



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING
& MOUNTAINEERING CLUB (INC)
P.O. Box 1217 Palmerston North

NEWSLETTER

11/77

Hon. Secretary:
Janet Maesson, 73-421
Membership Enquiries:
John Williams, 84-925
Newsletter Editor:
Kevin Pearce, ph. 83-467.

COMING EVENTS

ALL TRAMPING TRIPS LEAVE FROM THE SUPERSAVE CAR
PARK, FIZHERBERT AVE.

15th November Closing date for S.A.R. social Get-together,
Levin.

See details below, 25th November.

19th – 20th November WORK PARTY AT RANGI

Rangi is the Club's one and only hut. It is in the Western Ruahines near the village of Rangiwahia. Routine maintenance is urgently required so all good keen workers please turn out.

Foreman: Kevin Pearce, ph. 83-467
Grading: Easy
Cost: \$2.00
Depart: 6.00 a.m. Saturday

20th November RANGI DAY TRIP

A visit to our own beloved palatial mountain mansion which should be looking spick and span after the attention of the workers – gleaming brass door knobs etc.

Names to: Kevin Pearce, ph. 83-467
Grading: Easy
Cost: \$2.00
Depart: 7.00 a.m. Sunday.

24th November CLUB NIGHT – POT POURRI

(1) Search and Rescue – the role of volunteers, by Jim Neumann of the Palmerston North S.A.R. organization.

(2) Mini first aid.

(3) An informal discussion of the fate of Rangi Hut.

7.30 p.m. Thursday in the Society of Friends' Meeting Rooms, 227 College Street. All welcome.

SUPPER DUTIES: Heather Crabb, Julian Dalefield, Dawn Ellis.

25th November S.A.R GET - TOGETHER

The Horowhenua Search & Rescue Committee intend to have an end-of-year get-together for S.A.R personnel and especially invite all young ladies involved (men too, please). The function will take place at the Weraroa Domain Cricket Pavilion, Levin, beginning 8 p.m. Friday. Supper and beverages will be provided but bring your own spoon. Casual dress. Please give the \$2.00 function cost to Russ with your name by 15th Nov.

Names to: Russ Johnson, before 15 November ph. 87-777
Cost: \$2.00 for the function plus \$2.00 transport.
Depart: 7.15 p.m. Friday
Return: Late Friday night.

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26th – 27th November FULL TOKOMARU

A river trip beginning at the Mangahao No 3 dam and finishing at Horseshoe Bend.

Leader: Kevin Pearce, ph. 83-467
Grading: Medium
Cost: \$2.00 approx.
Depart: 6.00 a.m. Saturday

27th November LOWER TOKOMARU, HORSESHOE BEND.

A river trip which includes a few short swims.

Names to: John Carter, ph. 74-344
Grading: Easy
Cost: \$1.00 roughly
Depart: 7.00 a.m. Sunday

3rd – 4th December CHAMBERLAIN CREEK

A difficult trip down a waterfall and gory stream into the Ruamahanga gorge.

Leader: Kevin Pearce, ph. 83-467
Grading: F.E.
Cost: \$2.50 approx.
Depart: 6.00 a.m. Saturday

3rd – 4th December NGAPUKETURUA TARARUA CROSSING

One of the easier crossings of the Tararuas (Eketahuna to Shannon.)

Leader: Kevin Pearce, ph. 83-467
Grading: Medium
Cost: \$3.50 approx.
Depart: 6.00 a.m. Saturday

8th December COMMITTEE MEETING

At Peter Darragh's, 118 West Street, Feilding, beginning at 7.30 p.m. Contact John Carter for Transport (phone 74-344.)

10th – 11th December GRANDE ANNUAL DINNER

There will be three trips organized for this weekend, all of which will converge on our happy cottage on the tops.

(1) CHEFS & SCULLIONS

Chief Chef: Karyn Bishop, 84-925
Grading: Easy.
Cost: \$6.00 approx. (includes food.)
Depart: 7.00 a.m. Saturday.

(2) OROUA - RANGI

Leader: Trevor Bissell, 68-644
Grading: Fit
Cost: \$6.00 approx.
Depart: 7.00 a.m. Saturday.

(3) DINNING (sic) PARTY

Names to: Peter Darragh, Fldg. 5633.
Grading: Easy
Cost: \$6.00 approx.
Depart: 7.00 a.m. Saturday.

