



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217
PALMERSTON NORTH
NEWSLETTER

April 1991 Edition

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ENQUIRES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

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ALL TRIPS LEAVE FROM THE FOODTOWN CAR PARK IN FERGUSSON 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 which includes supper.

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.

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME

April 25 Phil Cawley, of 'Ration Packs', Marton, will be talking about his style of tramping food. There is the possibly of free food samples available. These packs are ideal for outdoor activities and civil defence emergencies etc. 'Ration Packs' might be the greatest thing since sliced bread.

May 16 DAVE BARKER VOLCANOES OF ECQUADOR
Climbing "CHIMBOROZO", the highest mountain in the world.

May 30 PNTMC potpourri of talks of recent trips – more from Stewart Island is rumoured, and other areas (Easter trips).

June 13 The annual photographic competition. Rules will be published next newsletter. Watch this space and get snapping!

TRIP LIST APRIL

APRIL 20/21 KAWEKAS, Fit, Te Puke – Venison Tops, Leader: Tony Gates Ph 70-990

APRIL 25 (ANZAC DAY) Club evening

APRIL 25 (ANZAC DAY) RUAHINES, Easy, Takapari Road A Frame Hut,

Leader: Kevin Pearce Ph 70-217

APRIL 27/28 RUAHINES, Medium, Hikurangi Range Tussock Tops, Leader: Claire Binnie Ph 552-730
Easy (Sunday) Mangaone Walkway, Leader: Margaret Riordon Ph 67-460

MAY 4/5 TONGARIRO, Medium, Ketetahi hot springs, Leader: Mary Craw Ph 290-749

MAY 11/12 TARARUAS, Easy, Mitre Flats, Leader: Alison McColl Ph 89-326
Easy medium (Sunday) Mitre Flats, Leader: Tricia Eder Ph 70-122

MAY 16 Club evening

MAY 18 Easy (Sat) Rimutaka Walkway Cross Creek, Leader: Sue & Lawson Pither Ph 73-033

MAY 18 &/or 19 RUAHINES, Medium, Oroua – Iron Gates, Leader: Brad Owen Ph 83-467

MAY 25/26 RUAHINES, Medium, Keretaki – Maharahara, Leader: Mick Leyland Ph 83-183

MAY 30 Club evening

Note change of plan:

Liz Morrison's day trip on 26 May now rescheduled for Saturday 8 June instead.

EDITORIAL

Travers Moffitt recently presented an excellent talk to P.N.T.M.C. He had no props, but kept the audience enthralled with tales of tramping in the Ruahines. His company, WILD TRACK ADVENTURE TOURS, takes guided tramps into the Oroua Valley, and provides a different perspective to our club style of tramps. Other club evenings to be held in future are surely to be every bit as interesting.

We are not in a commercial business here, but I would like to mention a shop new to New Zealand that has aroused much interest recently. KATMANDU is an Australian shop that specialises in outdoor equipment, and it aims to provide the best deals around. They are keen to do business by mail. Tony has further information.

It's getting pretty cold now, I even saw snow on Dundas Ridge today (April 9). Despite this, there are plenty of good trips planned, so contact the listed trip leader if you want to join in. And don't forget, you faithful leaders, to bring your ideas of where you want to tramp, to 57 Fairs Rd after dinner on 18 April. Also, to all you leaders of previous trips, your editor expects a trip report if you haven't already done so (please).

There was a tragic accident recently in the Southern Alps close to where we were Tramping. It served to rudely remind me of just how close we may be to an accident at almost any time. One must never forget this. Always, always take care, and never go ill prepared.

This newsletter lists several examples of the sort of trips we have done during the previous couple of months, the sort of variety of trips that can be expected for the ensuing next few months. It's a bumper edition here, so read on.

NOTICES

Club Officers: At the AGM, the following were endorsed as officers and committee members:

Patron and Auditor:	Lawson Pither
President:	Tony Gates
Vice President:	Yet to be filled
Secretary:	Brad Owen
Treasurer:	Peter Wiles
Committee:	Mary Craw
	Monica Cantwell
	Dave Orbell
	Doug Strachan
	Tricia Eder
	Mike Johns
	Mick Leyland

Subscriptions: The AGM resolved to maintain the subscription rates at their existing level. They are now due for the 91/92 year and are still the bargain value of \$20 ordinary members and \$25 for family members. Payments at these rates should be paid to the treasurer as soon as possible. Early payment assists the club's cash flow.

New Trip card It is proposed to hold a trip programme planning session at Tricia's place on 18th April starting at 7 .00 pm. Think of some places you might be interested in going to over the winter and spring. Let us know – or come along and we might be able to sort something out.

