



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217
PALMERSTON NORTH
NEWSLETTER

July 1990

President	: Tony Gates	70-990
Membership Enquiries	: Tricia Eder	70-122
Gear Custodian	: Daryl Rowan	64-655
Newsletter Editors	The DRI Gang	w 504-652
Newsletter Distribution	: Peter Wiles	86-894

ENQUIRES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

Brad Owen	: Ph. 83-467
Daryl & Linda Rowan	: Ph. 64-655
Sue & Lawson Pither	: Ph. 73-033

ALL TRIPS LEAVE FROM THE FOODTOWN CAR PARK IN FERGUSON STREET.
IF YOU WANT TO GO ON A TRIP, PLEASE ADVISE THE LEADER AT LEAST THREE DAYS IN ADVANCE.
IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN AN ALTERNATIVE DAY OR WEEKEND TRIP, CONTACT THE LEADER OF
THE SCHEDULED TRIP.

Members are reminded that a charge for transport will be collected on the day of the trip, the amount depending on the distance traveled and vehicles used. Leaders should be able to give an estimate in advance.

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME

Please sign your name in the visitors book. There is a door fee of 30c to cover hall and supper expenses.

The PNTMC committee meets on the first Thursday of each month, at 436 College Street. Meetings are held for all Club (and intending) members on the last Thursday of each month and the Thursday two weeks prior to that evening. The venue is the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North, at 7:45 pm.

JULY 26th Club Night: "Recent Scientific Work on Blue Duck (Whio)"
Ian Henderson discusses an interesting North Island conservation issue.

AUGUST 2nd Committee Meeting

AUGUST 16 Club night - Snowcraft lecture.
This is for all you aspiring mountaineers; your chance to learn how to get to the top. Peter Wiles, Brad Owen and Tony Gates will present an overview of the course they are organising. Details will be discussed, equipment and slides will be shown. Non course participants are most welcome. Participants are advised to obtain a copy of the most recent edition of the Mountain Safety Council's "MOUNTAINCRAFT Manual". This can be done through the Club. More information to come.

AUGUST 30 Club Night - At ALP SPORTS (186 The Square)
This time an equipment buy at ALP SPORTS. A minimum discount of 15% is arranged, with some items discounted up to 25%. There is no obligation to buy, though it will be a good opportunity for a spend up. Videos, and a climbing wall for entertainment. Bring something for supper.

Coming ... The annual debate with MUAC and the quiz for the Trevor Bissell Memorial Trophy.
Events: Please consider supporting your Club. With your support the trophies for both these events will be returned to their rightful holders.

FORTCOMING RIPS

For further trips and much more - stay tuned here ...

July 21-22 Dundas Ridge & Dundas Hut – North Tararuas
Grade: Fit overnight.
Leader: Mary Craw (Phone 290-749).
Adequate equipment and experience required. Good views if the weather is clear ! (It wasn't last time Mary!)

July 21-22 Roaring Stag Lodge – North Tararuas
Grade: Easy overnight.
Leader: Dave Orbell (Phone 35-145)
Easy overnight trip into the Ruamahanga Valley.

July 22 Herepai Hut – North Tararuas
Grade: Medium day trip
Visit a nice hut, in the Mangatainoka Valley, with good views from nearby tops if the weather is fine and the possibility of climbing up onto snowy tops above the hut.

July 28-29 MUAC Hut – Mt. Ruapehu
Grade: Mixed grades (easy/medium/fit available)
Leader: Dave Hunt (Phone 63-853)
Open ski / tramp / climb trip based at MUAC's luxury Hut. Hut fees \$20/night. Leave either Friday night or Saturday morning. Book now as spaces in the hut are limited.

July 29th Holdsworth Lodge area
Grade: Medium.
Leader: Doug Strachan (ph 75-732)
A medium "doddle" into the Holdsworth Lodge area.

Aug 4-5 Syme Hut & Mt Taranaki
Grade: Fit / technical weekend (snow & ice climbing)
Leader: Jenni Madgwick (Phone 590-536)
Note: Participants must have crampons and ice axes sorted out before leaving Palmerston North.