14 December CHRISTMAS PARTY AT THE SHERATON.

A firm booking has been made to wine, dine and dance at the Sheraton. Details from John.

Organiser: John Carter, ph. 74-344
Cost: \$10.00 per head
Assemble: ? p.m. Wednesday

17th December BURNS HUT

Take a break from the weekend routine and go tramping for a day. Maybe even have a swim on the way.

Names to: Trevor Bissell, 68-844
Grading: Easy
Cost: \$2.00
Depart: 6.00 a.m. Saturday.

17th – 18th December LOWER MANGAHAO – BABER SADDLE

A new trip for the Club in an untracked area of the Northern Tararuas.

Names to: Trevor Bissell, 68-844
Grading: F.E.
Cost: \$3.00
Depart: 6.00 a.m. Saturday.

NOTICES

1. RANGI HUT is nearing the end of its life and the question arises as to what is to be done (nothing, major repairs, replacement?) There will be an informal discussion concerning this matter next Club Night (24th November.)
2. FOUND
One watch in Kevin Pearce's car. Phone 83-467.
3. DEPARTURE OVERSEAS
John Carter, our Social Convenor, and Roy Wilson are to leave New Zealand early in the New Year to take up appointments in Christchurch, South Island. In fact so many people have been emigrating to the south lately that a sub branch of the P.N.T.M.C. will probably be formed in Christchurch. We wish John and Roy well for the future. Carol Nash has gone to pastures new. Good luck Carol.

PAST TRIPS

11th September TRIP TO MT TOKA

This was anticipated to be a bad weather trip, so the party – James Reeves, Jill and Kim Davies, Peter Darragh, Tony Mathews, Jan Simmons, Bryan Sissons (V.U.W.T.C.) Anne Flux and Carol Nash – was prepared with full storm gear for miserable conditions.

It began in the drizzle, across the turnip paddocks, up to a bush track, into snow, up to a trackless push and grunt through leatherwood – big whoppers that demanded overtrou and parkas with hoods for all humans; and then into the open – a sudden change brought about by clearing skies, peering sun and promising views. Near the top the snow began to firm up so that every step meant tiring breaking through, until a few steps from the Mt. Toka trig., it was possible to walk on top, towards the iced statue.

Lunchtime, so we dropped over the other side (Wairarapa side.) It was an obvious playfield of snow, that invited all sorts of ararsading, dorsalading, ventralading, dualading. Some indulged while others digested and chatted.

The day seemed to be warming up more, but it was time to go. The group split into two, some returning the way they came, the others continuing southward along the range to the ridge leading to Deerford track. (Kim Davies leading the way, dancing on top of the snow, and we heavier folks floundering behind scowling at his amusement.) The track had recently been cleared, enabling the group to run and sidle down, a 3' span on either side between the rows of leatherwood, reaching the farmland in no time. Some of the brawny males took off their shirts and bared their chests before continuing on cross country to return to the vehicles.

The end of a good fun Sunday.

24th – 25th September INTENDED GOLDEN CROWN RIDGE – IKAWATEA FORKS

This was a Friday night departure for the North-Eastern Ruahines through the Gwavas State Forest to Mangelton Road. A fly was set up for the evening sleep by the Ohara Stream off the roadside and enabled an early start the next morning. Weather conditions were bitter in exposed places, with wind and threatening rain. We walked onto the Golden Crown Station at 7.30 a.m., up the farmland and straight up a well sluiced track on Golden Crown Ridge. This intersected with the main Ruahine Range, heading south, again well tracked, deep with snow and easy travel contour wise. Lunch was at 11.30 a.m. at Aranga Hut, a quick break due to the cold and dampness. Floundering through swamps and snow necessitated wringing out saturated socks to warm feet up again.

From the hut we continued south-east, heading towards Piopio. Across broad flat tops land, then down into the bush, sidling below a ridge top. By this time it was early afternoon, and there was obviously not going to be enough daylight to reach Ikawatea Forks. Instead, it was unanimously decided to head north along the tops, then follow a ridge down which would ideally land us on the doorstep of Rockslide Biv. Our navigation was correct, but the Biv was marked wrongly – it was instead upstream of the Rockslide and on the true left of the river. A little shack in the bush (but well marked) full of canned vege., jellies, white spirits – you name it, they had cartons and bins strewn all round with it. So we set to work shifting, cleaning and organizing to make room for ourselves. Then wood gathering began for a successful blazing fire over which stews stewed and socks dried.