Leader contact It is very tempting for a day trip to make a spur of the moment decision to go or not – especially if the weather looks good. Ringing up late on Friday evening or on Saturday is not really on for arranging a Sunday day trip. The leader needs to be able to have the flexibility to juggle vehicles, or if there is an apparent lack of interest, to pursue other arrangements for the weekend. So folks – give the leader a fair go – 2 / 3 days notice, please.

Navigation: Map Reading Course

Q.E.C. Continuing Education

Basic introductory Course to map reading and compass work. Four night sessions of 2 hours duration and 1 3-hour day session for practical application. Ideal for new trampers or those who want to learn navigational skills.

Courses start: 30 May (a day course)
 24 September (night course)

Details from Queen Elizabeth College, Continuing Education.

TRIP REPORTS

CAVING AT MAHOENUI 8-10 MARCH BY STEVE GLASGOW

It seems few PNTMC wish to go caving these days. Mark Bown had deterred, most with the last caving trip to Makuri. Never mind, I had convinced our esteemed President that he should taste the darker side of outdoor (or is that indoor?) recreation with some M.S.G. and other interested people. Three carloads total.

We arrived at the Taranaki Caving Club Hut after 11.00 pm. It is a converted farmhouse with plenty of bunks, gas cooking, electric lighting, wet-back, and resident pigs in the backyard.

Up before 7.30 am (that's early for cavers), and ready to enter the cave by 9.30 after some difficulty locating the entrance. The intended cave was named "**RIMU-TOGY**", but we popped into the nearby "**KIWI CAVE**" for a look-see. It was known to be about 50 m long, with some pretties (cavers slang for stalagmites, stalactites, flowstones, etc). Outside the cave we waited for Bob and Vaughan to exit, and waited and waited. Jean popped back in and came back with the news that they had disappeared! I suspected where they might be, so re-entered and climbed into some upper level passages near the cave end. Sure enough, I found the two of them grovelling around in a small grotty passage – a taste of things to come. Outside, Tony was most impressed with the muddiness of our overalls. For some reason, he was keen to similarly daub his overalls.

We finally entered **RIMU-TOGY**. A little crawling, wriggling, and soon we were in a nice walking passage with lots of pretties and nice white walls. Progress, slowed when we began probing into some side passages. Most of these rejoin the main passage at a different point, or simply choke off shortly after you enter them. A lot of fun was had climbing into such passages, and exploring around. One side passage involved crawling on hands and knees (and bellies!) in a little stream, then confronting a split in the cave. One passage was dry, and a stream emerged from the other. This one was too cold and wet to continue after 20 m, so the other passage was looked at. Some 150 metres of grovelling and squeezing later, it ended, so we had to reverse. Some further parts of this side passage were explored before we continued on in the main cave. Presently, we arrived at a deep pool which I had warned the others of. Three of us managed to bridge the walls and avoid the wetting, but Bob decided to swim it. He found the water only chest high, but others were less fortunate, finding the water up to their necks and above! The lunch spot made all our tribulations worthwhile, as we sat at a cave exit in the middle of a cliff overlooking a sun-soaked bushy valley. The cave stream plunged spectacularly 20 metres vertically down in the sunshine, a most impressive sight. Carrying on, another exit was encountered that Vaughan and Catherine used, while the rest of us wombled on. The passage thankfully was dry, with much rockfall, then a small chamber at a dead end. Within this are incredibly delicate formations called gypsum flowers. These are composed of CaSO₄ crystals which emerge from the walls and twist around to form delicate and amazing shapes. Retracing our steps, we exited into the sunshine up a slippery slope where a shaft of sunshine illuminated the cave in "Indiana Jones" style. The exit hole was about one normal person diameter! TUG (time underground) 5.5 hrs.

The next day, we went to "SKYLINE" cave, with Vaughan leading us into a new entrance. A muddy wriggle, some crawling, then into a walking passage. Plenty of prospects for exploring cracks, holes, and side passages, so progress through the main passage was rather slow. Some of Steve's comments are unprintable here in such a respectable newsletter, sorry Steve! We had lunch in a cavern from which an exit is visible. Much cave remained, so we continued following the stream to its end. Some of the party found .out where that was, and learned what a sump was (a dead end) Shortly after, we admired "**THE OGRES MOUTH**", so named because of the stalactite-stalagmite teeth, each about 200 mm long, and in a very tidy formation. Some doubts were held as to which orifice it really was after someone farted! Eventually, a point was reached where 'you can exit and sit in the sun, or continue downstream about 100 m, where the cave divides into a number of exits. We found lots of pretties there, then Tony and Bob wandered down a tight passage (and got a little lost) ! before exiting. TUG 5 hours.