Aug 4-5 Pouakai Ranges – Egmont National Park
Grade: Medium overnight
Leader: Ann Young (Phone 70-153)
Interesting area, with good views of Mt Taranaki when fine.
Botany of this area also interesting.

Aug 4-5 Hikurangi Range (North/western Ruahines)
Grade: Fit cross-country skiing
Leader: Tony Gates (Phone 79-009 (work hours))
Tramp into snow filled basins near Purity / Wooden Peg / Iron Peg area. Skies are essential.

Aug 5th Kahuterawa Valley
Grade: Easy family day trip
Leader: Gavin Rogerson (Phone 34-702)

Kahuterawa Valley /Old West Road area.

Aug 11-12

Makaretu/Ohau Valleys
Grade: Fit overnight.
Leader: Paul Scheyvens (Phone 74-138)
A fit trip into the heart of the Tararua Ranges.

Aug 18-19

SNOWCRAFT 1 (Club training trip – Mt Ruapehu)
Grade: Medium overnight
Leader: Peter Wiles (Phone 86-894)
This is the first of three snowcraft training trips to be run this winter. Attend the Club Night on 16th August for pre-trip instruction by Peter, Brad and Tony.

Aug 18th

Atene Skyline Walkway – Wanganui River Road.
Grade: Medium day
Leader: Doug Strachan (Phone 75-732)
Good views of the Wanganui River and adjacent areas. This is a round trip in more senses than one.

Aug 19th

Coppermine Creek – Woodville
Grade: Family day trip
Leader: Terry Coburn (Phone 86-391)
New track, historical mining remains, and large-scale erosion make this an interesting day trip.

Aug 25-26

Otaki Forks Area – Tararua Range
Grade: Fit overnight.
Leader: Leader required – phone Tony Gates if interested.
Venue depends on leader.

Aug 25/26

Kime Hut (from Otaki Forks)
Grade: Medium day
Leader: Tony Cameron (Phone 65-461)
See the snow on Mt Hector and the Tararua tops if the weather is fine!

Aug26th

Field's Hut (from Otaki Forks)
Grade: Easy day.
Leader: Alison McColl (Phone 89-326)
Walk up the upgraded track to a historic hut. Good views from Table Top, 10 mins above the hut, in good weather.

Trips Coming Up Next Month

- more on the SNOWCRAFT courses.
- more Tararua & Ruahine trips.

PRESIDENT'S EDITORIAL (by Tony Gates)

Life rolls on, and members of P.N.T.M.C. continue to tramp and climb. With a bountiful series of trip reports in this newsletter, readers may be able to understand the sorts of things we get up to. This newsletter also (attempts to) advertise future trips / events. Plenty of interesting Club trips are listed, usually two per weekend. The only way to find out what fun they really are, is to join in. Contact the leader, or the club president, if interested.

As for social occasions, P.N.T.M.C. enjoys really good Club evenings, with a variety of talks and events. Slide shows are probably the best method of public presentation of a holiday or expedition. They are certainly the Club's most common evening's show and seldom fail to please. The recent slide show and talk on Alaska, given by Shirley Heaphy, was a fine example of how a holiday can be remembered by its participants, and advertised to and enjoyed by others. More good shows to come. Club members (and friends) wishing to present such a show are welcome to do so (if we can fit them in). Doug Strachan, our resident expert on the topic, presents a few hints (below) on how to make your slide show memorable. An attentive audience is guaranteed.

(How about some written feedback with a few letters to the editor?)

Enjoy this newsletter, it is your last one if you are not paid up for 1990/91. Enjoy your tramping, and don't forget to go prepared for winter.

PHOTO COMPETITION RESULTS (by Tony Gates) .

John Cleland judged the 1990 Club Photo competition. Entries were of a high standard. John sorted out the slides of the evening in his usual informal manner, and member voting selected the winning entries of each section as follows:

Natural History Section:

Slides: 1st Australian Harrier Chicks John Barkla
2nd Urewera

Prints 1st Elephant Seal John Barkla
2nd Ferns John Barkla

Landscape Section:

Slides: 1st Glacier John Barkla
2nd Ruahines Tony Gates

Prints 1st Blimit Mary Crow
2nd Torres del Paine John Barkla

Topical Section:

Slides: 1st The Temples, Mt Kenya Doug Strachan
2nd Mark Tony Gates

Prints 1st Boating Liz Morrison
2nd Daniel Mary Crow

Need more be said! Congratulations to all the winners, and start collecting slides and prints for next year's competition.

