



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217
PALMERSTON NORTH
NEWSLETTER
JUNE 1996 Edition

Club Patron	: Lawson Pither	357-3033
President	: Terry Crippen	356-3588
Vice President	: Tony Gates	357-7439
Secretary	: Warren Wheeler	
Treasurer	: Peter Wiles	358-6894
Membership Enquiries	: Liz Flint	356-7654 and Warren Wheeler 356-1998
Gear Custodian	: Mick Leyland	358-3183
Newsletter Editor	: John Phillips	358-1874

ENQUIRES CONCERNING OVERDUE TRIPS

Mick Leyland	: Ph. 358-3183
Terry Crippen	: Ph. 356-3588
Sue & Lawson Pither	: Ph. 357-3033

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 (Wednesday or Thursday) SEE DETAILS BELOW, OR RING Liz Flint (356-7654), or Lawson and Sue Pither (357-3033), or Monica (326-9691).

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 tramper 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. Beginners should start with Easy graded tramps.

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 50c which includes supper.

Club meetings are held for all club members and visitors on the second and last Thursday of each month. The venue is the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North, at 7:30 pm during winter and 7:45 pm during summer unless otherwise notified in the newsletter. The PNTMC committee meets on the first Thursday of each month.

Deadline for notices and trip reports for inclusion in newsletter: LAST THURSDAY of each month.

SCHEDULED EVENT LIST

NOTE TO TRIP LEADERS: PLEASE DISCUSS WITH THE TRIPS CONVENOR (TERRY 356-3588), AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT THAT YOU WILL BE UNABLE TO RUN YOUR TRIP AS SCHEDULED. THIS IS SO THAT ALTERNATIVES CAN BE ARRANGED, PUT IN THE NEWSLETTER, OR PASSED ON AT CLUB NIGHT.

JUNE 13 Midweek tramping Vina Cottam 354-5046

JUNE 13 Club Night: "History of Women Climbers in NZ" Graham Langton
Graham is from the History Dept, Massey University. This is a slide show and talk about women climbers from 1881-1935 in what was then a very male dominated past-time. Graham will show how much contribution women made, and talk about some of the heroines of the day, such as Freda Du Faur (the first woman to climb Mt Cook) and Betsy Blunden (the first woman guide, who is still alive today).

JUNE 15-16 Trip and leader yet to be decided Contact Terry 356-3588
Note: Tui Craven's Kaweka (MacIntosh Hut) trip cancelled.

JUNE 16 Maharahara Crossing M Warren Wheeler 356-1998
A day-crossing of the southern Ruahines. This track cuts across the most extensive continuous stretch of leatherwood in NZ. Great views of the plains either side (weather permitting!). If enough people, may form two parties at either end and exchange car keys at the summit.

JUNE 16 Hound hike Family Liz Morrison 357-6532
Liz has an easy walk in mind...Somewhere local, but yet to be decided.

JUNE 20 Midweek tramping Caroline Brodie 358-6576

JUNE 22-23 MID WINTER CELEBRATION (KAWHATAU BASE) Terry Crippen 356-3588
Depart Saturday morning onwards. This year's Midwinter social event will again be held at the DOC base above the Kawhatau River, in a pleasant clearing amongst mature forest, on the edge of the Western Ruahines. The base is located about 30 km east of Mangaweka via Kawhatau Valley, Uper Kawhatau road and Rangitane Road (or via Rangiwahia and Karewarewa-Aupauta Roads). The cost for accommodation etc is \$10. The base has kitchen/dining room (with wood stove and gas cooking), bunkrooms, (generator) electricity, and there is plenty of grass outside for tents. We need an extra gas cooking ring. Be sure to contact the farm house just before the gate at the end of the road, as the road goes through a section of private property. Please contact Terry who is co-ordinating food and transport. See below for the tramp on Saturday and the MWD and/or investigation of the Kawhatau on Sunday. Should be a good evening/day/weekend.

JUNE 22 Kawhatau E/M Mick Leyland 358-3183
A tramp in conjunction with the above.

JUNE 23 MIDWINTER DIP – on the Sunday to freshen up as part of the Kawhatau midwinter celebration! Keep the tradition up – 6 of us had one last year.

JUNE 27 Midweek tramping Monica Cantwell 326-9691

JUNE 27 Club Night PHOTO COMPETITION
Refer article in Notices below.

JUNE 29-30 Rangataua open w/end All Sue & Lawson Pither 357-3033
This is always a popular trip, staying at Sue & Lawson's holiday house and tramping around the Ohakune area. Many activities available.

JUNE 30 Daphne Hut E/M Tony Gates 357-7439
If there was a perfect hut in the Ruahines, then Daphne would be it. To tramp there, we will drive over to southern Hawkes Bay, and wander across farmland to the bush, and hence the Tukituki River. It takes about 3 hours to reach the hut.

JULY 3-4 Midweek tramping Waitewaewae o/night Judy Callesen 357-0192
Depart 7.30 AM. This trip is a departure from the usual day Thursday trip. Judy is offering it as an opportunity for people to stay overnight during the week. The trip is in the Western Tararua bush, in from Otaki Forks via the track to the large and modern Waitewaewae Hut (also known as YTTY). This trip also allows the group to meet up with those who want to visit the area just for Thursday.

- JULY 4** Committee meeting Venue Andy Backhouse's place 7:30 pm.
- JULY 6-7** Cattle Ridge M/F Patrick Janssen 356-3116
Cattle Ridge and the Hut are found in the northeastern Tararuas, on the tussock tops overlooking much of the mighty Ruamahanga Catchment. A reasonable walk in following a well worn track. Roaring Stag Lodge, and the swing bridge, is passed en route.
- JULY 7** Forest Hill Stream E/M Dennis Moore 357-5651
Dennis is one of these local people from Forest Hill Road who knows lots of nooks and crannies in the neighbourhood that you wouldn't normally visit. There is farmland and pine forest on the hill overlooking Aokoutere that Dennis will lead you to. He hopes to follow the main stream up to the lake, then return via forestry roads.
- JULY 11** Midweek tramping Bev Akers 325-8879
- JULY 11** Club Night: "Intro To Snowcraft" Andy Backhouse/Bruce Van Brunt
Essential listening. These two skilled mountaineers are running the ever popular PNTMC Snowcraft course this winter, and will be presenting the club evening that gives a brief over view of the course, then some tales, photographs, and demonstrations of the real thing. The real thing is a bit later on (refer below). More to come.
- JULY 13-14** Ruahine Sunrise M Tony Gates 357-7439
It might just be time to get out into the snow of the beloved Ruahines. Sunrise Hut is a luxuriously appointed hut just on the tussock tops of the north eastern Ruahines, and is easily accessible for day and overnight trips alike. The trip is graded medium for the more adventurous, with a few good day trips available (you will need crampons and ice axe for them), but it can be really easy if you want to walk up to the hut and back. Bring warm clothes and snow protection. Depart reasonably early Saturday morning.
- JULY 13-14** MSC Outdoor First Aid All contact Terry 356-3588
Refer details below.
- JULY 14** Shorts-Toka loop M Graham Peters 329-4722
A Ruahine classic, up onto the tops of the Ngamoko Range above Apiti. Reasonable, though steep, tracks all the way. Fantastic views of the plains over to Norsewood, the upper Pohangina Valley, and Apiti. May need ice axes.
- JULY 18** Midweek tramping Pam Wilson 357-6247
- JULY 20-21** Snowcraft I, Turoa M/F Bruce Van Brunt 328-4761
Andy Backhouse (after June 28) 353-0774
Full details supplied below. Come prepared.
- JULY 21** Hound Hike Family Liz Morrison 357-6532
Tramping with a difference! This will be a pleasant stroll to a nice local area. Exercise for the mutt as well.
- JULY 25** Midweek tramping Mike Corns 358-4869
- JULY 25** Club Night "Trekking in Nepal" Phil Brown
Phillip is a club member and globe trotter who visited this land of very high mountains last year, and has a few stories to tell us and pickies to show. Trekking, or even mountaineering, in this corner of the world in from Katmandu is a thing many of us aspire to, so come along and relive Phil's holiday.
- JULY 27-28** Mitre Flats/Mitre M+F Warren Wheeler 356-1998
Depart 7.30 AM. An easy walk (max 5 hrs) over endless tree roots up the valley track to the large hut at Mitre Flats. Weather and snow conditions permitting, we will go up Mitre Peak, the highest point in the Tararuas (approx 3 hrs up). Other options include exploring the streams and valleys, or just lounging in the hut and sunshine before walking out the same way.
- JULY 28** Herepai Hut E/M Peter & Judy Stockdale 355-5277
This departs from one of the closest road accesses in the Tararuas, and follows the well worn track up to the popular hut, with some good views of the Ruamahanga Catchment, and good access onto the tops.
- JULY 30** (Tues) Instruction evening (for Snowcraft Course participants only).
Location is at the Rock Wall, Massey University, Rec Centre, where you can learn the ropes as it were (no pun intended).

