



# PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217  
PALMERSTON NORTH  
**NEWSLETTER**

May 1994 Edition

Gear Custodian

Newsletter Editor & Newsletter Distribution

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|----------------------|-----------------|----------|
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| Membership Enquiries | : Pauline Coy   | 354-9126 |
|                      | : Nigel Barrett | 326-8847 |
|                      | : Mick Leyland  | 358-3183 |
|                      | : Peter Wiles   | 358-6894 |

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## ENQUIRES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Mick Leyland        | : Ph. 358-3183 |
| Daryl & Linda Rowan | : Ph. 356-4655 |
| Sue & Lawson Pither | : Ph. 357-3033 |

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TRIPS OFTEN LEAVE FROM THE FOODTOWN CAR PARK IN FERGUSSON STREET UNLESS THE LEADER ARRANGES OTHERWISE.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN GOING 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.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A DAY TRIP MID-WEEK SEE DETAILS BELOW, OR RING Lawson and Sue Pither (357-3033), or Monica (354-3834), Nancy (358-8241), John (358-3513).

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.

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## THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAMME

Please sign your name in the visitors book. There is a door fee of 30c which includes supper.

Club 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 unless otherwise notified in the newsletter.

The PNTMC committee meets on the first Thursday of each month.

## SCHEDULED EVENT LIST

### MAY

Club Nights: Thursdays 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>

| Date   | Trip       | Grade | Leader     | Phone |
|--|------------|-------|------------|-------|
| <b><u>MAY 12</u></b>   | Club Night |       |            |       |
| Doug Strachan will be showing slides and talking about his most recent excursion overseas when he visited Morocco, Finland, Denmark and Holland. |            |       |            |       |
| <b><u>MAY 15</u></b><br>4179   | Waipawa    | E     | Tui Craven | 355-  |

This is a beginners tramp, departing 8.00 am. We're going up the track and down the river (creek?). Strictly a cruisey tramp.

**MAY 14-15** McKinnon Hut M Llew Prichard 358-2217  
 This is in the western Ruahines. Llew encourages people to come along on this trip, especially those who enjoy adventures and would like to practice their navigation side. They will meet up with the fit trip at McKinnon Hut.

**MAY 14-15** Purity-Kawhatau M/F Trevor Meyle 354-9126  
 The idea will be to leave PN at approx 0500 hrs Sat morning. (This is to give us lots of daylight hours.) Go up via Purity Hut to Mangaweka Trig and on to Hikurangi, before dropping down into McKinnon Hut. Hopefully we will meet up with the other trip coming from Kawhatau Base. Walk out with them on the Sunday. Arrival back in PM approx Sun 5-6 pm.

The route looks like the normal grunt up to the tops, then it becomes easy street, nav in the rain and mist, (or whatever) look to hold no big hassles and best of all, no leatherwood to upset us.

Grade the trip as a Medium, but you have to have the fitness and strength to look after yourself if the weather turns on us when we gain the tops.

Give me a ring before Wed 11 May if interested. This differs from the trip card. Trevor 354-9126

**MAY 19** Trip card meeting at Tricia's place, or call 357-0122

**MAY 21** Oroua-Kiritaki E/M Chris Saunders 358-4899  
 Walk in from Loveday Road and completing the circuit by coming out at Fairbrother Road.

**May 20-22** Nichols-Tararua Pks F Derek Sharp 326-8178  
 If you have got what it takes, this one is for you.

**MAY 26** Club night  
 Dorothy Pilkington will be speaking about the development of the Heritage Trails in the Manawatu region.

**MAY 28** Tunipo M Patrick Jaassen 356-3116  
 Departing 7 am from Foodtown and travelling to the Heritage Lodge road end. All going well with the weather, it is intended to lunch up on top before returning to the vehicles.

**MAY 28-29** Iron Gates-Ngamoko M/F Terry Crippen 356-3588  
 Note grading change. Depart 6 am. We're going up over Tunipo and along the Ngamoko Range tops (hopefully it will be brilliantly fine weather and nice snow conditions) then down to Irongates for the night and out the next day via the Oroua River.