A very enjoyable weekend's caving. Pity not more PNTMC members were interested this time. The image of grovelling in small, dark, muddy passages is not always correct. Tony even likened some sections to boulder hopping on some tramps.

We were; Steve Glasgow, Jenny McCarthy, Catherine McCarthy, Tony Gates, Vaughan Keesing, Andy Pretious, Yvette Cottam, Jean Garman.

MAKARORO RIVER 23/24 February

By Friday the number of people wishing to follow William Colenso's route to the crest of the Ruahine Range has diminished to two; ourselves. In order to travel quickly, we did two day trips in excellent weather conditions.

On Saturday, we tramped up the Makaroro River from Yeoman's mill to Colenso Spur. Colenso's Track has been recently re-cut, and the memorial cairn is now easy to find. After a steep climb, we reached the ridge crest and had excellent views of the Ruahine Range, the Tongariro volcanoes as well as Hawkes Bay. We descended along the same route to camp out at Yeoman's mill.

On Sunday, we climbed the track onto the southern end of Parks Peak ridge. After lunch on one of a series of rocky knolls we descended a poorly marked and somewhat overgrown track to Barlow Hut. There was considerable evidence of deer (Marcel & Tony please note) in the scrub / forest margin on the higher spurs. After a very steep descent through degraded forest we reached the riverbed and turned downstream to the car.

Arthur & Lis Todd

16 -17 March GLACIER INSTRUCTION WEEKEND

We were the only people at the Turoa carpark and it was an excellent day. After a rest at the top of the second chairlift, we completed the final 250 m of height gain required before traversing over to the bottom of the Mangaehuehu Glacier. Conditions were basically the same as they were 3 weeks before when I made a trip to check the area out.

After a well earned lunch, it was time to organise the tent sites. We found a couple of very serviceable flat spots close to each other – a few metres below the bottom of the ice, about halfway across the valley. Then it was time to put our crampons on and get to grips with what we were here for – glacier travel. We soon got onto a rather cravassed area – sufficiently so that we had to back-track a bit to continue upwards. We found a reasonable spot to try climbing up the side of a serac and to use the prussic slings. We tried out ice screw anchors and pulley extraction methods.

Having exhausted most of our options at this spot, we headed up the glacier to the ridge crest where we then scrambled along the ridge to Girdlestone. We used the rope to belay some of the initial parts of the ridge. The afternoon cloud obscured most of the view. We got back to our tents by about 6 pm. After dinner the cloud layer gradually descended and pulled back from the mountain.

With no wind, there was a good freeze during the night. We ignored the changeover to regular time, so we were away at about 7.30 am. We headed up the glacier again, but this time headed over to the western side. We ventured in and around some further cravassed areas. In so going we found, about half way up the glacier, what would have been an ideal crevasse for the previous afternoon's activities. We ignored the possibilities here and continued upwards, cramponing on moderately steep and excellent snow. At the top of the glacier under Tahurangi, we reached the rock ridge, rearranged our gear before scrambling up to the summit.

After a rest and some time to soak in the view, we refastened our crampons and headed into the crater. A long walk brought us to the snow face on the Te Heu Heu ridge which defines the northern margin of the plateau. We all seemed to have sore feet by this stage.

Derrick and I persevered up the snow / ice slope which was in excellent condition and which reaches nearly 60° for about 10 –15m. The ice was good enough to provide a solid hold on an icescrew and also a dubeck. The ankles had to take quite a bit of strain on this slope. The iceaxe blades, with a good solid swing, bit in about one third to half their length. Having got to the top of the slope, it seemed logical to complete the extra hop to the summit of Te Heu Heu.

Time was moving on, so we did not waste time on the return. We descended the ice slope at the eastern end, where perhaps it wasn't quite as severe but the run-out still good. Without belaying the descent, quite a lot of mental and physical effort was consumed in the process. Once at the bottom and back into the sun, we had a quick lunch before heading off across the plateau to catch up with the others. Fortunately, the odd patch of afternoon cloud" gave us some respite from the sun. Near the bottom of Dome, Doug found a billy partly buried in the snow. He wondered whether it was part of the collection of the soldiers' gear which had been blown around the area?

Once we reached the crater rim adjacent Tahurangi, we rejoined the others and plunged down the snow in dense cloud. We reached our base, had a rest / drink / eat and packed up. Then it was off down to the car park, and home.