AUGUST 1 Midweek tramping Peter Johnstone 358-8596

AUGUST 1 Committee meeting Venue to be chosen

AUGUST 3-4 Snowcraft II, Egmont Bruce Van Brunt 328-4761
Andy Backhouse (after June 28)

Pre-requisite: Snowcraft I. Details below.

AUGUST 4 Holdsworth M+F Chris Saunders 358-4899

This is probably the most well known of all Tararua peaks, and the most easily accessible. There are good tracks, a large and luxurious Powell Hut at the bushline, and a genuine Tararua experience. Chris knows the area well.

AUGUST 8 Midweek tramping Neville Gray 357-2768

AUGUST 8 Club Night: "A year in the Antarctic" by Howard Nicholson, of Palmerston North. The Antarctic continent is a place few of us will visit, but many of us would like to. Howard Nicholson, of the MTSC, wintered over down there in the late 80's as a science technician, involved with seismic studies in the Dry Valleys. Come along to hear his presentation on his travels about the snow and ice, and life at Scott Base.

NOTICES

Newsletter Articles – note from the Editor

We are always looking for articles of interest to put in the newsletter, especially trip reports. It does not necessarily have to be a club event; people are always interested to hear about any intrepid ventures by club members, no matter how big or small. So please get those trip reports rolling in! (And writers, please your name – we like to know who's talking to us!)

Small articles are OK hand-written, but it makes the editor's job a bit easier if larger articles are on disc or, even better, if you have facilities at home or at work, why not "e-mail" it to me at my work e-mail address which is PHILLIPS@MRC.GOV.NZ. I am editing on "Microsoft Works" software, which can convert Microsoft Word as well. If you use any other software, give me a ring on 357-9009 (work) or 358-1874 (home) and I may be able to indicate whether it is compatible or not.

Please note the deadline for each month's issue on the front page of this newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome Merv Matthews (19 Redwood Grove phone 357-2858) and David Grant (6 Earl Place phone 357-8269).

SUBS

Final reminder time. This is your last newsletter if you have not renewed your subscription!

GEAR AMNESTY

Recently Mick Leyland (Gear Officer) and other club officers have done a stocktake of club gear. This was to determine what gear we are short of, and hence would want to purchase if funds permit. However they found that there is a lot of gear that has been hired out to club members and non-members that has not been returned.

When club gear is hired it should be returned immediately after that trip. This is particularly important for events such as the club's snowcraft instruction courses (which are coming up soon) as the gear requirements are very high for these events. So how about checking that disused corner of your room or the back garage? You may be surprised!

For those of you who feel a little guilty (having stumbled across that ice-axe from last year's snowcraft!) there will be a GEAR AMNESTY on all outstanding gear from now to THURSDAY 27th JUNE (the last club night of the month). Please return it to Mick Leyland or his back door steps, no questions asked (promise!). For gear not returned by this date, however, we may have to resort to desperate measures, such as no further gear hire or as a last desperate measure, perhaps even a list of culprits in the next newsletter!!!

Gear hire from this club is very cheap, and is one of the great benefits of the club. Please make the system work by returning all gear immediately after use.

EVENTS CARD FOR JULY-DECEMBER 1996

The Events Card for the next six months has hit the streets, and is included with this newsletter. I hope all club members and prospective members will be catered for by the wide range of trips and activities being offered. With winter arriving, the Snowcraft Course weekends and follow-up climbing trips are prominent, but there is still plenty of variety for those who are not into the snow and ice, with plenty of local tramping of various grades. Also some different trips such as a summit camp on Ngauruhoe, a trip to Mt Hikurangi on the East Coast, and some formal instruction on essential skills such as navigation and outdoor first aid. Any further ideas for this period, extended trips over the summer, or for 1997, let the Trip Convenor, Terry (356-3588) know.

Over thirty members have committed themselves to lead one or more trips/events, giving about fifty day, weekend, or longer trips. I'm sure all club members will actively support this good effort by going on lots of these trips and events. Don't forget to encourage flatmates, partners, parents, family and friends to come on these trips as well.

Most of the club evenings have also been organised, using members and outside speakers. Included are also the Photo Competition and Interclub Quiz. Any suggestions to fill the remaining gaps? Let Tony (357-7439) know.

'PNTMC GUIDE FOR TRIP LEADERS' AND PINK "HELP" FORM

The latest version of "PNTMC Guide For Trip Leaders", essential reading for leaders of Club trips, and good value for all trip participants, has been rewritten and is included at the end of this Newsletter. Please keep as reference. Also included with this newsletter is a copy of the pink "Help" form put out by the NZ Mountain Safety Council for possible Search and Rescue purposes, for when you are leading club or other trips. Fill it in or use it as a guide to compile details, prior to the trip's departure. (More copies are available, at club night, from the police, etc.)

Special note for Trip Leaders from the Trips Coordinator, Terry Crippen

If you have committed yourself to lead a PNTMC trip set down on the Events Card please don't forget your responsibilities. Consult the end of the newsletter for the "PNTMC Guide for Trip Leaders." A couple of comments on different aspects of club trips:

Firstly: If you can't lead the trip as scheduled (either on the Events Card or when it appears in the Newsletter) and wish to cancel (this doesn't relate to trips that do not go due to a nil response), postpone, change it in any way (eg. From a day to weekend trip or vice versa), it is essential that you contact the trip coordinator (Terry Crippen 356-3588) as soon as possible. As a scheduled club trip it is a club decision (ie. Leader in conjunction with trip coordinator) as to whether a scheduled trip is changed, etc. Over the last year a number of trips have been cancelled, postponed or changed by the leader from what has been scheduled. Sometimes the leader has discussed it with me, but often I find out inadvertently or not at all. Two cases come to mind. The first one, I passed on names collected at Club Night to the leader only to find out the trip was cancelled. The second was when a concerned parent phoned an Overdue Trips Contact regarding a trip that wasn't out on time. Confusion reigned, as the trip was scheduled for an earlier weekend and the leader had postponed it without informing the Club.

Secondly. Now that winter has arrived, hours of daylight are much reduced, and temperatures are low. Extra care is needed in planning and undertaking any trip. The possibility of extreme cold and running out of daylight is real. Don't underestimate winter conditions, either on the tops, in rivers and streams, or just in the bush. I find that late autumn/early winter is always the tricky time for tramping until I get acclimatised, on a couple of trips, to winter conditions. So ensure all trip participants have extra warm clothing and food and a good torch, even on day trips. Above the bushline full storm gear is essential and, soon, ice axe and crampons.

So far no major problems have arisen from aspects mentioned above (e.g. requiring a SAR), But some situations regarding trips do send out the wrong signals to parents/partners, club members and prospective members.

Good safe winter tramping.

OUTDOOR FIRST AID COURSE

How is your ability to carry out first aid? What about first aid in the hills when you need to improvise and medical help is not just a (cell) phone away? A bad cut, a broken limb, frostbite or hypothermia? Hopefully such situations seldom arise but it is always useful to be able to render care and help if required. The NZ Mountain Safety Council (Manawatu) is running a weekend course and if it is like the one I (Terry) went on a few years ago it should be great value and enjoyable. 13-14 July, Camp Kilsby near Linton, cost \$50 includes meals etc. Contact Cheryl Wright 357-1169 for enrolment forms. Pre enrolment essential, 20 places only.