## JUNE

Committee meeting 2nd  
 Club Nights: Thursdays 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>

| Date            | Trip                                       | Grade | Leader      | Phone    |
|-----------------|--|-------|-------------|----------|
| <b>JUNE 4-6</b> | Queens Birthday 4-6<br>Oturere / Tongariro | M/F   | Peter Wiles | 358-6894 |

I am now committed to go on an alpine instruction course this weekend. I will take names of anyone who wants to go on this trip, or on a related trip.

Anyone interested in day trips over this weekend, suggest air at club night on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**JUNE 11** Manawatu Gorge E Liz Morrison 357-6532  
 Depart 8 am from Foodtown. An easy day walk suitable for all and especially for first time and beginner trampers. A ramble through interesting bush to check out some big Rimus and Nikau Palms.

**JUNE 11-12** Kelly Knoght E/M Llew Prichard 358-2217  
 An easy walk for those who like a cruisey trip and a night out in a hut (which has been recently renovated).

**JUNE 16** CLUB NIGHT  
 Mike Edginton Department of Conservation (Wellington) will be speaking to the club about recreation concerns and conservation initiatives and strategies in the Tararua Ranges. Question and answer time afterwards. All interested persons welcome.

**Mid Winter**  
**JUNE 18:19** Putara Food/Ail Tricia Eder 357-0122

## OPTIONS AVAILABLE INCLUDE:

|              |   |                       |
|--------------|---|-----------------------|
| Herepai      | E | Leader on the spot    |
| Roaring Stag | M | Leader                |
| Round Trip?  | F | Mick Leyland 358-3183 |

A really enjoyable social event in which every club member and their family and friends are invited to join in. Easy access, plenty of space inside for sleeping, or tent sites amongst the trees. Some members are intending to go over on Friday night so those who want to tramp can dump their gear at the Centre. A variety of trips can be undertaken from this base. Contact Tricia to organize food and trips.

Mick Leyland (358-3183) will depart 7.30 am from Putara Road end and will be back in time for dinner. Mick will be going into Roaring Stag either (depending on the weather) up onto the tops via East Peak round to Herepai and down to Putara, or going in from below Mt Bruce to Roaring Stag and out to Putara for dinner.

**JUNE 25-26** Te Hekenga Xing F Trevor Meyle 356-8782

**JUNE 25-26** Howletts M Llew Pr1chard 358-2217  
Depart 7 am for this trip. A trip to a great hut perched on the top of the range with a fantastic view out over the Hawkes Bay. An easy trip can be made to Daphne Hut for those who don't wish to climb to Howletts. See below.

**JUNE 25-26** Daphne E/M Leader required

## **JUNE 30** CLUB NIGHT

Jim Neumann will be speaking about Search and Rescue. Jim has had many years of experience in the field as team member, on the coordinating committee and directing operations in the district. This should be an interesting perspective.

## EDITORIAL

### ALPINE SKILLS

Winter is near and that means the Missus and I will be spending 6 out of 8 weekends up above the snow line. As in this year's President's report said the Mountaineering side of the club has dropped off in the last couple of years. To assist in correcting that I have had this brain search: I would like to start a register that would house all those people who want to stomp around in the snow but don't have the skills to do it in a safe manner. When I go up to Taranaki or Ruapehu, I give the group a bell and we arrange to take a party to a base area. Here we would spilt up into groups according to skills and disappear to achieve our own goals, reforming for the evening meal. I want to get away from continuing to reinvent the wheel but don't want to have a fella getting to know what a figure of eight knot is halfway up East Ridge, or somewhere. This is not designed to replace the snow courses but to assist in lifting the pool of people who can be described as intermediate/leaner climbers and have the confidence to go out and extend their limit line a little.

Trevor

The committee discussed this proposal and saw considerable benefit in it. Safety must remain in critical focus at all times. Trevor will coordinate trips and perhaps accommodation and transport where possible. However, each party is responsible for ensuring that overdue contacts and intentions are left with the appropriate people back in PN.

Give Trevor or Pauline a bell and good climbing.

## NOTICES

### NEW MEMBER

Please welcome Alistair Millward to the club. Alistair is in the 7th form at Freyberg and may be contacted at 257 Victoria Avenue, ph 356-9612.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

I hope I am reliably informed that Trevor and Pauline can be contacted on 354-9126.

