



# PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217  
PALMERSTON NORTH  
NEWSLETTER

January/February 1995 Edition

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Membership Enquiries	: Pauline Coy	354-9126
	: Nigel Barrett	326-8847
Gear Custodian	: Mick Leyland	358-3183
Newsletter Editor & Newsletter Distribution	: 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).

### Trip Grades

Grade of trips can depend on many factors, most especially the weather and state of the track. As a guide, a reasonably proficient trumper would be expected to cover the graded trips in about the following times: Easy (E) 3 – 4 hours, Medium (M) 5 – 6 hrs, Fit (F) about 8 hrs, Fitness Essential (FE) >8 hrs. (Tech) refers to trips graded technical requiring either special skills and / or gear.

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

BBQ 26<sup>th</sup> January 1995. Venue is at Horseshoe Bend from 6.30 pm. Contact Nigel for any further details.

### FEBRUARY

Committee meeting 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Club Nights: Thursdays 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
Waitangi Weekend 4-6				
<b>FEBRUARY 4-6</b>	Hawkes Bay Ridge	M/F	Terry Crippen	356-3588
<b>FEBRUARY 5</b>	Coppermine/Wharite	E/EM	Leader?	357-0122
<b>FEBRUARY 5-6</b>	Waikamaka	E	Leader?	357-0122
<b>FEBRUARY 12</b>	Irongates	M	Stuart Hubbard	356-8782
<b>FEBRUARY 11-12</b>	Waiohine River	M+Tubes	Nigel Barrett	326-8847
<b>FEBRUARY 18</b>	Otaki River	M/F	Patrick Janssen	356-3'
<b>FEBRUARY 18-19</b>	Rangitaua	All	Sue & Lawson Pither	357-3033
<b>FEBRUARY 26</b>	Kiriwhakapapa	E	Peter Darragh	357-4498
<b>FEBRUARY 25-26</b>	Park Forks	F	Derek Sharp	326-8178

### MARCH

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

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
<b>MARCH 5</b>	Sutherlands Bush	E/Family	Margaret Riorden	356-7460
<b>MARCH 5</b>	Canoe Rangitiki	Open	Aaron Panchaud	354-8422
<b>MARCH 4-5</b>	SAREX	M	Mick Leyland	358-3183
<b>MARCH 12</b>	Porewa Walkway	E	Liz Morrison	357-6532
<b>MARCH 11-12</b>	Mitre Flats/Peak	E+F	Warren Wheeler	356-380
<b>MARCH 11-12</b>	Ice Craft	Tech	Peter Wiles	358-6894
<b>MARCH 19</b>	Ventura Crashsite	E	Tony Cameron	356-5461
<b>MARCH 18-19</b>	Pohongina Base	M/F	Graeme Roberts	357-856'7
<b>MARCH 25</b>	Egmont Summit	F	Bruce Van Brunt	328-4761
<b>MARCH 26</b>	Manawatu Gorge	E	Leader?	357-0122
<b>MARCH 25-26</b>	Totara Flats	M	Jenny McCarthy	06-376-8838

### EDITORIAL

There seems to have been quite a lot of South Island activity engaged in by members this summer. Three parties/ independently checked out different parts of the new Kahurangi National Park. Sally, Tony and Yvonne were reported to have had a relaxing excursion in the North-west Nelson area. Steve and Jenny were spotted in the Wangapeka Saddle area. Concurrently, over the New Year period/ Lance and Peter put their navigation, bush bashing and rock hopping skills to the test by completing a crossing from the Wangapeka to Seddonville, via the Matiri River, 1,000 Acre Plateau and the Mokihinui River.

Slightly later in January/ Terry led a trip to Arthur's Pass – three pass trip. And what a stunning week's weather it was too!

Meanwhile/ the reason this newsletter is a bit earlier than usual, and a bit thin, is that having just about recovered from the 1000 Acre Plateau trip, I am off back to the Mainland again for two weeks to tackle what Charlie (Explorer) Douglas once referred to as the sandfly/mosquito capital of the country - the Cascade River/ Red Hills, Big Bay area - south of Jacksons Bay.

All this activity augers well for future trip reports and slide shows.

### NOTICES

#### **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 place Tricia's place 57 Fiars Road.

Hut passes continue to be available as required at \$40 each.

#### **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?

## TRIP DECISIONS?

If you decide you want to go on a trip, please ensure that you have contacted the leader by the Wednesday before, so that logistical decisions can be made. Recently, there have been several instances of people expressing an interest in a trip on the evening before - the leaders in some cases, having made other plans at that late stage.

# TRIP REPORTS

## RUAPEHU CLIMBING PRE-CHRISTMAS - by Peter Wiles

Five of us left PN on mid Friday afternoon for the Whangaehu Hut on the Tukino side of Ruapehu. The last couple of kilometres of the Tukino road up to the repeater station seem to have deteriorated rather markedly over the last six months or so. It is deeply scoured and rutted, and it was only by virtue with the assistance of a considerable amount of pushing that the car got up there this time. Once at the repeater; we noticed an interesting phenomenon - a very localised low level area of fresh snow covering several hundred hectares on the northern side of Ruapehu at an altitude of 1300-1500m. Can an intense local thunderstorm or something, suddenly create a local blizzard?