PHOTO ALBUM

The Club Photo Album is currently being renovated and photographic donations are required. Of course we will consider anything, but we would prefer good photos of club activities, club members, and well known places. We would particularly like to see donations from place getters in the photo competition. Contact Tony at 357-7459, or a committee member.

SNOWCRAFT COURSES 1966!!!

This winter there will be three snowcraft courses designed to teach the novice on snow some basic techniques that will provide the skills necessary to safely climb the mountains on the North Island in winter and tramp many south Island transalpine summer routes. Each course builds on the previous course and the three course programme is regarded as integral. The club is planning some pos snowcraft III alpine trips this winter and, in autumn next year, a glacier craft course will be offered. In addition, there are plans to initiate a rockcraft programme to address yet another important aspect of mountaineering. The novice thus has the opportunity to learn the alpine skills necessary to tackle many south Island mountains.

The Snowcraft Instruction courses this year will be more formal than in previous years incorporating both field experience and lectures. The huts have been selected to afford the convenience for evening lectures and minimise night travel from the road end. The focus in these courses will be upon teaching and not on simply reaching the summit (though this is always a possibility).

SNOWCRAFT I (19-21 JULY)

This year we will be holding the first snowcraft course at the Massey University hut on Mt Ruapehu near the Turoa skifield. We will leave Palmerston North on Friday night for the hut, which is a short walk from the road. The course assumes no prior experience on snow. The programme consists of lessons on basic snow travel on gentle and moderate snow slopes. The objective is to introduce students to various techniques for walking on snow and the use of an ice axe. The outdoor activities will be supplemented by evening sessions in the hut on diverse topics such as mountain weather, knot tying, etc.

Prior to the trip there will be a meeting in Palmerston North for all participants to attend. This is scheduled for Tuesday 16 July. This is an important meeting as it is here that the first instruction is given, and material concerning the programme distributed. Moreover, it will be here that the required gear will be sorted out and the travel logistics finalised for the trip.

SNOWCRAFT II (3-4 AUGUST)

The second snowcraft course will be held at Kapuni Lodge on Mt Egmont. We will leave Palmerston North EARLY Saturday morning for the Lodge, which is about 1½ - 2 hours walk from the Dawson Falls car park. The course is designed to reinforce the skills learned in Snowcraft I and extend them. Specifically, the focus will be on basic handling, setting up snow belays, and crampon techniques. Again the outdoor activities will be supplemented by evening sessions. It is hoped that by the end of this course the participants will have developed confidence on hard snow and modest snow slopes, learn some useful cramponing techniques, and be capable of setting up a basic snow belay using a snow stake or snowpig.

As with Snowcraft I, there will be an evening session prior to the trip on the 30th of July. The session will be held at the climbing wall located in the Massey University recreation complex. One goal here is to introduce the student to rope handling and belays in the comfort of an indoor gymnasium. This will optimise our time on the slopes. The logistical details of the trip to Egmont will be finalised at this meeting.

PHOTO COMPETITION

The club's annual photo competition will be held on Thursday, June 27 and judged once again by John Cleland, our guest photographic expert. The rules for the competition will be as follows:

- Slides must not have been entered previously.
- All entries must be related to tramping, skiing or climbing.
- All slides must have a cross on the bottom left-hand corner of the mount for normal viewing (ie. Top right-hand corner when loaded into the carousel).
- Limit of 3 slides per person per category, but no limit on prints.

Categories:

1. Alpine (NZ) Predominately alpine scenery in NZ ie. above the bushline.
2. Scenic (NZ) Scenes of natural pictorial interest in NZ hills, coasts, etc. i.e. predominately below the snowline.
3. Natural History (NZ) NZ flora or fauna.
4. Topical (NZ) People in tramping, climbing, or skiing-related activities in NZ.
5. Overseas Alpine or Scenic Related to tramping etc. overseas.
6. Overseas People Climbers or people met while tramping, climbing overseas.

Formats: slides, black and white prints, colour prints. Prints do not need to be mounted.
Prints may be judged as one group or separated at the judge's discretion, depending on numbers.

HOW TO MAKE A TCL by Terry Crippen

Now that winter is coming and there is the possibility of getting caught out without a torch or your torch/headlamp fails, it's useful to know how to make a TCL. Using an upended 1.5 or 2 litre plastic soft drink bottle, stick a candle (about 3 to 4 inches long) up the spout (the diameters match just right) screw the top back on, cut a 2 by 4 inch hole in the side of the plastic bottle, (for lighting the candle and letting oxygen in), and it's ready to be used. Use it to find your way back to the hut or for those early morning starts: hold it with the cut hole pointing to the back (avoids draft, but allows ventilation), above your head (to avoid the glare). You can use a "refresh" packet opened up inside out as a reflector. The air passing over the bottle is enough to take the heat away so that the bottle doesn't start to lose shape and melt. Use inside the hut necessitates walking around with it to create a cooling breeze, and "entertainment" value for the others in the hut.

PS: Question; what does TCL as against TLC mean?

BOOK REVIEW

BY TONY GATES

"ACROSS THE TARARUAS AND BEAUTIFUL OTAKI" by Frank Penn, Otaki Mail Office, Otaki, 1920.

"The Edelweiss here grows profusely, and for a while, one is tempted to step carefully so as to avoid trampling upon the blooms. Soon, however, this feeling wears off, and one places one's foot just where it is most convenient. Really, it would be worth the trudge from Alpha to visit this spur on a clam moonlit night, when surely the fairies would provide us with unimagined joys and visions of loveliness."

"You gaze in wonder, become contemplative, and suddenly feel very small and insignificant. You get for once, at any rate, the correct perspective and discover that your ambitions, petty successes, and yourself are merely pinpoints in immensity. The mountains have a corrective power on mental perspective which compels inward acknowledgement."

"One cannot go the trip across Mount Hector Track without experience and new feelings and new thoughts, or gaining new knowledge about nature. It makes fresh blood, brain, and nerve- it cleanses and tones the system in a thorough and exhilarating fashion, and one is certainly the better for the experience. If you are one of those who find no pleasure in aching muscles, in early rising, in hard beds or hard knocks; in fact in roughing it and in finding joy in the unconventionality and in living for a brief space much as a Neolithic man, well then, stay at home- there is no profiteering, and you get the fullest measure your soul is capable of absorbing."

Couldn't resist! Well, this is certainly a treasure of a book. It is a tiny soft cover booklet designed as a guide book of sorts for the trampler of the 1920's.

Several reasonable photographs of great historic interest are straight from the archives (or they themselves made the archives). Some of these are mounted with a ghastly thick black surround in a montage sort of format. The route map is also of historic interest, as are the advertisements.

The text is basically of one guided tramp from Bassets Hut (near Walls Whare), over to the Tauherenikau Valley, then up onto the Southern Crossing Route, and down to Otaki Forks. It is advertised as a four day trip, possible to complete in two days. Even way back in the 1920's tramping was popular, and seen as a rugged and glamour pastime! There are numerous interesting descriptions en route.

The text provides plenty of superlatives about the great beauty, scenery, vegetation, birdlife, and wilderness. It also mentions the introduced wildlife (including wild and unfriendly cattle) in a somewhat different way to how we see it, as this was all written before we understood such problems as accelerated erosion and TB.

The second chapter in the book deals with the seaside and horticultural resort of Otaki, and the road up to Otaki Forks. It is written in the same way, and goes way over the top in promoting the area.

"SOCIAL CLIMBERS" A Cultural Report by Alistair Millward

Five teachers, all women, and one daughter stuck in a mountain hut over a long weekend. No, not PNTMC's latest Maharahara crossing gone wrong but the new play at Centrepoint. The club was represented at one evening performance by a few members out for a night of culture; just goes to show that we're not all gun wielding, thar crazy mongrels. Written by Roger Hall, 'Social climbers' was a very entertaining play with plenty of humour, I thought Warren was going to fall off his seat laughing at one stage. It also had some more serious, thoughtful moments amongst the drunken revelry and sexist jokes. The excellent acting was appreciated by the audience. Also excellent was the realistic mountain hut set, which made us all feel at home. If it is still playing when this newsletter is published and you need a good laugh, I can thoroughly recommend 'Social climbers' for an evening's entertainment.