### TRIP CARD PLANNING

Aspiring trip leaders, your chance to secure that choice slot to do that trip that you have been planning for months to do is on Thursday 19 May. Call in at Tricia's place on that evening and give her the details. If you can't make it, give Derek or Tricia a call. Call in any time after 7 pm or so.

### SUBS ARE DUE

Yes it's that time of year again. At the AGM it, was resolved to maintain the subscriptions at the existing rates - Family \$30, Ordinary \$25 and Junior \$10. Please get them into the Treasurer either by hand or via the mail (PO Box 1217).

### NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

If you are unable to make it or expect to be late, please ensure that your apology is forwarded to the secretary in advance. Next meeting at place Tricia's place 57 Fiars Road.

## **MAP ORDERS & HUT PASSES**

We have begun assembling a second map order. Budget for an average charge of \$9/map.

## **CLUB NIGHTS**

The committee discussed the timing of the club nights at its latest meeting. If you have any strong preference for the present arrangement - last Thursday and the Thursday, two weeks before, or would prefer the second and fourth Thursdays in the month - let Tricia know.

## **NODDY AWARDS**

At the recent committee meeting, it was suggested that an award might be presented for the best newsletter article each year – perhaps 'separate categories for serious and humorous. The discussion then broadened to include possibilities for other club activities best trip/idea etc. If you have any suggestions, then don't feel backward about feeding them into Tricia.

## **SPLASH AND DASH**

It is planned to organise a trip to Rangī sometime this winter to put up the refurbished photo board in the hut. Nigel has promised (in the presence of witnesses) that he will be going for a swim in the stream up near the hut. Watch this space for more details on this one - not to be missed - anyone got a video camera?

## **POISONING OPERATIONS IN THE RUAHINE RANGES**

DOC and Hawkes Bay Regional Council are proposing to carry out large scale aerial possum poison operations in the Ruahines and Kawekas during May 1994. This is principally to protect farm stock against the likelihood of the spread of Bovine Tuberculosis from wild possums. 1080 pellets will be dropped on approximately 50,000 hectares, stretching 144 kilometres from the Tukituki River up to the Ngaruroro, over both DOC and private land. There is also a sizeable chunk of the Lake Colenso-Ruahine Corner area to be poisoned. Beware of the little green pellets!

There are arguments both for and against this type of blanket coverage operation, and disputes as to the effects on other forest fauna, namely deer, but there is no doubting that the possum population needs to be reduced. Hopefully this will do it for the time being.

Also rumoured is a large scale poison drop into the Tararua ranges. We will try to keep you informed.

Meanwhile DOC are having problems in their Taranaki operations.

## **TRIP REPORTS**

Don't forget (leaders) please get your trip reports in or use your short lived powers to delegate to an unsuspecting team member. How about a letter to the editor, perhaps, or some good gossip, or a poem or what ever.

## **WANTED TO BUY**

Any old timers out there? One ice axe required - non-technical with 85 cm shaft or thereabouts - either wooden or metal will be fine. Phone Terry Crippen at 356-3588.

## **TUKINO ROAD KEY**

Planning to plough up the upper section of the Tukino Road at all? Contact John Greenhough on 04-368-1465 for him to send you up the key. We are also making enquiries with DOC as to the possibility of keeping a key in town for parties to borrow.

## **THANKS**

Thanks to Perry and Jacqui Hicks, who after a considerable number of years in PN with the club are moving on to new things in the Nelson area. Good luck and we hope to see you sometime.

## **SYMPATHY**

To Sally Hewson and Glenda and Dennis Moore, we extend our sympathy and condolences on the recent passing away of their father, Stan Hewson.

## **A TRAMPERS GUIDE. ...**

by Tony Gates

The Tararua Ranges were made for tramping. Tussock tops, Leatherwood, Beech, Podocarp, Kamahi and mixed forest, river flats, gorges, and slips are all found in the Tararuas. Ample reason to tramp there is seen in the scenery as well as the entrenched tradition. We go there quite a bit. Tracks, bridges, and huts have been made for us to use, so here are a few route guide details to help you discover the Tararuas.

## **... TO WAINGAWA CATCHMENT**

This is the first of a series. Might as well start at the top, at Mitre Peak, the highest peak of the Tararua Ranges, in the depths (heights) of the Waingawa catchment.

