
PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - February 1998

*****THIS ISSUE*****

NEWS: Bushcraft courses, Book Reviews & Annual Awards!

**TRIP REPORTS:
Titahi Bay rock, Glaciercraft,
Arthurs Pass-Mt Rolleston, Tama Lakes**

**AND COMING NEXT ISSUE . . .
4 club members tackle Mt Aspiring - wait for the trip report!**

CLUB NIGHTS

FEBRUARY 12	“Aconcagua Climbing”	John Berends
FEBRUARY 26	“A Night on the Wall”	Massey Rock Wall
MARCH 5	Committee Meeting	venue to be announced
MARCH 12	“Club Summer Trips”	various
MARCH 26	AGM / Wine & Cheese	

Club nights are held for all club members and visitors on the second and last Thursday of each month at the **Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, Palmerston North**. Club nights commence 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.

At the club night: Please sign your name in the visitors book. There is a door fee of 50c which includes supper.

tramping in over Mt Holdsworth, then tubing down the mighty Waiohine River gorge to Totara Flats, then to the Wairapara plains. Come prepared, with wet suit, crash hat, tube, and dry bags, for some of the best fun you have ever had on a tramp.

March 1 Oroua River, Iron Gates gorge
M Terry Crippen 356-3588
Depart 7am A good day alternative to Tony's weekend Waiohine tube trip. Up the sidle track of the Oroua Valley (western Ruahines), a short way, then down into the river bed and a pleasant walk down stream with the odd deep pool for pack floating or a relaxing swim. A spot of lunch then the final section through the Iron Gates gorge before emerging onto farmland.

March 5-6 Thursday Trampers (2 days)
Sue & Lawson Pither 357-3033

March 5 Committee meeting

March 7-8 Full length Pohangina F
Graeme Roberts 357-8567
Depart Sat morning. Heading in from the eastern side, this trip comes down the whole section of the Pohangina Valley that lies in the Forest park, staying at one of the huts overnight. River and sidle track travel. We may meet the day trip people on the Sunday as they head to Centre Creek Biv. Let Graeme know in plenty of time so transport at both ends can be organised.

March 8 Centre Creek, Pohangina E
Mick Leyland 358-3183
Depart 7 am. The Centre Creek Biv is well hidden in the bush on a terrace above the Pohangina near the edge of the Western Ruahines. Mick is offering a prize for the first one of the party to sight it. Plus a river pool or two for a swim on the way back.

March 12 Thursday Trampers
Pam Wilson 357-6247

March 12 **Club Night: "Club Summer Trips"**
Talks & slide shows of the club summer trips: the (now) traditional South Island epic round and about Arthurs Pass (Terry Crippen) and a more relaxed trip on a long abandoned road project through the Whanganui National Park along the Matemateaonga Walkway (Malcolm Parker), with a side trip to the Bridge To Nowhere.

March 14-15 Wharepapa rockclimbing T
Andy Backhouse 353-0774
Depart early Sat morning. This outcrop & its neighbouring crags is one of the fastest developing areas in the North Island, with the full range of grades for all climbers, with mostly bolted routes. We will camp at the local school providing us with toilets, water & an early morning bracing swim in the swimming pool. A long drive but well worth it.

March 14-15 Jumbo/Holdsworth M
Lyn Murphy (04) 386-3334
Depart Sat 7:30am. A favourite area in the eastern Tararua Ranges, good tracks though bush to Jumbo Hut for the night. This hut just above the bushline is well appointed with gas & heaps of bed space. Continue Sunday across excellent open tops to Holdsworth to complete the loop. Give Lyn, our keen club member in Wellington, a phone call (in plenty of time).
***NOTE: This is a weekend trip, not a daytrip as shown in the trip card.

March 15 Rangī E/M
Stuart Hubbard 356-8782
Depart at a respectable time on Sunday morning. This is a well visited part of the western Ruahines and is a great place to go (slip on the track permitting) for a first, or one hundred and first, tramp with a hut just above the bush line, good views of Ruapehu and further tops to explore if wanted. (If the slip is still there the trip will go up the track on the adjacent ridge).

March 19 Thursday Trampers
June Sowerby 355-2690

March 21-22 Rangī- Oroua M
Dave Larsen 329-8054
Depart 8 am. This is a combination of track, open tops and river travel, staying at a hut overnight. A good introduction to the western Ruahines. Contact Dave in plenty of time as transport at both ends has to be organised.

March 21-22 SAREX M/F
Mick Leyland 358-3183
This years Search and Rescue exercise will be run by the Dannevirke SAR Committee. Club SAR list members, and others with tramping experience who are keen to become active in this field, contact Mick.

March 22 Sunrise-Waipawa Loop M

Warren Wheeler 356-1998
 Depart early Sunday morning for this popular part of the eastern Ruahines. Via an excellent track and a well kept hut, there is easy access to the tops. There are a couple of possibilities for loops: along the tops over Te Atuaoparapara to Waipawa Saddle and down the aggrading riverbed, or the

Wheeler Moon Walking Junkies Scree decent route.

March 26 Thursday Trampers
 John Stantiall 354-5521

March 26 **Club Night: AGM / Wine & Cheese**

Trip leaders:

Please discuss with the trips convenor (Dave Grant 357-8269, or Liz Flint 356-7654), 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.