TRIP REPORTS

WAIPAWA TO RANGIWAHIA

by Peter Stockdale

March 22-24

We rooled down the hill into town with Ruapehu standing across the right hand horizon and the black cone of Taranaki straight ahead. It was going to be a good weekend. We pulled up outside the cop shop only ten minutes late and three sprightly lads tossed their packs in the back and jumped in and we were away. Two hours later minus ten minutes we were on the banks of the Waipawa by way of Wakarara. Judy drove up the hill towards the Sunrise car park and we closed the gate behind us not to see another fence until we hopped the stile into Rangi car park. The other three shot off up through the gorge of the Waipawa, I had put running shoes on to keep my boots dry and followed them well behind. A smoko was called by Llew just above the junction of the track up to the Sunrise saddle and I had time out to change into my, to be christened, boots. Then we started to move along up the river to Waipawa Saddle and got there just under two hours from the car stop. The wind was keen and there were small patches of snow on the saddle and no one stopped on the top but moved on down the ridge to the first place where the small stream crossed the track from the left. Another smoko, this time by Mick. The track, part down the stream, was icy and some of the reeds were covered with ice up to a centimetre in diameter, there was verglas on some of the boulders and the going was a little treacherous. It was dark for the last ten minutes before Waikamaka Hut, and the temperature was dropping. The hut was palatial, even if a small palace. The stove was particularly well set up for drying clothes, socks, boots etc and we ate like fighting cocks. New mattresses, and Mick on the floor, and myself on the top bunk with Greame and Llew in between, kept the snorers at bay and well dispersed.

We slept in'til 7 am and then were up and into the museli. We took off for the Rangi Saddle at about 8 am dropping down to the stream and following it up and taking the right hand fork as we climbed. The stream is one of the more beautiful brooks of the Ruahines. We climbed into a wide basin filled with Spaniards and another smoko was called – Graeme? Then on with a bit of a rush to the Saddle we once again we took our ease in perfect weather looking back to Te Atuaoparapara and Armstrong Saddle.

We dropped off the saddle through the tussock down to the stream and walked a wide valley down to the Kawhatau River that was reminiscent of the South Island. We walked up the river to the cairns that mark the track to Waterfall hut and had a look at the hut before heading on up Pinnacle Creek. About a kilometre up the creek Mick called a lunch spot and we all dropped our packs. From where we had joined the Kawhatau to the lunch spot we were buzzed by three different choppers checking us and the deer out.

We started up for the saddle at the head of Pinnacle Creek. Mick said “you’ll be surprised how fast this one goes!” Greame and I weren’t. On the top we flopped in the track and were mesmerised by the view; it was possible to see the Kawekas as well as many of the Northern Ruahine landmarks. After a good break we strolled off along the ridge ‘til we reached the signpost down to Pourrangaki Hut. Now the cloud was rolling in from the east and beginning to boil over the saddle we had left ten minutes ago.

Then, as we stood up, we saw, down to our left about 100 metres below, a circular rainbow. This was a first for some of us. Then we saw it – on the bottom of the edge of the rainbow; four small shadows – The Brocken Spectre – I didn’t think they came in multiples before. Llew made like the Chicken dance and soon all four spectres were joining in. We set off down the ridge and about 200 metres further on saw a much more typical Spectre without the rainbow and a large dark shadow on a white cloud; looked a bit like Mick.

It too us a fair while to drop down to the Pourangaki and the double confluence which makes it different – again a smoko and then up the last 60 metres to Pourangaki Hut. This again was a deluxe sort of hut and we soon had the billies boiling and tea and coffee followed. It had been a seven hour day but we were glad to stop.

The next day it looked darker but Graeme came back into the hut to opine that it was clearing up to the North. We set off up the ridge at a little before 8 am. It was looking pretty dull and cloudy the way we were heading. We left the bush about an hour later and started up some tussocky guts that were studded with solitary leatherwoods. Mick called a halt in the lee of one of these last and we started to rug up with parkas and rain pants. This turned out to be a good decision as it was blowing and cold all the way up the ridge to the sign. We had a miserable break while we checked the bearing for Maungamahue which turned out to be about 160 degrees. The visibility was about 20 metres and we headed off with the wind from our right and Mick and Llew keeping their eyes on the compasses. We followed along a drop off to our left and then stumbled across the rain gauges on the flat below Maungamahue and then we were on top of the hill and towards the saddle where there is a good campsite and a bigger tarn and stopped for a smoko and a drink of water. We soon chilled and took off for the saddle down to Triangle and then galloped for Rangi and cleared the clag about 500 metres from the hut. A good lunch followed and some hot drinks. The hut was full of Wellington trampers and they were the first people we saw on the tramp. Llew phoned Jenny to meet us in the car park

an hour later and we arrived almost at the same time. A pleasant and steady two days tramping with superb views and good company. We were Graeme, Llew, Mick and Peter.

SEA KAYAKING: DOUBTFUL SOUND/LAKE MANAPOURI

by John Phillips April 2-6

Tuesday morning, April 2nd – our group of four plus guide set off from Te Anau township to Manapouri settlement in the pre-dawn darkness. It didn't get light very fast, thanks to a heavy ominous cloud cover. The weather forecast did not look good for any kind of outdoor activity, let alone sea kayaking – two cold fronts about to sweep through Fiordland over the next couple of days. Our driver and guide for the trip, boasting about the glorious weather that Fiordland had experienced for the last month, did little to help lift our spirits.

There's something I recall a little discomfoting about the last moments before a kayaking/rafting trip (from the very few that I'd done) driving towards one's launching destination... the cold rubbery smell of piles of life-jackets, wetsuits, and other associated paraphernalia... a reminder that you're about to spend some days out of your element, ie. not on land!

The plan was a five-day trip – offered by Fiordland Wilderness Experiences – with our host Daphne Taylor to transport us across Lake Manapouri and Wilmot Pass. In the first 2-day leg, Daphne would accompany us as our guide, kayaking with us on doubtful sound, then transport us back to the West Arm of Lake Manapouri. From there, in the remaining 3-day leg, we would make our own way kayaking back across the lake to Manapouri settlement.

Our initial apprehension was compounded by delays trying to get across the lake in Daphne's motor boat, seeking shelter in a cove at one stage to wait for wind and waves to settle down to a safe level. Once out of the boat at West Arm, to our delight the weather brightened up a little as we drove across Wilmot Pass; glimpses of the awesome Fiordland landscape there warmed us for what was to be a great first day in Doubtful Sound.

Before midday we were ready to go... kayaks unloaded and packed... people kitted out, briefed on skills and safety. We set off from Deep Cove in Doubtful Sound in double kayaks ("divorce-boats" we were told!) and headed northwest up the Sound.

We soon discovered the wonderful rhythm of sea-kayaking as we made our way towards the entrance to Hall Arm. As avid as I am about tramping, this kayaking stuff struck me as being so eminently sensible... actually getting the boat to carry one's gear instead of lugging it like a mule across the countryside... and with kayaking there is so much time to look around and soak in the surroundings, gliding along with comparative ease (well, until my paddling partner in front realised he was the only one paddling!). Actually, I was bludging off Buzz a little bit, but with good reason I soon realised – my right forearm began to feel quite sore and I was labouring a little. A painful reminder to do a little practice for such a trip first of one hasn't done kayaking before.

We forged on to the entrance to Hall Arm, marked by the striking Davidson Head rising 1000 metres almost vertically out of the water. Hall Arm was an absolute delight. The felling of being totally immersed in this fiord-landscape cannot be adequately described. On the open water the sheer vertical scale of the surroundings captures you. At a different scale you can glide in along the base of the cliffs dripping with overhanging branches, ferns and mosses, and capture the spray of the numerous waterfalls. We pulled into a small sheltered beach for lunch.

