rather quickly I suppose, but is it worthy of a trip report? Tony bent down to pick something up out of the front seat of my car and WHAMO he was writhing in agony with a slipped disc in his back – I'm piling it on here, sorry Tony – but he looked like he was in agony. He took a couple of Voltarin and lay down suggesting he'd be right in no time. Well an hour later we were driving to Masterton where my local knowledge (I am proud of my Masterton heritage) found the medical centre.

Tony took great delight in us stopping briefly in front of Masterton Funeral Services as I did a U-turn to park at the medical centre. Incidentally McDonalds is not 50 metres away – very convenient! Upon securing a late morning appointment we visited my folks for a cup of tea and a natter before returning to the medical centre for the examination and a prescription. By 2pm we were back home in Palmerston North on one of the more abbreviated official PNTMC club trips. So in the final wash-up, excuse the pun but it did rain in Palmy all weekend, this did constitute for statistical purposes a completed trip even if we did not actually step on the track!!

Stanfield Hut, Feb 8 **By Duncan Hedderley**

We were Martin, Derrith, Ilya and Susan Tollich, Amanda Simpson (from Dannevirke - at last, a meet-us-at-the-road-end plan which worked), Elaine Herve, Neil Campbell, Doug Strachan and Duncan Hedderley.

On a good day, the trip to Stanfield Hut - in along Holmes Ridge, back out down the stream - is very pleasant; a taste of the sort of things trampers do without being too hard. As we huddled in the shelter of Neil's car putting boots on, I looked at the Tollichs (who had phoned at the start of the week, saying they wanted to get into tramping and would this be suitable?) *and wondered what I'd got them into.*

The weather was not that bad - windy, steady but not heavy rain – just a let-down after Waitangi day. We did not stop long at any of the look-outs, and got to the hut just after 11, just before a heavier burst of rain. So we stayed a while, having lunch and bandaging blistered feet. We discussed how we might head back; but as Elaine observed, we had to start off down the river. So we did.

There was a bit more water in the stream than usual, but the rain had stopped and the sun came out. The Tollichs had got the hang of rock hopping and stream crossing by the time we reached the Holmes Ridge track, so we carried on, getting back to the cars at a respectable 2pm. Martin said it had been a blast; Amanda said she would be along to a club night.

First Aid & River Safety, Feb 15 **By Doug Strachan**

The Palmerston North contingent was: Mark Street & Garry Grayson (MTSC); Andrew Lynch & Doug Strachan (PNTMC).

Our 1st aid and river safety course was to be held at Otaki Forks. Driving down, it was obvious from the dirty, swollen rivers we saw that we wouldn't be going in any water (the following day, roads into P.N. were closed due to the one in 100yrs flooding). It was as cold as winter too. We arrived at Otaki Forks at 9:30, only to find that, due to the weather, the venue was now the Levin Police Station.

We had missed some of the 1st aid instruction, but there was a bit of a recap, and a chance to ask questions. We spent quite a while discussing

burns and hypothermia. Then we went to the Kimberley Reserve to put theory into practice. We were sent into the bush where people with injuries were strewn around. In groups, we approached each person and assessed their condition before applying the appropriate first aid. The first person we aided clearly had a compound fracture of the ulnus, and the bone was sticking out through the skin. "Wooo that's a NASTY injury!" I said. Immediately, I realised that would be the last thing you'd say to the injured party. "Oh, you might have fractured you arm, but don't worry, we know just want to do," I added reassuringly. We splintered it to a piece of rotten wood.

There were about 10 different scenarios, ranging from a head injury through to someone whose injury was all in his head. By the way, Mark does a mean simulated-asthma attack.

Now it was time for river safety. On land, we practiced how to support each other when crossing a river, and how to remove a pack quickly in the water, without losing it altogether. Then it was announced that we would repeat the exercises in the water. It seemed that, as no trees were floating downstream, it would be safe enough. A few sensible people practiced hypothermia avoidance by not going in the river. Andrew was the keenest out of everyone to brave the cold water, but he couldn't go in lest his plaster cast got soggy. Most people started pack-floating down the river, and having the instructors force them under water, simulating what the current pushing on a pack might do.

After that, we found the least unsuitable place to practice river crossing. Garry and I were in the same group of four. The current was strong, but we made it across the river. We crossed back a little farther downstream, but felt insecure and put our team into reverse. Someone on the bank said "wimps," and we changed back into first gear. We moved forward a few baby steps and got swept off our feet. We stayed linked, and kicked our way to the bank as a team. The young boy in our chain thought it was awesome fun. We changed into dry clothes, and headed home for a hot shower. A big thanks to the organisers for an informative and practical training session.