## TRACKS AND BRIDGES

### Lower Waingawa

Firstly, the most usual road end from which to access the Waingawa Valley is just in from Masterton, at "The Pines", at the end of the upper Waingawa road. The good, well used "Barra Track" takes you up to Mitre Flats Hut in between two and three hours, and is well known to many of us. The route follows a farm road for half an hour, over the style to the Tararua Forest Park, then above the lower Waingawa Gorge. There is a private three wire crossing of the river (off the track) at the bush edge. As gorge side tracks go, this one is not bad, though a few hills tend to induce sweating! Also, typical of well used tramping tracks, one must get used to dancing around tree roots, stones, and mud puddles. There is a lovely new swing bridge 5 minutes upstream from Mitre flats Hut, or a knee deep shortcut across the river at its confluence with South Mitre Stream (another swing bridge here), 2 minutes downstream from the hut.

### Mid Waingawa

Nestled in the delightful podocarp forest of the Mid Waingawa Valley lies the track between Mitre Flats Hut and Cow Creek Hut. It follows the western bank all the way, winding in and out of wide, heavily bushed river terraces, regularly interrupted with grassy flats and slips. The track is rather rudely interrupted by the edge of the map. Downstream from Peggys Stream, the track climbs fairly high above the river, then it drops down to the lower terraces for most of the way. Parts of the route are easier followed in the river itself, and there are plenty of good swimming pools for those that way inclined. Of course there are plentiful good campsites, especially around Cow Creek Hut. There is a cage crossing the Waingawa River just down from Cow creek Hut. Time between huts 3- 4 hours, or for Nigel Barrett we expect less than 2 hours!

### Upper Gorge Sidle Track

How do we say this, the ahh "infamous" Cow Creek to Arete Forks track. Comments in the hut log books reflect some sort of dislike to the continual grind, the continual steep track, both up and down, and the unrelenting forest and scrub. Makes you wonder about the original track cutters. Actually, between 2 and 3 reasonable hours of tramping will see you through this track, as DOC have recently cleared it, but be prepared to sweat! And there are plentiful side streams the track crosses for your rehydration. There are parts of the track that seem to veer rather close to the tussock tops of Table Ridge, leaving you thinking perhaps one big climb up onto the tops, then one big descent, would be easier than the continual ups and downs. The original track passing that route is overgrown, but O.K. (If you also wondered whether that maybe the direct trip along the riverbed might be easier - see below.)

### Arete Forks to Tarn Ridge

Cross the river then follow the track up Pinnacle spur, climbing steeply to the leatherwood belt, between approximately 1100 and 1300 metres. Several distinct ups and downs, in some places somewhat "South Island-ish", and eventually you gain Tarn Ridge and the tussock at the Waiohine Pinnacles. A relatively easy 40 minutes north will take you to Arete (Biv and Peak), or 30 minutes south lies the ridges namesake, which provides a reliable source of water at the old hut site. Continuing south along the tussock tops, there are, two bumps to climb over, then the newest Tararua Hut, New Tarn Ridge Hut, near the Blanchford Memorial. A steep grunt up onto Girdlestone Peak, bypassing a few more craggy bits, takes maybe another 30 minutes. Alternatively, above Arete Forks, the Waingawa River offers reasonable off track travel, and there are a few possible good routes up onto the tops. The prominent ridge down from Blanchford Memorial is one that avoids the usual leatherwood bash (the leatherwood belt is inconsistent). The track marked on some maps down from old Tarn Ridge Hut does not exist (never did!). Tracks in the tussock are well marked on the ground, but lack marker poles. A snow covering and mist would make them difficult to follow. Take ice axe and crampons during winter.

### Mitre Peak

To complete the circuit described above, the track follows easy terrain over to Brockett Peak (10 minutes), where Table Ridge joins it. No tracks up there, just overgrown routes down to Arete Forks and Cow Creek, which are probably OK to tramp. From Brockett, there is a big saddle to cross before the steep section up onto the highest point on the Tararuas, altitude 1571 m (a further 30 minutes). Derek, have you ever been there? Peggys Peak is a little lower, then there is a steep section before a broad well cairned shelf just above the bushline. A steady descent through Beech, then Podocarp forest on a good track, and you are back on level ground at the river. (Mitre to Flats, 1 hour, Flats to Mitre 3 hours!