I was sharing a double kayak with Buzz, and Ramon and Vanessa shared another double. An exciting diversion from the afternoon's paddling was a bit of "sailing" – our guide equipped us with optional spinnaker-type sails designed for use with kayaks. Our two kayaks were "rafted" together alongside each other and the paddles were propped upright to serve as masts for the sail. We were soon hurtling down Hall Arm at a rate of knots – COOL! And yes... cool it was indeed, thanks to the wind and the lack of heat-generating physical exertion involved. Reaching the head of the Arm, we turned round into the wind and soon warmed up again paddling back up to our campsite for the first night.

A large overhead trap and sandfly net provided by our host made for a fairly comfortable and sociable evening gathering at the camp, but the rain soon set in as people retired to their tents for the night. It kept going till the morning too and, after a night of booming thunder echoing up and down the Sound, we woke the next morning to the sight of the nearby creek rising perilously close to the campsite, thanks also to the high tide in the Sound. We also woke to the wonderful sight of the mountain tops dusted with snow down to 600 metres. The weather eased enough for us to take in some of the transformed landscape as we paddled back out of Hall Arm, but the weather then closed in again, aborting our second day as we headed back to Deep Cove by 1 pm to unload the kayaks. We felt like cold, drowned rats as we drove back over Wilmot Pass to bed down in West Arm Hut for the second night. It was a bit of an anti-climax after a fabulous tow days, with

not even a fireplace in the hut to warm our spirits. The sombre lights of the power station buildings glowed across the other side of the lake arm.

The third day was spent in the hut waiting out the weather, which was enthralling enough at times, with impressive lightning and thunder as we had only experienced in Fiordland. Refried beans brightened the spirits in anticipation (or hope!) of finer weather and some kayaking on the fourth and fifth days.

The weather was still grey and cold on the morning of the fourth day (Friday), with a little drizzle to start. But, provided the winds stayed down and the lake wasn't too choppy, we felt that it was better to get going with only two days left. Ramon and Venessa scored a double kayak again, but Buzz and I each had a single for this leg of the trip. I was a little concerned as to how I would fare, with my right arm still quite swollen from the first day's paddling, despite the rest since Wednesday.

We decided to head for a hut at the head of Hope Arm in the southeast corner of Lake Manapouri – a fairly steady day's paddling ahead. Once paddling we soon warmed up a little. Our main concern was getting across South Arm which, we were told, could be very dicey when a stiff southerly blows. Our timing was perfect, with a lull in the wind as we surged to the other side, the sun even coming out for a brief moment, catching a rainbow in the misty cloud down the Arm.

The sun showed more frequently as we headed for the next beach for lunch. The beach had the right position to catch the sun, but it also faced a rather brisk north-westerly wind at this stage, which really set in the shivers once we stopped paddling. We huddled behind some scrub and downed some lunch. I scouted around a mossy-covered headland at the end of the beach for a couple of photos, but we were soon off again, eager to get paddling to warm up. Launching from a beach, we discovered, can have interesting outcomes if things don't go right, especially when there's a good headwind and a fair bit of surf. It's straightforward for all but the last person, who doesn't have someone else to push them off the beach. It was poor old Buzz who drew the short straw and, after wading out and hopping into his kayak, the wind promptly blew the bow of the boat straight back into the beach. Which is fine, as long as you stay at right angles to the beach, but the wind caught the side of the kayak and soon Buzz was very much side-on to the swell, hard up against the beach. He was promptly swamped and had to get out, bail the water out of the kayak, and re-launch in a somewhat dampened state.

Round the next point we entered Hope Arm, and paddled down to the hut in some lovely sunshine that did a lot towards helping us feel the whole trip had been worthwhile so far. An opportunity to dry out some clothes in the last hour or two of sunshine, followed by a blazing pot-belly fire in Hope Arm Hut, soon reinforced the feeling. A swim, a hot meal, and a good bed made for a great fourth night – if it wasn't for the local rodent population, who obviously thought that when the lights go out, it's time to party! I must have got up half-a-dozen times to re-arrange the food out of reach of the little buggers – I ended up hanging all the food and even the empty plastic bags up on an overhead wire – even if a bag is empty, mice just seem to see it as an opportunity to rummage around and make as much noise as possible. Ten minutes after doing this I was stirred yet again by the little cretins. I was confronted by the most amazing sight when I flicked on my torch to investigate... about half-a-dozen of the most smug looking little rodents were draped over this empty plastic bag out in the middle of the overhead wire! Furthermore, having been disturbed they proceeded to tight-rope their way back along the wire! Exhausted of remedies, I went back to bed and tried my best to ignore them. They must have got bored and called all this off after a while, because I ended up getting quite a solid night's sleep after all that.

The fifth and last day we woke to brilliant blue sky, not a breath of wind, and the most glorious sight – a view from the hut straight down Hope Arm to the snow clad Kepler Mountains rising above the northern lake shore, reflected in the lake's mirror-like surface. This was the view that we had to put up with for the next two hours as we glided back out of Hope Arm to the main part of the lake. We didn't have too far to get back to Manapouri settlement, so made the most of our last day, and the glorious weather, exploring some of the enchanting wooded islands in the middle of the lake. We pulled up at a little beach on one which, amazingly, was free of sandflies. A good hour or more was spent sunning on rocks, eating lunch, and then exploring the island, which would have only been a few hundred metres in diameter. Some rocky headlands provided magnificent views north and west across the lake to the Kepler Mountains and Cathedral Peaks, plastered in a thick mantle of snow (the end effect of the two days of foul weather earlier in the week). Crouching through the peripheral scrub revealed a fascinating interior of beech forest with its thick mossy carpet underfoot. We ambled about, making the most of photographic opportunities and generally savouring the moment. But the day drew on, so it was time to head back to the settlement for the end of a memorable introduction to sea kayaking and, for myself, the wilds of Fiordland. (Next issue: Fiordland tramping).

MANGAHAO VISITED by Tony Gates May 11

It was a damp, dark day in May. Derek the leader took three carloads of us into the hinterland of the Tararua to prove day trips are as popular as ever, and they can visit some pretty good spots. He also was in the mood for teaching some map and compass skills, something Derek is renowned for.

We set off from the top dam in light drizzle, but it soon started to dry out, and we diverted away from the track at the top of the lake, and followed the river up, a much quicker option than the track. Some map and compass training on the way. At the swing bridge, we joined the track, and splashed our way up to Harris Creek Hut for an early lunch. Sorry, primus don't work, so no cuppa, damn.

We followed Dicks Creek up to Baber Creek, then back down to the lake, a route that required some physical exertion, a few navigational skills, and a bit of praying to the weather gods. It actually worked out really well, as we splashed on up the creek (fairly easy gradient), and then found our bearings on a bushy ridge. We made the saddle in good time, and soon were pushing through reasonably open bush down to the headwaters of Baber Creek. After a short section of fairly difficult travel, the valley opened up nicely. Being a large party, we did tend to get separated from time to time, but we knew the way, and it wasn't too difficult. Some concerns arose about reaching the cars before dark, but there was nothing to worry about. Weren't we fit and experienced trampers? Nevertheless, we were glad to reach the wide open lake shore and were doubly pleased to be able to follow the lake edge around for a bit (deep gluggy silt!), so saving maybe 20 minutes of up and down on the track (the lake level was considerably down). Back at the cars just on dusk. Derek had a few more things to say...

Day trampers were Tony, Clive, Nigel, Derek, Warren, Sarah, David, Victoria, Marie and ?

CHAMBERLAIN CREEK an epic trip (and tale) by Warren Wheeler May 4

Chamberlain Creek is in the North-east Tararua Ranges and runs south off East and West Peaks into the Ruamahanga River. It is something of a classic creek trip for fit and experienced parties. It features abseiling, rock-climbing, pack-floating, and night-walking with a wide range of terrain and outstanding scenery. It gained notoriety after an epic trip by a search and rescue party some years ago. This trip was originally billed as an overnighter but was changed into the more "normal" light-weight one day trip of 14-15 hours: Still interested? Are you fit? Can you get a harness and figure-8 for the abseils? Can you handle a 4.00 a.m. start?... Sounded good to me!!!