HINTS ON GIVING A SLIDE SHOW (by Doug Strachan)

- 1: Pay attention to basics.
Your slides should be dust-free, the right way up in the magazine, and each picture should be recognisable. Extraneous light can spoil a good show; blackout curtains are essential.
- 2: Give an introduction.
Set the scene with background information, such as when a trip took place, who was on it etc. A good map, or slide of a map is useful in the introduction.
- 3: Show only the best.
Cull out any slides which are poorly exposed out-of-focus, or are repetitious. Too many slides of mountains can become tiresome, even for trampers. Pictures of people, huts, plants, etc give variety.
- 4: Don't show too many.
Aim for about 45 mins. With an introduction questions & comments you could show a maximum of 60 slides in an hour.
- 5: Put your audience in the picture.
Any anecdotes, or interesting points will go down well, but don't wander too far from the subject of each slide. Have a ready explanation for each slide & anticipate obvious questions, e.g. "how high is that mountain?".
- 6: Make sure the projector is focused.
With auto focusing projectors (such as the Club's), this is much less of a problem. Sometimes it is difficult for the person showing the slides to see the picture very well. If in doubt ask someone at the back.

I hope these points provide a useful checklist for your next slide showing.

WATCH YOUR EYES (by Peter Wiles)

It seems that even the experts can have problems with eye protection as evidenced by the people who were laid low with snow blindness on the recent successful Everest expedition.

Snow blindness is sunburn of the eye - a most distressing, painful and incapacitating condition for those who have had it – and will get it sometime – unless adequate precautions are taken. Like the skin, the eye is gradually and permanently damaged by exposure to ultraviolet radiation; most notably wavelengths known as UVB rays. Unlike snow blindness, you are very likely to be unaware of the damage until it is too late. The end result of this damage over 20 to 50 years of exposure, is the formation of cataracts – the lens in the eye becoming cloudy. For those people who have a family history of cataracts the risks are greater.

The recent results of long term measurements of ultraviolet radiation levels in the Swiss Alps, show that over recent years, the level of ultraviolet radiation has been increasing by about 1% per year. This is bad news for anyone spending time out doors but most especially for people on snow at high altitudes and extreme latitudes.

For us, there is more bad news. The problem in the Southern Hemisphere at latitudes of about 45° and higher, is the recent discovery that large cells of ozone depleted air can break off the polar vortex at high altitude over the polar regions and drift over more northerly latitudes. One such cell has been recorded to pass over southern New Zealand in mid December a few years ago. During such events, there can be increases in ultraviolet rays by as much as 20- 30% for a few days. There is no way of knowing in advance when this will happen again. Spring and early summer are the most at risk times of the year.

Use the best eye protection you can afford to buy – try to avoid taking your chances. Filters are recommended which will remove at least 99% of UVB, 60% of UVA and anything from 20 to 97% of visible rays. Do not forget reflected rays off surfaces.

Use zinc cream on exposed skin. Could people who have found a good brand of zinc cream let us know? (One that does not go rock hard in cold weather for a start. Does anyone have a recipe to make their own?)

Material extracted from US FDA Consumer Dec 89 -Jan 1990 and other sources.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Reeves Contractors, whose application to log the Aorangi Block was not approved by the Rangitikei District Council, have now lodged an appeal against this decision.

Peter Wiles and Lance Broad will be co-ordinating a submission to the Planning Appeal Tribunal on behalf of the club. Help from any other club members who have experience with the planning legislation would be appreciated. (Phone Peter at 86-894)

FMC BULLETINS

Calling all you budding authors, the Federated Mountain Club's Bulletin Editor would like to hear from you urgently! Contributions of up to 1200 words welcome. See the June 1990 Bulletin (No 102) for details. If you don't have a copy of the latest FMC Bulletin ask Peter Wiles for your free copy.