### Bannister Ridge

From Arete, this well known, dominant ridge winds its way to the East, to Cattle Ridge, and takes maybe,.4 hours of toil. The Twins, then Bannister Peak, and the numerous other little bumps along the way leave a lasting impression on the minds of those who tramp over them, definitely not for the faint hearted. Check your map carefully. A typically rough track drops down the tussock from Waingawa, then steeply in the bush, to Cow Saddle, or directly to Cow Creek Hut. (1 hour.) There is a good campsite at the bush edge.

### Blue Range

The Kiriwhakapapa road takes you to the eastern edge of Blue Range. There is a good track, through open beech forest, over this hill past Blue Range Hut to Cow saddle, thence up to Bannister Ridge, or down Cow Creek to the hut. Road end to Cow Saddle 3- 4 hours.

### Mitre Flats to Atiwhakatu

South Mitre Stream is crossed on the new swing bridge a couple of minutes down river from the hut, then the track winds its way over to Pinnacle Ridge (note, different to Pinnacle Spur) then Atiwhakatu Stream and Hut. One gully to cross. Tramping time to the saddle approximately 1½ hours. Barton Track climbs for 1 hour from the swing bridge directly up onto Baldy.

### Mitre- Holdsworth Ridge

This is another famous Tararua classic which, with the Mitre-Arete Forks-Cow Creek loop, forms another loop one can tramp in two or three days. Follow the ridge from Mitre-> Brockett-> Girdlestone, getting used to continual changes of direction, then almost straight south to Adkin. It is a fair grind up to the Kings (North, Mid, and South), then you tramp off the map. Baldy, an aptly named knob, is down the ridge to the bushline, then it's not far to the above mentioned saddle. Girdlestone to South King 2 hours, down to the saddle 1 hour. Then you are out of the Waingawa catchment, and have to buy the next edition of the route guide before you can continue down to Jumbo Hut or Mt Holdsworth!

### Off track tramping

You may read in hut log books about travel in the gorges, right down the river beds. Well, don't do it unless you are well prepared, and the conditions are suitable. Arete Forks to Cow Creek can be done in about four hours in dry conditions with only a few swims and a fair bit of grovelling. Despite the above description of the track, the river is slower! Then down to Mitre Flats, a few mini gorges present no real problems, and once again, the track would be quicker. Once below Mitre Flats and South Mitre Stream, the lower gorge is the domain of the tuber, otherwise known as the rapid shooter or river rat. You need a wet suit, helmet, truck tube and a lot of guts. Ask Nigel.

Travel in the side creeks can be formidable in places, and Arete and South Mitre Streams are cases in point - difficult, especially in the leatherwood.

Elsewhere, off track tramping is typical of the Tararuas. Forest is always mixed, and travel can be very easy in the open beech and podocarp, or incredibly difficult through scrub and windfalls (better to go around them if you can). Many slips are steep and dangerous, though some, once they have grassed over, can be traversed easily. As DOC no longer maintain all the tracks marked on the old maps, off track tramping may be required.

### HUTS

Two of the newest huts in the Tararuas are found up the Waingawa, at Mitre Flats, and along Tarn Ridge. They both have mattresses, pot belly stoves, a porch, and are roomy and comfortable. Mitre Flats Hut is located on a delightful grassy flat at the base of the Mitre Peak track. Tarn Ridge hut is nestled in a vital tramping spot in the tussock under the slopes of Girdlestone Peak, (actually Blanchford Peak), just on the eastern (Waingawa) side of Tarn Ridge. It replaces the old Tarn Ridge Hut, more passionately known as "Tarn Fridge", half an hour north. There are two of the old faithful Forestry six bunkers still standing, one at Cow Creek (where the river takes a "kink" at the bottom of the upper gorge) and at Arete Forks (at the top of the gorge). Both huts are in choice locations, as are the bivvis. Not quite reaching the rank of huts are two bivvis, otherwise known as dog kennels, on the tops on the Arete bench, and at Mid King (on the bushline). If you are lucky, there will be a mattress there. Bivvis can provide vital shelter in adverse conditions.