TODAY IN THE MARKETS

The following was submitted by Ian Harding (and accepted for inclusion as it does contain a reference to tramping.) Today in the markets:

Helium was up.
Feathers were down.
Paper was stationary.

Fluorescent tubing was dimmed in light trading.
 Knives went up sharply.
 Cows steered into a bull market.
 Pencils lost a few points.
 Hiking equipment was trailing.
 Elevators rose; escalators continued their slow decline.
 Weights were up in heavy trading.
 Light switches were off.
 Mining equipment hit rock bottom.
 Diapers remained unchanged.
 Shipping lanes stayed at an even keel.
 The market for raisins dried up.
 Coca Cola fizzled.
 Black & Decker stock inched up a bit.
 Balloon prices were inflated.
 Scott Tissue touched a new bottom.

Welcome to Tramping-physics.101

Humid air is lighter (less dense) than dry air. Newton pointed this out nearly 300yrs ago. You might think adding water vapour to air should make it heavier, but physics explains why this is not so. Avogadro gave us the following law of physics: equal volumes of gas at the same temperature and pressure will contain the same number of molecules, regardless of the size of the molecules. So, if you had 2 equal volumes of hydrogen and oxygen, each would contain the same number of molecules. This holds true if pressure and temperature are the same for both parcels of gas. The oxygen is heavier because a molecule of oxygen weighs 16X more than a molecule of hydrogen.

Now, let's think about the air around us. As you know, dry air is a mixture of gases, principally nitrogen (78%) and oxygen (21%), with traces of other gases. What happens if we add gaseous water (water vapour) to the air? Molecules are far apart in gas, so the water molecules would fill in the space in between the nitrogen and oxygen molecules, adding weight to the air, right? Wrong. Remember what Avogadro discovered: a given volume of air contains a given number of molecules, whatever gases are present (*ceteris paribus*). Therefore, if you add a molecule of H₂O, a molecule of another gas will have to leave. Now, a molecule of water is lighter than a molecule of nitrogen or oxygen. When the heavier molecule is displaced by the lighter water molecule, the air becomes lighter.

Yes, humid air is lighter, provided temperature and pressure are constant. Changing the temperature or pressure brings about more significant changes in air density than does changing its humidity. As air heats up, the molecules move more quickly and migrate out of the volume of air we're imagining, lowering air density. Just as cork floats on water, less dense air will move up through

denser/cooler surrounding air; e.g., a hot air balloon rises, and so would humid air (because we already established it's lighter). Also, warm air can hold more water vapour than cooler air, which would presumably further lower its density.

When you climb a mountain, the air gets cooler but, despite this, air density decreases. This is due to a decrease in pressure. On top of the mountain, there is less depth of air than there is at sea level. The molecules aren't being squashed together by so much weight of air, so there are less molecules in our imagined volume of air. In the Himalayas, the air is still 21% oxygen, but there is about 40% less of it, so trekkers struggle uphill. The low pressure has rarefied the air.

In theory, you will experience less drag tramping through humid air because the air you knock out of your way is lighter! However, with humid air you might over-heat because your sweat can't evaporate as easily. Hmm, I guess you'd get less oxygen too because some of it is displaced by water. Thought-provoking, isn't it?

Warm air would also create less drag, but again you might over-heat, and it would also contain less oxygen than cooler air.

At high altitude the thin air would also give less resistance to your forward motion, but you will puff and pant due to the lack of oxygen. When you get to camp, you will have to cook things for longer because the water boils at a lower temperature at high altitude. It's easier for molecules to escape from the liquid because there is less air pressing down on the surface of the liquid, preventing molecules from leaving. Also, combustion of your cooker fuel will be less complete, releasing less heat energy, because the burning process requires oxygen.

Conditions on Everest would be even worse if the mountain was in our Southern Alps instead of in the Himalayas. We are nearer the South Pole, and the atmosphere is thinner nearer the poles than at the Equator. Thus air pressure would be lower on Mt Everest if it were in NZ. Your blood would be a wee bit closer to its boiling point (in space, without a spacesuit, it would boil!) The air might be so rarefied that an oxygen-less ascent would be impossible.

You are now less dense than you were before you learned this, so rise out of your chair and head for the hills where any given cubic metre of air is, according to Wheeler et al. (2004), fresher. Ed.

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