1991 CALENDAR ORDERS

1991 Alpine and Antarctic Calendars may now be ordered through the Club. Contact Peter Wiles, or any committee member for details. Orders close in about two months.

QUOTABLE QUOTES (Please send more ... ed)

"leatherwood oooh massage."

M. Hollenstein.

"tramping is supposed to be enjoyable"

T. Gates.

(while stumbling in shin deep mud, amidst leatherwood and Spaniard grass, in a storm, tired and hungry)

"I'm going nowhere fast"

T. Eder.

(knee deep in snow, attempting to climb a steep hill, freezing cold, mitts blown away and lost)

"If there are no famous hills then nothing more need be said; but since there are they must be visited."
(ancient Chinese proverb)

TRIP REPORTS

To ensure inclusion in the next newsletter, please forward trip reports to any committee member (or, post to PO Box 1217 Palmerston North) before the first Friday of the month. Trip reports are a valuable record of the Club's activities. They should be concise, describe of track & hut conditions, give approximate travel times for the conditions experienced.

Winter Southern Crossing (2-4 June) by Brad Owen

The rotten forecast and the overnight rain didn't deter seven of us leaving the Foodtown carpark for Otaki. At the road-end we met up with Tony and Christine, who had spent the night tenting in a puddle. Daniel returned to Palmy, with promises of afresh bread delivery on Sunday night.

DOC are gradually upgrading the track to Fields Hut to highway status, and in spite of recent rain it was as mud-free as I've ever seen it. An early lunch at Fields and then that steady upward plod over Dennon, the steep bit on to Bridge Peak, and finally the wander across the plateau to Kime Hut. Kime has no fire and it can be a pretty chilly refuge, so we piled on all our clothes and spent the next few hours happily steaming away.

Now, I haven't done much tramping for a year or three and I want to tell you that the Club has come on heaps in the cooking league – it must be the continental influence. 'Real trampers' used to exist on surprise peas floating in a turgid morass of TVP, and if it was a festive occasion the slops would get livened up with a dash of Maggi soup. Not any more – we dined on a wide variety of fresh vegetables, simmered in wine, a subtle mixture of pasta, even some genuine meat!

All washed down with some funny herbal tea, coffee, and liqueurs (which I was informed had been distilled in Marcel's bath). I have resolved to crank up my gastric juices and do some more tramping. But I am digressing; let me get back to the job of reporting this trip. While lying in my sleeping bag trying to get motivated to put on Saturday's damp clothing I drifted back down memory lane and realised that my first Southern Crossing had been made twenty years ago. When I went outside that same old magnificent view was there again – the inside of a cloud going past at about one hundred kilometres an hour.

Off we lurched, stopping only on the summit of Mt Hector for a team photo. We all clung to the cross on top so that we could stay in one cohesive group. Then, over the Beehives like a swarm of staggering drones, around the Dress Circle to Alpha, and down to the hut. A fire this time, and another fine feast. The bread delivery service woke us up in the middle of the night.

In the morning we sent Tony back to Kime Hut to look for Mick's galoshes. We calmed his doubts by pointing out that the wind would now be behind him, and he proved us right by halving our time to Otaki Forks. The rest of us went down to Kaitoke in improving weather via Marchant Ridge. Mary had organised things so well that we were even able to get back home without hitch-hiking, or sitting on each other's laps, as in some previous crossings.

We were: Mary Craw, Tony Gates, Christine Mahoney, Mick Leyland, Brian Lawrence, Claire Binney, Sue Hoskins, Marcel Hollenstein, Tricia Eder, Daniel Schupbach, Brad Owen, & Kathy Craw.

Maharahara (10th June) by Tony Cameron

By a series of co-incidences our leader found himself taking two different Club parties to the same destination on the same day. We joined forces at Ashhurst, and proceeded to the Opawe Road, stopping by the airstrip on the Coombes farm. Greetings were exchanged, and off we went.

The tramp began by wading through deep mud, thanks to milling cattle. Then it was up a series of grassy slopes until the Opawe Hut, on the bushline, was reached. After a refreshment pause, the real work began. At 600 metres we were crunching through patches of snow, and before long it was everywhere, but not deep enough to be a hindrance.