Next morning, 5.00 a.m., the sky was clear, but the snow falling. After reshifting all the forest service foods back into the Bivy, we crossed the river, snow falling thickly, and headed up the side of a 800' slip, bush bashing up a ridge, then heading north-east across the tops, experiencing that sensation of surprise that one has, on suddenly coming across a well poled track. And even greater shock on hitting a four wheel drive track. For lunch we left our route down another for 10 mins. To No Man's Hut where we had an excellent brew of coffee.

The remainder of the day was easy traveling, completing the circuit by coming down Golden Crown Ridge again.

15th – 16th October MIDDLE TARARUA CROSSING

The trip began as a party of three (Philip Budding, Gill Davies, Carol Nash) leaving on the 5.50 p.m. railcar to Masterton – the fourth member, Tim Short, appeared at Pahiatua. The plan was to spend Friday night at Mitre Flats Hut and leave early Saturday morning. This meant arriving at the Pines Roadend at about 10 p.m., flicking on torches, and stumbling along the track (ask Gill about her black eye) until reaching the hut at midnight.

Up at 5.30 a.m. the next day and away an hour later. A heavy frost had meant a cold sleep but a fine day to follow. We climbed up through the bush steadily but relaxed from there on, enjoying the views and fine weather – there was no snow to impede progress. Up Peggie's Peak, Mitre (unsuccessfully glissading down by the males), Brockett, Girdlestone, Pinnacles and to Dorset Ridge where we sheltered for lunch, tucked away from the cold wind. All appreciated the view: south to Hector, west to Carkeek Ridge, east to the Three Kings, and north over the Ruahines, Ruapehu, Egmont. As we ate lunch we watched two black dots (Trevor Bissell and Peter Darragh) appear over Girdlestone and rapidly continue on towards us.

Half an hour for lunch, then down into the bush towards Park Forks, following a compass bearing through erratically placed yellow discs. We dropped down to the river at about 4.00 p.m. then scouted round to find the ridge leading to Nicol's slightly upstream from the Forks. As we were about to leave to follow this up, Trevor, trailed by Peter, came scrambling down with shouts and leaps. They tagged onto us four with constant natter along our last effort for the day up to Nicol's Hut.

Sunday brought rain and wind, particularly on the exposed tops. We left the hut at

7.30 a.m. and headed along over Junction Knob and Shoulder Knob to Waitewaewae. Lunch was at Waitewaewae Hut with three Wellington trampers who were completing their Middle Crossing. From there progress was straightforward but long, as rivers were too full to cross, and there was no awaiting transport at Otaki Forks. Fortunately Trevor found a pair of running shoes. He set out for the nearest farm house, with us plodding along behind, so that we managed to catch the Northener home, (he chose a taxi driver who was most understanding about trampers) with its welcome meal and beer.

LABOUR WEEKEND TRIP

We departed for the Kaimanwas at 6.00 on Saturday morning in convoy, the fourth car tagging on at Waiouru. Such a means of travel tended to be rather breath holding for those in the little blue V.W. in the rear. Particularly at our final departure from the main highway when the white Toyota in the lead suddenly swung into an obscure track just at a bend in the road. This was the Pillars of Hercules track, our chosen point of access. Although a bad choice it proved to be interesting because of the inspection of the making of a 250' drive shaft for the Tongariro Power Scheme.

We finally left the car park in dribs and drabs at 11.00 a.m., straight up a bush ridge onto the Umukarikari Range. Once up above the bushline those in front rested in the sun, eating lunch, admiring the view, and wondering whether Peter and Tim had begun their snowcave up in the Ruapehu cloud. By 2.00 p.m. we were all together again, 9 having decided they would like to continue along the tops as it was so pleasant. The other 6 wandered along and dropped off a ridge into Waipakahi River just before the main ridge became a bushy saddle.

This bushy saddle proved to be a major undertaking for our gallant 9. Heavy snow had destroyed what was imagined to be an easy route, so that what should have taken less than two hours, took three. It wasn't till 5.00 p.m. that our weary 9 dribbled out, very torn, scratched, bleeding, hot thirsty and regretful.