By 5.35 a.m. we were at the Putara road-end and ready to go. The weather was perfect and was to remain so for the whole trip. There was a clear starry sky and full moon but despite this astro-illumination we still needed our torches in the bush. We bounced across the first swing-bridge and moved quickly along the easy track. The next bridge was over a deep ravine, darkly ominous. It's all uphill from here, stepwise over tree roots, the first sweaty test.

As darkness turned to grey the torches were switched off and we reached the turnoff. Tonight we would be returning from the left, and Roaring Stag...ahh, the sweet anticipation of all that lay ahead. We turned right and after a bit of mud and slush for half an hour or so, the trees grew shorter and finally Herepai Hut appeared, door wide open, nobody home. Breakfast on the tops. A chance to see where we were going, check map features, fill water bottles, try out the dunny, and get to know our companions a bit more.

Onwards and upwards into the sunny scrub and tussock leading up the steep ridge to Herepai and over to Ruapai for a break – glorious views, despite cloud now obscuring the earlier views of Ruapehu. At East Peak we decided to drop into Chamberlain Creek the easier way off the saddle between West and East Peak. This would sadly involve only two abseils instead of three, but with nine of us it would save time. Phil went on with three of us to set up the first abseil while the others waited to see how well Rachell's boot would respond to being wrapped with half of an elastic bandage – the sole had split in half across the ball of the foot. (It was to work surprisingly well, lasting until lunchtime when the second half of the bandage was deployed.)

Getting through the leatherwood was a lot easier than expected and we soon dropped into the rugged little creek. Progress downstream was pretty straightforward until we were stopped by a small waterfall – the first abseil? Not this time – Delia scrambled across a little slip to the right and found a way down. The real abseil spot soon presented itself – marked by a piece of webbing left jammed in a crack in the streambed. We opted for the "dry" route, so the rope was thrown over a handy tree and run-tested by Phil. The rest of us donned our more or less familiar harnesses and followed him down the little cliff, a drop of about 7-8 m. The next abseil was only 10 m downstream, an easy 6 m drop beside the cascade.

We stopped for lunch in one of the few sunny spots, "on schedule" and just downstream of the other branch of Chamberlain Creek that Kevin and Phil had come down earlier in the year.

The creek was now running in a much bigger channel and we could rock-hop along beside the stream until it narrowed into a gorge – and a slithery scramble down to the first little pool which required a quick dip to get across. AAAGh!!! – it was cold! Get warm, keep moving... right into the next one, only waist deep this time.

Phil and Delia got ahead at this stage – making good time and no doubt relishing the thought of jumping off the infamous Waterfall. The rest of us were moving more slowly and arrived a bit chilly at the next obstacle, a deep wade and short swim across a decent-sized pool. Amazing how deep the pools were considering the size of the stream. To help us across Kevin threw an end of the rope over and, using Rachelle's pack as a float, we were fast-ferried across. This worked fine but unfortunately left people standing around getting cold on both sides of the pool. Progress downstream was blocked by a 3-4 m waterfall – either a jump into another pool and swim, or a steep bank to climb and a short sidle through the bush. Jumping in was not met with much enthusiasm so Kevin decided to help hoist us up the 4-metre bank using the rope again. So we each dug out our harnesses again, clipped in, and stepped up off David's shoulders on up the bank. More standing around, more getting cold waiting for Kevin to lead us down the sidle back into the creek. We got moving again but we had no chance to warm up as it was only fifty metres to the top of the Waterfall: should we abseil around and stay dry or should we save time and jump? Jumping would be fun but...

Phil and Delia had already done the Waterfall and were waiting in a huddle on the beach at the far side of the pool 5 metres below. They just wanted to get going, so after scrambling up and around the corner to rig the abseil Kevin told them to go and get a fire going at the Roaring Stag hut.

Time was starting to slip by and it would soon be dark. The option of staying put for the night was considered and dismissed by Kevin – it would be too cold, although our resources included 2 or 3 Survival Blankets, a cooker, spare food, and soups. In the meantime, Greg made a quick brew of noodle cup-o-soup, while we huddled to keep warm, fuelling up on chocolate and scrog.

Nikki and Greg were hoisted up the bank and joined Kevin for the abseil while the rest of us psyched ourselves up for the jump. Now how do we do this?? Throw pack in first or keep it on? What about hidden logs and rocks and things? OK...pack on, run and jump as far as you can to land just outside the base of the waterfall so that the current will help carry you to the beach, lie on your back and paddle and kick like crazy OK? Rachelle. Ladies first....

Amazingly, after emerging from the water I started feeling warm straight away – good old woolly vest and two woolly shirts, they must really hold the heat. How Kevin kept warm in just his polypro T-shirt I don't know...)"just keep moving...a lot!"). Everyone feeling pretty good now, the worst over...we thought. Only two hours to the hut (in daylight), and, according to Kevin, only a couple of deep pools to get across, although he couldn't recall exactly. Hardly surprising really, it's pretty full on the whole way – so much to remember, so much to forget.

It was about 5.30 p.m. and getting on towards dark by the time we met the Ruamahanga River a short distance downstream from the waterfall. By torchlight it was going to be a lot longer than 2 hours to get to the hut...not a problem, we'll take our time, so long as we can keep warm by keeping moving...better than camping out for sure. We all had torches and made slow but steady progress down the gorge – about a kilometre on the map. We rock=hopped along one side or the other and crossed over when necessary. At the deeper crossings it was difficult to find the shallowest route along the gravel shoals. We probably ended up getting a bit wetter than in daylight but in any case the pools may have had their summer shallows scoured out by Autumn storm flows....maybe.

Anyway there must have been at least four or five places where we were over waist deep or more – and at least three of these included a short swim. We seemed to reach them just as we were starting to warm up from the last one. (Phil and Delia had opted for stripping off their tops to keep them dry during the pool crossings, they were having an epic trip too, somewhere ahead...their wet footprints leading us on.) Where possible we scrambled around the deep bits. This included some tricky bits of rock-climbing (which again delayed progress) with Kevin showing the way and giving plenty of encouragement and help. Using his advise and example we could more easily help each other to locate footholds and so on.

The cold and weariness was starting to tell but I woke up in a hurry when, leading at the time, I stepped over a boulder into the shadow of my torch and off into space...only avoiding a 3 m fall by my leg remaining hooked over the boulder. I hauled myself back on track...yea, I'm OK. Mild hypothermia all round, maybe yes.

After what seemed to be the last deep crossing I put on my long-johns – wow, what a difference, instant warmth. Happiness filled. But then another crossing appeared and they got wet over the knees. Still warm though, great! What a discovery – bare legs are not necessarily the best way to keep warm, especially on a cold night. Then, to thoroughly test this theory, the Last Crossing appeared – and looked deep, dammit. David was route-finding: "Too deep here, it's over my head..." Straight across then, another cold swim. I thought that jumping in backwards would let me float out of the water on my pack but I only succeeded in having my glasses washed off my face...an offering to the River Gods.

Thankfully the gorge ended, the river opened out, the going got better with the ridge ahead beaconing us on to the Roaring Stage Hut, and with the full moon lighting the way under a starry sky one could be excused for feeling quite euphoric. There were still numerous river crossings but much easier, and no more than knee deep.

At about 10.30 p.m. we finally reached the hut with Kevin directing us tail-enders off the river bank with the news that there was a note in the Hut Book from Phil to say they had gone on to alert Search and Rescue. Kevin considered our options and decided that we should have a good break, get into dry clothes, have a feed, and walk out – it would be too cold to stay in the hut. While David quickly got a fire going the rest of us sorted ourselves out, took off wet socks to hang by the fire, wrung out wet clothes to lighten packs, and changed into dry clothes, some of which were shared around – Kevin's generosity meaning that he was left huddled butt naked in the corner by the fire at one stage. (Brendon had left his woollen jersey behind somewhere: don't take rock coloured clothing!). I nagged about hazards of sitting too close around the fire when hypothermic, even if we weren't.

We all started to perk up as we fuelled up on four or five brews of cu-o-soup and shared goodies like cabin bread and sardines, left-over macaroni-fish (from Greg's lunch), Blue Vein cheese (really gets your taste buds going!), slices of capsicum, scroggin and Bhujji mix. Nikki commented that as soon as she had some soup her fuzzy head cleared. Brendon also started to feel much better after shedding his cotton shirt and shorts and slipping into borrowed Polar Fleece jacket and dry long-johns. The clothing in his pack had got saturated, despite being in plastic bags, but at least the poly-pro vest he had been given upriver by Kevin had dried out.