Good progress was made until two girls, who shall not go unnamed, got a bit ahead of the male contingent and took up a perfect attack position above us. We were badly outgunned and effective retaliation was hopeless. When their ammunition ran out we stumbled on, defeated but swearing revenge.

The summit was reached about 2½ hours after leaving the carpark. It was cold. Cloud as usual obliterated the view, and our stop on the top was short. So back down the track we slithered and slipped, down to the comfort of the wet dripping bush for a rather abbreviated lunch stop. Then, lo, the sun came out, the plains were revealed below us, and all around the snow and bush glistened in the hard strong light and dense black shadows.

Another stop at Opawe Hut then down to the carpark. The hut is still serviceable, but some idiot has wrecked the loo. Oh yes, our revenge. The offenders, ever alert, picked a perfect defensive position and got out virtually unscathed. It wasn't our day!

Dramatis Personae:

PNTMC: Monica Cantwell, Joan O'Neill, Gavin Rogerson, Tony Cameron (leader)

Wanganui Tramping Club: David Scoular, John Lythgoe, Denis Rainforth and two children, Brenda Baxter, Ken Howie, A.N. Other, and the two snowfight tacticians Marjie Hurley and Rosie Rawlinson.

Rangi Hut Round Trip (17th June) by Mick Leyland

Ruapehu basked in the pink morning light, saluting the eyes of early morning travellers who were soon to face a cloud-covered Ruahine Range. From the car park we went up the track a little south of the main route to Rangi Hut.

Vast amounts of snow and mist were a feature, however on reaching Mangahua it started to clear. Some fine wintry views were obtained on the way down to Rangi Hut, where we stopped for a much needed cup of tea. Snow had made the tramp harder than I expected. Looking at the tired faces of my fellow trampers I wondered if they like me thought it had been a bad dream. But their effort had made this a classic trip.

Seven made the trip: Tony Cameron, Trish Eder, Susan Orme, Mick Leyland, Joan O'Neill, Stuart Boyd, & Monica Cantwell.

Mt Egmont (16-17th June) by John Barkla

Round Ngaruahoe had lost its appeal. Perhaps the heavy snowfalls were to blame. Not to be put off, we motored up to Taranaki, and the Park boundary on the West. A couple of hours walk through the tall forest saw us at Kahui Hut, one of the Park's more rustic (i.e. with rats) huts. Tantalising glimpses of the upper slopes prompted a mid-afternoon stroll into the alpine scrub and snow.

Some doubts about the weather on Sunday lost us an hour. Climbing into the Okahu Gorge we were greeted by a shower of falling icicles, and lots of sunshine. Cramponing conditions were good all the way to the crater entrance, guarded by the sastrugi-laden 'Sisters'. A hurried lunch on the summit gave precious little time to appreciate the magnificent view. An hour's glissading had us most of the way back to the hut, and a welcome change to gumboots for the way back to the car.

A nice variation to a familiar climb.

We were: Marilyn Barnard and John Barkla.

Midwinter dinner at Sunrise Hut (June 23-24th) by Trish Eder

Menu Entree:	Smoked oysters. Devils on Horseback (hard to get them all way up there too!)
Main Course:	Stir fry Vegetables, including: broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, cabbage, capsicum, baby corn, water chestnuts, pineapple & bean sprouts; flavoured with onion, garlic, & green ginger.
Meats including:	Chicken, Steak, Pork pieces.
Dessert:	Trifle. Sherry & cream ginger nuts. Authentic Banana Swiss Roll.
Topped by:	Real coffee. After Dinner Mints.

These were the culinary delights which we all provided and shared. A feast appropriate to celebrate Midwinter. Holly was hung to give a festive air. Snow was on the ground, and more fell overnight.

Those who shared this event were: Stuart, Terry, Louise, Arthur, Lis, Marcel, Jenni, Elisabeth, and Tricia.