## **TRIP REPORTS**

### **SAR WEEKEND 5/6 MARCH**

Llew picked me up Friday night; had a chance to say Goodbye to the Bat my beloved twice, the Youth needed a Sleeping mat - too many designer label shirts if you ask me.

Briefing at Sixtus Lodge at 2100hrs and the word was Dave (other club chappie) Barker was Boss and wanted to put 2 teams in at night. The leader (me) has had a guts full of waltzing around God's green land in the middle of the night, getting lawyer round his neck and Perry's mates stuck up his nose so he said the PNTMC team didn't know the area too well. (Didn't have to worry too much - the other club and Massey were keen to get up Knights. Massey ended up at Kinvig Hut around 0400 and MTSC was halted at Toka and threw a fly up.)

The Boys were tasked in the morning (after attacking an excellent breakky sorted out by the Sallies), mission was to head up Shorts Track. We was gone. Warmed to the task and hour had us short of the snow grass and a hour later had us at the objective. Nil was seen.

Radioed in and Dave spent a good 10 minutes looking at the map to find Leather Wood city. On the map, 250m south in a saddle thing, are some little fingers running down to join an unnamed stream which in turn ends up in the Pohangina. Good place to send the team. We laughed at the brushes, found a stream/slip/down steep bit and went for it, 1 waterfall and 1 log jam and a couple of hours had us in the river for a swim and lunch.

Llew reckoned that the large arrow on the river bank was something of importance and Youth decided to have look down by the gorge approx. 50 m away. He did find one of the lost ones. Our mate Mick was a minder, so we had a chat and coffee, Youth had another swim and somehow we got a radio message back to HQ.

Moved back to Leon Kinvig and found Queen St, didn't take long to realise that the night wouldn't be spent there. Went back down river for a couple of minutes and found a place for rest and fire, but was joined by Psycho.

Next day moved back to Sixtus Lodge for De-brief and Beers. All in all not a bad outing.  
Llew, Nigel, Trevor

### **EASTER (April 1-4) by Stuart Hubbard**

Kiwi Mouth - Manson - Rockshead - Back Ridge - Kaweka J – Studholme Saddle - The Rogue-Lakes

Leaving P.N. at 7.15 am on Good Friday, we took the Napier - Taihape Road to Kuripapango, arriving about 10 am. Mick and Peter knew the Kawekas fairly well so we decided to try something new, and travelled up the Ngaruroro River to Kiwi Mouth Hut. The river level was relatively low, but was still waist deep in places and somewhat cool, as I discovered the two times I fell over with my pack on. I soon came to realise the value of gaiters in repeated river travel, I got tired of sharing my socks with many, small stones. (I've since bought a pair of gaiters). Mick and Alistair had a direct encounter with some rather vicious wasps while we were pushing through a small section of manuka scrub. Beyond Cameron Hut the valley is very windy and there are no cut short-cuts through sections of bush. We must have forded the river many dozens of times during the day. Plodding over rocks all day is a rather tiring way to travel any distance. We arrived at the Kiwi Mouth Hut about 6 pm, and found the hut occupied by hunters. We fly camped nearby. The weather was kind, we had no rain for the first 2 nights and little wind.

Saturday - breaking camp round 8 am, made our way up the ridge to Manson (1448 m), pausing for an early lunch at Manson Hut, which appeared to be well used by hunters. I found the Manson tops surprisingly dry and barren compared to the Ruahines or Tararuas. After another lunch stop, we headed down Spion Kop to Rockshead Hut. The cableway across the river was not functioning as the brake on the car had jammed on, so we were fortunate that we could safely wade across the river at this point. The hut was full with a party of fisherman that had flown in with the works, so once more we fly camped near the hut after some gentle rearrangement of the ground cover. We dined well with Mick's excellent coffee to wash it all down. Rain seemed imminent but we only got a few drops overnight.

Sunday dawned somewhat misty, with the prospect of a hard climb ahead, gaining over 1000 m in a few hours up to Back Ridge. The cloud gradually lifted though, so we got some views. After gaining all this height, it was rather demoralising to lose 100 m or so as we dropped down to Back Ridge Hut for lunch. After a hard scramble back up the ridge, we made our way to Kaweka J. trig (1724 m), from where we had excellent views in all directions. We arrived at Studholme Saddle Hut mid afternoon, and found we had it to ourselves, which was fortuitous as it turned out. We started the fire, dried out some gear, and had the satisfaction of hearing the rain bucket down overnight.