It had taken five hours to come from the waterfall and despite being able to walk the last hour or so by the full moon some of the torches were getting pretty low. There was still four torches between the seven of us so at about 12.20 a.m. we headed off to the road-end, weary but in pretty good spirits, although I can't say I noticed anyone bursting into song. It took us a gentle couple of hours, with rest stops every half hour, to reach the signed turnoff we had passed some 19 hours earlier. Some were finding it hard to stay awake, almost dozing off when we stopped and passed the water bottles around.

The downhill bit was taken just as slowly. Tree-roots and downwards steps requiring care. Feet and knees really starting to feel sore. So tired that apparitions seemed to appear – at the swing-bridge Rachell saw someone lurking below... only to laugh it off as her own moonlit shadow. Finally at 4.30 a.m. we arrived at the road-end. No Phil... curses...no dry clothes to put on. Fortunately the walk out had pretty much dried us off and left us with only wet socks.

The seven of us piled into the Civic and, surprisingly, the suspension didn't bottom out so off we went, in search of a phone. We spotted a security light on at the first farm-house and woke the friendly farmer (Anyone home!). Kevin phoned and woke up Phil's flat, dragging Phil out of the sleep of the dead to tell him we had all walked out, and would he cancel the Search and Rescue etc...needless to say he could hardly believe it!

Now all we had to do was get home without the driver falling asleep at the wheel. Kevin reckoned on driver changes every 20 minutes, concentrating on keeping the speed down to 80 to 90. Despite our best efforts to keep awake Brendon still managed to take a micro-sleep, losing concentration and missing a right angle bend on the outskirts of Eketahuna – the lights momentarily disappeared into darkness as we dropped over the edge...and thankfully onto the grass-edged gravel continuation of the road – whew!! no worries.

At a 24 hour petrol station in Pahiatua we fuelled up the car as well as ourselves – dog-tired but still able to enjoy a hot pie. A very sleepy-filled car pulled in to the Foodtown carpark at 7.00 a.m., just as dawn was breaking. What an epic!! Boy, we were happy to be back! And won't the folk at home be happy too... David and I unfolded ourselves from the car, and agreed with Kevin's suggestion that it would be really good for everyone to get together for a de-brief. (see below).

Thanks Kevin for a most memorable trip, and tanks to Phil and Delia for your initiative – even if Search and Rescue weren't needed it could have been a lot worse, and this story not have the Happy Ending it now enjoys. A trip to be repeated some time soon? Probably not!.....summer-time? Sure, why not, see you there!

The Epics were Kevin Mansell, Phil Brown, Greg, Nikki, Rachelle, Delia, Brendon Sheppard (on his first Club Trip), David Grant, and Warren Wheeler, your humble scribe.

P.S. The de-briefing was very successful. WE expressed our support for Kevin's leadership and help throughout the trip. We heard Delia's side of the story as she and Phil agonized over what to do – stay at the hut or get SAR. Everyone was very positive and keen to learn and share their experiences, some of which I have incorporated in the points below which have been written in conjunction with Terry Crippen (Club Trips Convener). Terry has had discussions with Kevin Pearce who has lots of experience in leading hard club

trips, SAR, and Chamberlain Creek in particular. We came to the view that the main difficulty had been with managing the size of the party and the time of the year. The party should be small in number and all experienced people, and should really only be attempted in the summer months.

Other points noted included:

While everyone had carbo-loaded the day before, frequent eats on the way are essential.

Plenty of suitable warm clothing is needed (both to wear and change into).

Good boots are essential. Rachell's boot just lasted the distance but her feet were swollen for a couple of days later..... mine too – my rubber gummies (Ashleys) are obviously not up to the twisting and wrenching of rock-hopping.

SAR would have been initiated from Palmerston North by the Club overdue contacts the following day. This is standard procedure. Hence, as was done on this trip, the necessity for leaving full trip details behind.

PNTMC GUIDE FOR TRIP LEADERS

(All club Members should keep this for use/reference.)

AS LEADER OF A PNTMC TRIP, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY AND WELL BEING OF ALL THE PARTY MEMBERS. YOUR BUSHCRAFT / NAVIGATION / LEADERSHIP SKILLS MUST BE SUFFICIENT FOR THE TRIP YOU ARE LEADING.

BEFORE THE TRIP Don't leave planning to the last minute.

If for exceptional reasons you cannot lead the trip, or wish to change the trip as scheduled in any way, contact the Trip Convenor as soon as possible. (Also try to arrange a substitute leader, where necessary.)

- 1: Become familiar with the area and route; ask if in doubt. Obtain permission to cross private land. Got the latest map? To hire gear contact Gear Custodian well in advance.
- 2: Collect trip sheet at club night, and contact prospective participants.
- 3: Check experience and suitability of prospective participants with regards to type of trip, and grading. If necessary you may have to reject a prospective participant. If doing so suggest a more suitable club trip for them. Any special medical requirements?
- 4: Discuss with participants communal (e.g. evening) meals and personal food (e.g. breakfasts, lunches, nibbles, extra for emergencies), equipment required, (refer to Bushcraft or Mountaincraft manuals or ask) and hut pass requirements. Party gear?
- 5: Inform trip members when and where to meet. (Usually outside Foodtown), expected cost (usually 20c/km/car). For distances see notice board or ask Trip Convenor.
- 6: Ensure trip members have informed their parents/partners/flatmate that if the trip is overdue and there is concern, they can phone a club Overdue Trip Contact (listed on the front of the Newsletter and Events card and below). The Overdue Trip Contacts will know if there is any need for actual concern.
- 7: Leave written information for SEARCH & RESCUE purposes either: a club Overdue Trip contact, or at the Palmerston North Police Station, or at your home with a reliable contact (i.e.: partner/parent). Include: PNTMC name; list of all participants names/phone numbers; date, duration, grading, destination and planned route of trip; registration numbers of cars, what road end, and due out time/date. (Pink Help forms are available.)

ON THE TRIP

- 1: The party always travels together i.e. at the pace of the slowest person.
- 2: Communicate clearly your objectives to all participants, during the trip, so they feel part of a team.
- 3: Be aware of where each participant is, and how they are going, during the trip. Take a special interest in new timers. Make sure everyone is catered for in food/sleeping arrangements at night.

AT END OF TRIP

- 1: Take a few minutes for a debrief; any problems, suggestions, further trip ideas?
- 2: Collect all hired party gear and any money.
- 3: Make sure transport arrangements are still OK; all participants are leaving the road end.
- 4: On returning to Palmerston North inform whoever has the trip list. (When using the Police Station, uplift the information sheet in person.)

AFTER THE TRIP

- 1: Check and dry any hired party gear and return it promptly to the Gear Custodian.
- 2: Write a trip report (delegate?) and give it to the Newsletter Editor.

Any queries contact Trips Convenor (Terry 356-3588).

Overdue Trips Contacts: Mick Leyland 358-3183, Terry Crippen h 356-3588, w 356-7154, Sue and Lawson Pither 357-3033.

CLUB NIGHTS

These are held on the second and last Thursdays of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street (down alleyway). During daylight saving, meetings are scheduled to start at 7.45 pm, and during standard time (i.e. winter) at the earlier time of 7.30 pm.

Trips Convenor

Terry Crippen 356-3588

Each Tuesday evening (6.30 pm onwards) there is informal rock climbing at Massey's rockwall in the Recreation Centre. For more details contact Andy Backhouse 353-0774.

The club's mail address for correspondence is PO Box 1217, Palmerston North.

Trip Grades

Grades of trips can depend on many factors, most especially the weather and state of the track. As a guide, a reasonably proficient trampler 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. (I) refers to instruction courses.

Gear

The club has gear available for hire. For major trips and instruction courses, some gear might be in short supply and early bookings are desirable. Phone Mick Leyland (358-3183). Return gear promptly please.