However, they were soon cheerful: sun was lowering, the cloud had cleared, the tops were warm, the views were tremendous and the moon was $\frac{2}{3}$ full, pale in the sky. So our merry 9 began to console themselves with the happy thought of a moonlit tops amble. They forgot their weary woes, arose and continued cheerily on. Thirst was coolly quenched in a stream just before Umukarikari Peak, so the arduous slog was not long. From there (5,222') it was a gentle plod down (very well poled – white sticks with orange tips) the pale daylight turning to pale moonlight, and yonder appearance of the twinkling red lights of Turangi.

By 8.00 p.m. we reached Waipakahi River, and floundered through the swamp (disastrously for some) towards the hut lights. It had been the intention to find a paradise spot to set up our flies, but torch and moonlight weren't sufficient to realize this. Instead we landed outside a Lockwood hut which announced an altitude of 3,000' and was full of T.T.C. trampers. What better night could one wish for sleeping under the stars? So our gallant 9 dispersed into the darkness for a welcome night of their own.

Up and away at 7.30 next morning, the early risers ahead of the drabs. Greetings en-route down the Waipakahi River to all other Wellington and Wanganui trampers still breakfasting by their tents. And even a greeting to K. Pearce and H. Verve, who were wandering the other way and were most put out by the sudden appearance of rain as we came towards them, and by the fact their way was stopped so frequently to talk to oncoming

P.N.T.M.C. drabs, each reporting the same news (our gallant 9 had, by this stage, split into a prompt 3 and lazier 5 with 1 in the middle.)

By midday we had all rendezvoused with the other 6. Our 9, after formalities, set to work to make a home over the creek from the 6. It was an afternoon of sunbathing and chatter (there was one who stayed in pit and read, bearing abuse from the others.) Venison stew for tea, thanks to J. & J., and then a challenge to better the others' campfire – we couldn't match up to many years' experience, so enjoyed the heat from the 6s blaze.

On Monday we again dribbed and drabbed down the Waipakahi River towards Access 15, breaking camp in the drizzle and fleeting moments of sun. The narrow swampy valley gradually turned into broader river flats – like West Coast rivers and ridges opened out. The river was crossed countless times (we thanked fortune that it wasn't in flood or wasn't snow fed) to the point where the final crossing was wet instead of using the bridge. It was amusing to see the bank opposite crawling with army khaki as we waded over. And even more amusing to see them better our effort under command: wade across, then run and splash back. It was a thoroughly successful trip, enjoyed by all – thanks Kevin for leading it.

KAIMANAWAS – LABOUR WEEKEND

A short cut to Spain? A hardened I.C.B.M. silo? An H.G. Wells canon for moon shots? Carol had said there was a big hole with two bulldozers in the bottom. In fact the hole was prodigiously enormous. The bulldozers looked like matchbox toys. Two of Palmerston North's tallest buildings could have been stacked one upon the other without showing above ground, so deep was the hole. The hole was part of the Tongariro Power Scheme and we had missed the beginning of the track.

Gale force winds prevailed on the Desert Road but the wind was only moderate on the tops. In fact we enjoyed good weather the whole weekend – lots of sunshine and only a few snow flurries. The party split – the smaller group making a direct route over Urchin from the Pillars of Hercules to Waipakahi River. The larger group traversed Urchin and Umukarikari to the Head of the Waipakahi, the last bit by moonlight. On Sunday the larger group traveled downstream to the campsite of the smaller group while two members travelled upstream to the head of the river and then returned by traversing Umukarikari.

On Monday we travelled downstream to the end of the Number 15 Access Road. On the way we met a convoy of army trucks driving up the river bed – quite ecocatastrophic. Later the remnants of the party tramped through the river right by a road bridge in front of all the soldiers who were having lunch. Shortly after the soldiers marched through the river also. Not to be outdone our leader ordered Harry to go swimming in the icy waters but Harry refused and a Court Martial is now pending. (A firing squad has already been selected.)

Those taking part were: Kevin Pearce, John and Jennifer Stent, Carol Nash, Philip Budding, Gillian Wratt, Dawn Ellis, Anne Flux, Robyn Palmer, Colin Hoare, Sarah Godfrey, Stephen Moore, Harry Verwey, Janet Maesson, Peter Croad.

(It is understood that some of the above persons are to petition the committee to run a course in fire lighting. There would seem to be a good case for such an activity judging from the time dinner took to prepare.)