Monday was damp with mist initially, as we made our way via Kaiarahi and the Tits, during which time our views were rather restricted. Use was made of both compass and Peter's altimeter to help us to locate The Rogue Ridge, which took us down to the Lakes car park. The cloud had lifted by this time giving us good views of the lakes. We took the track around the lakes, then a shortcut of Mick's (part of the Kaweka Challenge course) back to our car.

A most satisfactory trip, good weather, good company, good scenery. Thanks Mick.

Those present: Mick Leyland (leader), Peter Wiles, Alistair Millward, Stuart Hubbard.

### **TITAHI BAY ROCKS**

Went climbing down at the bay rocks on Sat 9 April. Spent the time around by the nose area and did all top rope stuff, not a bad way to spend the day: the two who came were new to the game but they did well and hopefully have got the hunger to do some more. Somebody has gone to the anchor points with a big hammer and the screws and chains are no more, hopefully it was done because of safety and not by some fool on a ethic trip. Any way the bolted areas are no more and you really have to look for top rope anchors now.

Still a place to go when you don't have time to go else where.

Trevor

### **ATENE SKYLINE WALKWAY 10 April**

We set off at 8.30 under clear blue sky up the fence line and onto the old NZED vehicle track. Two cattle beasts and a horse were encountered as we climbed to the top of the ridge. From here magnificent views towards Mt Ruapehu were obtained. Also noted were the extremely low water flows in the Wanganui River. I remarked to Chris that 10 minutes would see us at the bivvy; alas my 10 minutes turned into forty five before the bivvy was reached. Lunch was taken by myself: Chris, a breakfast man was not that hungry. Two and a half hours later saw us at the end of the track. Walking along the road to rejoin the car we were accompanied by a friendly pig – regretfully too large to throw into the boot!

A stop was made in Wanganui for the traditional iced desert before a pleasant drive back to Palmerston North.

Team was Richard Lockett and Chris Morey

## **HAUKURA RIDGE** by Graeme Roberts

Saturday 30 April saw four happy souls away before the sun made its appearance. The Northern Taranaki were our tramping ground, and we weren't going to be disappointed today. 7:40 am and we set off from the end of Putara Rd up to Herepai for morning tea (1½ hrs.). The views from the hut roof were excellent. The slog continued up to the top of Herepai, on to Ruapae for a photographic session. Hardly a breath of wind, not a cloud for many miles. From the top of Ruapae you look straight down Harris Creek to the Mangahoe Valley. From here it was on to East Peak for lunch, where the view was incredible. Only a short distance (or so it looked) to the S.W. was Pukemoremore and Dundas. Around a little was Bannister and the Twins. Directly below us to the south was the Ruamahunga River with Cattle Ridge heading off S.W. A little further south (not too far) those legendary names of Girdlestone, Mitre, Arete etc., showed their heads majestically. Even the new Tarn Ridge Hut could be seen. All the daydreaming must cease sometime so we carried on south along the Haukura Ridge, then dropped off the east side (scree slope then scrub) to Haukura Biv, beside a dry stream bed that runs down to the Ruapae Stream. A very tidy little hut, even though the door had fallen off, but I feel it would be hard to find in bad weather. Heading east, it was bush bashing for; the next 1½ hrs along a ridge then down to the Ruapae Stream and a welcome drink. By this time a lack of fitness (and age) were starting to make their presence felt on the writer. Climbing out of Ruapae Stream to intercept the Herepai-Roaring Stag Track saw me struggling to keep up, but once on the track the legs felt better. The disagreements started as to which side of the junction to the road end we were on. Three to one said we go north, with bets being taken, but after about 20 minutes, it became obvious Derek was right. A fast walk out from here had us at the road end about 4:15 pm. Being my first time with PNTMC, I could not have been more satisfied. The company was good, the weather perfect, the views spectacular, and yes Derek got his milkshake. We were Tony Gates, Derek Sharp, Nigel Barrett and Graeme Roberts.

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