Anyway with both cars eventually reaching the Round-the-mountain-track it was time to start the proper work. We packed up and headed up to Wangaehu Hut, reaching the hut at about 8.45 pm in perfect conditions. It was evident that since our previous visit, the wind had completely demolished the toilet - Oh dear how sad. (Especially, as we learned that NZAC had recently gone to the trouble of putting a new door on it.)

Conditions were perfect in the morning, and we climbed the northern spur of Mitre Peak - directly opposite the hut; Chris managed to overcome some incompatibility problems with his breakfast and caught us up as, we attempted to manoeuvre our way through the schrund that cut through the middle of the snow face. (The same time last year Derek and I did this climb but instead at this point there was a rock face to climb, so there was certainly more snow about this season.) The ice rib that linked the lower and upper sides of the schrund was negotiated by sitting astride it and grovelling forward. Chris nearly investigated the inner mysteries of the crevasse, but managed to recover in the nick of time to keep on track. We then belayed a pitch on the snow, followed by about a 100 m of free climbing on steep snow. Once we gained the rock it was an easy scramble to the top of the buttress. We admired the view up the valley to the Cathedral Rocks and had a snack before resuming the climb. The next section was scrambling up a narrow rock gut for about 20 m before we reached a short steep section of rock. We belayed this with Bruce leading. After this the gradient declined significantly and it was a tedious walk to the summit of Mitre.

After another snack on the col between Mitre and Tahurangi, we put on crampons on again and continued to Tahurangi. It was about 1 pm, in still misty conditions when we reached the top. The heat was wilting. We decided to descend into the crater and complete a clockwise circuit around the lake. On our way, we met three skiers from Hamilton who were heading towards the hut. A few drops of rain threatened in the afternoon but did not come to much. By the evening the ski was clear again.

Next morning was perfect again and we headed directly up the Whangaehu Glacier to the Cathedral Rocks. We climbed the snow ramp on its southern end. The snow was already rather soft and very good for kicking steps into. Once we stepped into the Plateau we were rewarded with a superb view in the morning sky. After another snack we headed over the Plateau to the snow face between Tukino and Te Heu Heu commonly known as the Fishtail face. Bruce, Chris and Peter headed up the middle of the slope while Terry and Alistair tried a more ambitious route closer to Tukino. However, the snow was already too soft and without suitable protection at hand, the later gave up and joined the former. Daytime mist rapidly gathered and we began to lose contact from one end of the rope to the other. However, there is only one and a bit pitches to contend with. During this, someone dropped a snow stake and a karabiner. Fortunately, after sliding down about 50 m, it came to rest on the lower lip of a crevasse that was still closed off. At the top of Te Heu Heu it was generally whited out in a chilly easterly breeze. We descended via the snow slope west of Tukino, before heading over to the rocks that connect the northern side of the Cathedral Rocks with the Clock Tower to the east. We sat in the sun and enjoyed an early lunch.

Back at the hut, Bruce and Chris packed up and headed back to the car. Before they had been gone an hour, thunder began to be heard around the mountain. This heralded the beginning of one of the most protracted thunder storms that we could remember. The thunder was essentially continuous for about 2 hours. Heaps of rain could be seen falling out to the east on Rangipo Desert area. We managed to miss all but a few minutes of light rain. By 9 pm the sky was clear again.

The next day we had big plans to get going before 5 am for the east of Girdlestone, but during the night the westerly wind suddenly came up. Before long it was howling and rattling the hut. We ignored the alarm at 4 am. By the time we decided to get up 6 am-ish, the wind was a little calmer. We decided to opt for a tramp up to the Mitre-Tahurangi col and then descend the Wahianoa Valley, before calling into Rangipo Hut and returning to the car on the Round-the-mountain-track.

We reached the col by about 8 am, but already the clouds were gathering around the summit. We descended down the glacier in the cold wind. Then followed a series of snow slopes snaking through the bluffs. We arrived at the forks and stopped for a drink and snack. From here we could have continued down the valley, crossing the river at various places until we reached the bridge and the track. We would then have the steep ascent back to Rangipo. We

decided to try a more efficient option and commenced a long sidle from the forks, along the northern side of the valley, aiming to reach the ridge crest about half down to the bridge. Then it would be an easy trek across country to the hut. This went very well, with only an intervening gully to cross on the way (the site of Snowcraft I). We removed some Pinus Contorta along the way.

After lunch at Rangipo, we pressed on, as yet again rain looked like it was threatening. At the lower altitudes, the wind was rather less and it was correspondingly hotter. We seemed to avoid any significant rain until well along the road.

Team: Bruce van Brunt, Chris Saunders, Alistair Millward, Terry Crippen and Peter Wiles.

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