Gear for General Trips

For day trips, each person should have appropriate footwear, small pack, lunch and nibbles, water bottle, parka, over trousers, gloves, whistle, and woollen head gear. There must be at least one torch, first aid kit, map and compass amongst the group, plus an adequate supply of toilet paper and sun cream etc. On snow, dark glasses or preferably goggles are essential. For weekend or longer trips, a large pack with sleeping bag and cover, carry-mat, parka, over-trousers, mittens, balaclava, longjohns / change of warm clothes, torch, with spare bulb, map compass, eating utensils, first aid kit, sun cream, candle, matches, toilet paper, and food for appropriate number of days. Dinners are usually communal. Hut passes are required depending on location and plans.

Overdue Trips Contacts

Mick Leyland Ph.358-3183, Lawson & Sue Pither Ph 357-3033 or Terry Crippen 356-3588.

Club Officers for 96/97

Patron: Lawson Pither. President: Terry Crippen 356-3588.
Vice President: Tony Gates 357-7439 Secretary: Warren Wheeler 356-1998.
Treasurer: Peter Wiles 358-6894 Membership enquiries: Warren Wheeler 356-1998 or Liz Flint 356-7654. Editor: John Phillips 358-1874
Newsletter mailing: Peter Wiles; Gear custodian: Mick Leyland 358-3183.

P. N. Tramping & Mountaineering Club Inc.

Six Month Evc Calendar: July - December 96

JULY

3-4	Thurs trampers Waitewaewae overnight	Judy Callesen	357-01924
	Committee meeting		
6-7	Cattle Ridge	M Patrick Janssen	356-3116
	Forest Hill Stream	E/M Dennis Moore	357-5651
11	Thursday day trampers	Bev Akers	325-8879
	Club Night: Intro To Snowcraft	Andy Backhouse & Bruce Van Brunt	357-7439
13-14	Ruahine Sunrise	M Tony Gates	357-7439
13-14	MSC Outdoor First Aid	all contact Terry	356-3588
14	Shorts-Toka loop	M/F Graham Peters	329-4722
16(Tue)	Instructional evening (for snowcraft participants only)		
18	Thursday day trampers	Pam Wilson	357-6247
20-21	Snowcraft 1, Turua	I, M/F Andy Backhouse & Bruce Van Brunt	353-0774
			328-4761
21	Hound Hike	Family Liz Morrison	357-6532
25	Thursday day trampers	Mike Corns	358-4869
25	Club Night: Trekking in Nepal	Phil Brown	
27-28	Mitre Flats	M Warren Wheeler	356-1998
28	Herepai Hut	E/M Judy & Peter Stockdale	355-5277
30(Tues)	Instructional evening (for Snowcraft Course participants only)		

AUGUST

1	Thursday day trampers	Peter Johnstone	358-8596
	Committee meeting		
3-4	Snowcraft 2, Egmont	I Andy Backhouse & Bruce Van Brunt	353-0774
	(prerequisite SC 1)		328-4761
4	Holdsworth	M+F Chris Saunders	328-4899
8	Thursday day trampers	Howard Nicolson	357-2768
	Club night: Antarctica	Mick Leyland	358-3183
8-11	Hierua Hut	M/F Liz Flint	356-7654
11	Top Maropea	Jill Spencer	329-8738
17-18	Snowcraft 3, Whakapapa	I Andy Backhouse & Bruce Van Brunt	353-0774
	(prerequisite SC 2)		328-4761
18	Chris's Special	M Chris Saunders	358-4899
20(Tues)	Interclub Quiz evening at the Pavilion		
22	Thursday day trampers	Doug Wakeling	323-4127
24-25	Ruahine Winter Classic	FE, T Derek Sharp	358-8178
25	Purity	E/M Judy Callesen	357-0192
29	Thursday day trampers	Merve Mathews	357-2858
29	Club night: BYO slides, videos, prints and yarns		
31-1 Sept	Kime Hut	M Peter Darragh	323-4498
31-1 Sept	Southern Crossing	FE, T Leader required	
1st Sept	Field Hut	E/M Dave Larsen	329-8054

SEPTEMBER

5	Thursday day trampers	David Warnock	357-4140
	Committee Meeting		
7-8	Pouaki, Egmont	M Malcolm Parker	357-5203
8	Tunipo	M Dale Lockart	359-2922
12	Thursday day trampers	Cath Lyttle	329-8608
12	Club Night: SAR and First Aid	Travers Moffitt	
14-15	Whangaehu, climbing	F, T Nigel Barrett	326-8847
	Rangi snowplay	E+M Tony Gates	357-7439
19	Thursday day trampers	John Rockell	358-3513
21-22	Gold Creek	E/M Graeme Roberts	357-8567
	Sunrise Waiapawa loop	M Warren Wheeler	356-1998
26	Thursday day trampers	Phil Pearce	354-6887
26	Club night: Climbing in Bolivia	Andy Backhouse	356-3588
28-29	Climbing Whakapapa	M/F, T Terry Crippen	356-3588
29	Rimitaka Incline	E+M Richard Lockett	323-0948

OCTOBER

3	Thursday day trampers	Peter Carver	354-4479
	Committee meeting		
5-6	Mckinnon Hut	M Barry Scott	354-0510
6	Ohau Shelter	E Margaret Riordan	356-7480
10	Thursday day trampers	Neil Gutry	354-0284
10	Club night: Rocky Mountains	Peter Stockdale	
12-13	Howletts - Longview	M/F Llew Prichard	358-2217
12-13	Rockclimbing instruction	I Andy Backhouse	353-0774
17	Thursday day trampers	Ken & Rose Hall	356-8538
19-20	Mangahao Flats combo	M Warren Wheeler	356-1998
20	Mick's Mystery Trip	M Mick Leyland	358-3183
24	Thursday day trampers	Lawson Pither	357-3033
	Labour Weekend		
25-28	Mi Hikurangi	M+F Terry Crippen	3563-588
26-28	Heritage Lodge	Family Jo & Lawrence O'Halloran	356-2296
31	Thursday day trampers	Judy Stockdale	355-5277
31	Club Night: Intro To South Island Trips		

NOVEMBER

2-3	Cattle Creek Xing	M David Grant	357-8269
3	Takapari cycle	MTB Stuart Hubbard	326-8762
7	Thursday day trampers	Liz Flint	356-7654
	Committee meeting		
9-10	Whanganui Bay rock	T Andy Backhouse	353-0774
10	Sheriden Creek, Otaki	E Richard Lockett	328-0948
14	Thursday day trampers	Russ Johnson	358-7777
	Club night: YBA		
16-17	Toka-Leon Kinvig	M Judy & Peter Stockdale	355-5277
	Waiapawa Saddle	M/F Patrick Janssen	356-3116
21	Thursday day trampers	Nan & Bud Cade	358-8241
23-24	Ngauruhoe summit camp	M Alan Bee	354-9180
23	Iron Gates Hut	E/M Malcolm Parker	357-5203
28	Thursday day trampers	Keith Domett	04 562-7322
28	Club night: Map and compass	Dale Lockart	
30-1st Dec	Navigation at TNP	M, T Dale Lockart & Terry Crippen	359-2922
	& River Safety		356-3588
1 Dec	Daphne Hut	E/M Liz Flint	356-7654

DECEMBER

5	Thursday day trampers	Vina Cottam	354-5045
	Committee meeting (Last for year)		
7-8	Rangi-Oroua	M Andrew Carvell	359-0935
8	Diggers/A-Frame Xing	M/F Nigel Barrett	328-8847
12	Thursday day trampers	June Sowerby	355-2690
12	Club night: End of year BBQ at Brian's		
14-15	Climbing Whangaehu	F, T Peter Wiles	358-6894
14	Oruakeretaki	E/M Tony Gates	357-7439
19	Thursday day trampers	Carolyn Brodie	358-6576
21-22	Suggestions for a pre-Christmas one?	Let Terry know	356-3588

Extended Summer Trips
South Island (Let the leader know six weeks in advance)
Jan 11-25 Arthur's Pass F, T Terry Crippen 356-3588
*Suggestions for an E/M trip Let Terry know.

North Island
? Suggestions /leader Let Terry know.