Waipawa Saddle to Armstrong Saddle (24th June) by Peter Wiles

The weather forecast looked good for Sunday, so as arranged, I gave Lance a ring on Saturday evening to organize the details for a day trip to Sunrise Hut and hopefully meet up with the weekend group. We left at 7am for Wakarara Road. While on the way, we decided to do a longer trip by making a loop by going up the Waipawa valley and long the tops to Armstrong Saddle; calling in at Sunrise before descending back to the road.

Travelling up the Waipawa, after we had got clear of the gorge, was rather pleasant in the winter sunshine. At the start of the track through the scrub, we stopped for a drink and a snack to eat. As we set off to Waipawa Saddle, a party of at least 10 came down from Waikamaka Hut. Once we got to the Saddle we were exposed to the full force of the south westerly wind. We put on a few more clothes and headed up towards the ridge tops. After gaining a further 100m, the snow, which we had been travelling through for some time with little effort, became hard and very icy on the wind swept southerly and westerly slopes.

Once on the tops, balance was a real problem on even nearly flat ground in the wind. Unfortunately the ridge narrows and climbs rather steeply towards the summit of Te Atuaoparapara. Without crampons, travel was slow and rather tricky. We both thought of giving up, but the thought of going back down the icy slopes did not appeal; nor were we sure where the half-way point was. We continued, being forced out onto the very icy south-westerly side cutting and kicking steps. Eventually we could hear the trig up ahead whistling in the wind. After the trig, the travelling was much better on a broad and gently sloping ridge. Beyond this there seemed to quite a long way to go before reaching Armstrong Saddle. The ridge narrowed and steepend, but this time the northern slopes were covered with easy powdered snow.

Once clear of the worst of the wind and the snow, we stopped for lunch at about 2pm. Then on again – up again and down to Armstrong Saddle. There were none of our group at the hut at 3 in the afternoon, so after a short break we headed down the track. We reached the car shortly after 4pm, and headed home rather tired out, hungry and thirsty after what seemed like a 7 hour long burst of activity.

Peter Wiles and Lance Broad

"Confessions of a Maniac" (July 7-8) by one of "them"
(I didn't realize we had any in this Club. – ed.)

"There is some smoky corner which through poverty, passes for a dwelling place, a workman wakes from his sleep; all night he has been dreaming of a pair of boots. ..."

Fedor Dostoevsky, "Poor Folk", 1845 (and ex the Guardian Weekly 10/6/90.)

With such thoughts in mind, I'm sure Marcel was just wishing for his ski boots. I mean, we had floundered about for some two hours on Saturday in the snow, in doubtful conditions, and now we had to return to the car by the same route. A skier's dream, the Hikurangi Range, on a chilly July weekend. But only one trip member was sensible (stupid? ed.) enough? to carry skis. It was a bit of a fight over the tops, then a short downhill bit to McKinnon Hut - (it's not really a "poverty" type dwelling). Unfortunately, with all that fantastic snow about, only one member could enjoy it to the full.

So on Sunday, we (attempted to) wear off the massive gluttony that was Saturday's dinner. In a word, grotty conditions. Thick mist caused a minor team separation - (got cold fingers eh - Mick), and saw all of us wishing for warmer climes. Brrrrr. Visibility was not much more than 25m, and ice began to build up where we were wet. Definitely we needed crampons, ice axe, mega - warm clothes, fitness, map, compass, knowledge, good food (no problems on that one for us), and those elusive skis. Essential when the snow gets to knee deep - ask Tony why!

Dreaming of the warm dry boots. The tussock tops of the Hikurangi Range can really lay it on when that sou-westerly blows. But we survived. The descent was I recall, the steepest in the Ruahines. The slip to one side was vertical for a bit. We crossed the river in the cage – a method not recommended solo. We watched a stag grazing up river, had a brew, then went home. That's all. When's the next trip?

Maniac's were: T Eder, D Hunt, M Leyland, T Gates, M Hollenstein and D Sharp.

THE THOUSAND MOUNTAINS SHINING

From "Hawk over Bowen Peak-" by Charles Brasch.

Beneath, his province, he sees
Earth in its first likeness;
Out of the maze of valleys
The thousand mountains shining,
Lifting their rock and snow
Into upper air, ocean of light
And fountain of undying day