CYCLE TRIP FEB 23 by Sally Hewson

Intrepid cyclists Trish Eder, Jenny Hoskins, Pricilla, and maggot-brained Sally Hewson braved howling gales and lunatic truck drivers on their assault on North Range Road. We cycled through the Gorge to Ballance, then turned onto the gravel road that winds its way up and down (but mostly up) to North Range Road. We admired the views of Woodville and Ashhurst from a spot sheltered from the wind whilst stopping for some sustenance. Luckily the rain held off. Many bends and gates later, we emerged at the top of the Pahiatua Track, anticipating a good blat down. The wind was against us however, so we ground our way down back to P. N. and found a dairy to replace our lost calories.

DIGGERS HUT REVISITED (TOO MUCH FOOD) MARCH 22-24

It was a sprint over the Frank Arbons farm to Diggers Hut, then an hour or so to admire the sunset and the majestic Rimus bathed in evening light. Very dry. The popular TV show "THE SIMPSONS" was sorely missed, never mind, some real life families are just as good aren't they Mick! A large dinner. The hut log book is almost a diary by Marcel.

Saturday dawned brilliantly fine as expected. We each tramped solo to have a look about, and to enjoy off track tramping and hunting.

Jane was in only for the day walk, must have been too much food!

The Makawakawa is a good area to get to know, with interesting botany differentiated into very definite altitudinal zones. Some vegetation provides easy and enjoyable tramping, whilst there are parts that are positively impenetrable (ask Tony). Also, the terrain, in particular waterfalls in the creek, can make travel extremely difficult (ask Marcel). So it can be very important to read the terrain and the vegetation, and plot a good route using local knowledge wherever possible.

Hunting for the day proved fruitless, but a couple of stags were roaring, a good sign for these keen men. The deer usually try to hide, and if disturbed, they usually vacate the area rapidly. But during their mating season (autumn), the stags carry on with a hell of a racket, and can often be easily located. They can become extremely fired up about competition for their hinds, roaring, stomping, barking (sounds a bit like a dog), and even using their antlers as offensive weapons (and they can be very offensive with a 200 kg animal behind them!) Many a deer farmer will testify to the aggressive nature at this time of the year of normally placid animals. In the wild, stags can be encouraged to come up close to people due to this hormone induced anger or even because of curiosity, maybe looking for new hinds. Furthermore, stags seldom have time to eat for the month or so of the mating season as they are too busy mating and fighting. They also wallow in mud, urinate on themselves, and produce pheromones in profusion, all part of their mating ritual. This time is known as the "ROAR", a most exiting time to be in the hills. Who is coming with us next time?

The main part of this story is about food though, because, true to form, these chappies brought far too much. Comments over dinner were mostly about how we would ever eat it all by Sunday. Slightly alcoholic too, so, after a reasonably strenuous day, sleep was very easy.

"have another glass of vino"
"Looks like dehydrated calfshit - for flavour!"
"how many calories?"
"I'm busting for a leek, well cook it"
"drinking tea by the bucketful - literally!"
"I'm a great believer in force feeding"
"The chef's bellied up on us..... "
"I'm a tired boy"
"Tony, buy a new jacket"
"Mick, buy a new map"
"aaaahhhh, coffee Leyland style"

Sunday dawned b-e-a-utiful (spoken with a Swiss accent). We once again split up to hunt solo. Tony shot a mega-giant stag that he is writing a book about, so the 400 pages do not need to be printed here! Suffice to say, it had antlers with 11 points, and was about as big as a horse! A few stags roaring. Mick and Marcel had a good look about, but they didn't score due to tight, scrub and generally dry conditions. Also, the deer are not always dispersed where we want them to be, and do not always co-operate when we get close. However, between the three of us, a large area of country was explored, and we all want to return.

Ugh, we had to go home. Well, it's not far out to the farmland, and 'didn't take us long with the venison split between three. One litre of Just Juice hardly touched the sides. For some reason, Mick appeared to be limping.

Participants; Mick Leyland, Marcel Hollenstein, Tony Gates, Jane Williams.

March 28 – April 6 1991

WHAT THE WEST COAST IS FAMOUS FOR

The West Coast of the South Island is famous for its isolation, its scenery, and its tourism. The region has mountains, glaciers, forests, big rivers, gold, coal, and rugged people. But the West Coast is most famous for the rain.

Tony Gates and Michael Hewett drove south at Easter with high hopes and big plans. Called into Bill Bissell's house for a cuppa, then jammed everything into the packs and sweated up the Waitaha Valley to Kiwi Flat Hut. A grouse spot.

EASTER TRIP II

There is neither time nor room for a blow by blow (sorry splash by splash) account of our trip at Easter in the Erewhon district. In spite of various set backs, some success was had. Two peaks were climbed, respectively just under 2,500 and 2,400 m. (Editor)

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