Trip participants:

If you are interested in going on a trip, please advise the leader **at least three days** in advance. Trips often leave from the Foodtown carpark in Fergusson Street unless the leader arranges otherwise. A charge for transport will be collected on the day of the trip, the amount depending on the distance travelled and vehicles used. Leaders should be able to give an estimate in advance. For general information on the scheduled or alternative tramps please contact one of the trip co-ordinators Dave Grant (357-8269) or Liz Flint (356-7654).

***** OVERDUE TRIPS *****

Enquiries to: Mick Leyland (358-3183), Liz Flint (356-7654), or Sue & Lawson Pither (357-3033)

From the President's PC

Yo, PeNTiuM Groupies, howzit then?

I hope you are all nicely topped up with Yuletide blessings and New Year resolutions already actioned - like striking out on some Summer tramping.

Perhaps you have visited a favourite stream with refreshingly cool swimming holes or have been out and about in the mountains getting all hot and sweaty with exertion, effort and excitement.

Or like me sharing the joys of the outdoors with family and friends - playing at making dams in the cool shade of a small stream, having fun beyond the normal boundaries of city life.

I hope you have been avoiding the horrors of dehydration or heat exhaustion - pounding headache, vomiting - not a pretty sight. It's hotter out there than it looks and 2 litres to take on even a 5 hour trip is not too much.

And cover up or avoid the hottest part of the day for walking.

A portable water purifier can be a good idea - there's plenty of selection nowadays and they give peace of mind without overloading the pack with water.

With all this in mind I wish everyone many enjoyable tramping experiences as we start in to the Club Trip Calendar - goodness gracious me, is that February already!!

And to those of you who were not at the traditional first Club Night of the Year BBQ at Horse-shoe Bend I look forward to seeing you all soon.

No the BBQ was not cancelled although in traditional fashion the weather chose this day to break the drought - actually it bucketed down, though only between the steak and the dessert. Sure the bread got a bit soggy but watermelon marinated in fresh raindrops is absolutely delicious, you know.

And it was good to see that the three other dedicated, hardy (fool-hardy?) BBQites had come prepared with raincoats, but interestingly my towel seemed to keep me at least as dry as them -

so be prepared and check your gear before you head on out into the wild places.

Wishing you happy tramping in 1998.

Cheers, Warren.
WHEELER@MWRC.GOV.TZ

NOTICES

GREETINGS FROM THE EDITOR

Hi everyone & welcome to another year! We've started off our first 1998 edition with a few good trip reports but I'm sure there has been plenty of activity over summer so please consider sharing your accounts with our members via the newsletter - it doesn't matter if it goes into later issues.

If it is a small article, hand-written is okay (deliver to John Phillips, 87 Victoria Avenue) but if handwriting is all you can do, don't let it put you off larger articles. I got one 4-page account through the mail from the South Island the other day from a certain Mr Crippen after his Arthurs Pass trip - hand-written on obviously well-travelled notepaper during a break in travels & mailed on to me as he was en route to other places down there.

If you *do* have access to a computer, it does make my job a bit easier if larger articles are on disc. However, more and more people are e-mailing articles to me. If you have the facilities at home or at work, this is a very quick & convenient way to do it - my work e-mail address is PHILLIPS@MWRC.GOV.TZ.

I use Microsoft Word Version 7.0. 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. If in doubt, try sending any files as an ".RTF" (Rich Text Format) file, which can sometimes be easily converted from one software format to another, or the safest bet is to just cut-and-paste your text directly into your e-mail message.

I can also scan photos for inclusion in the newsletter but no one has been sending any to me!. If you get photos printed off soon after your trip, please consider submitting them as photos can really spruce up the newsletter.

Please note the deadline for anything to go in each month's issue is the FIRST THURSDAY of the month.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir

After reading Harley Betts' excellent article on Internet Weather, I noticed that he had similar info on sites for planning outdoors trips, browsing for equipment. Could you commission a series of articles (albeit short so not to bore those without Net access) on other such topics, from Harley & perhaps others with such knowledge. His article has already saved me a few NZ MetService bills.

Yours sincerely

Andy Backhouse

[Andy raises a good point - I too have saved on a few MetService bills. Is there anyone who has done any internet browsing on any other topics of relevance to our activities? eg. climbing gear? We would welcome a small article from you for the newsletter. - Ed.]

FAREWELL CHUMMIES!

from Richard Lovell

Sadly, the relaxed world of postgrad study has ended and a career in Wellington (the centre of the universe!) beckons. So before I go I'd just like to say thanks to all at the PNTMC, no names you know who you are!

Thanks to all those people who compiled the trip cards; all those leaders who gave us insight into their favourite little 'corners' of the region; the gear custodians; the snowcraft instructors and volunteers who gave us the benefits of their knowledge; those who donated their cars to take us to and from road ends; and all those who I enjoyed the alpine playground with. The PNTMC really does have a friendly and dynamic welcome to new people and has re-awakened me to what a groovy place New Zealand really is!

Cheers

Richard Lovell.

p.s. It was quite nice to see people in their forties and fifties, you must be doing something right with your technique!

NEW CLUB MEMBER

The club has another new member:

Duncan Hedderley
7 Keiller Place, PN
Phone 355-2523

Welcome aboard Duncan.

SAFETY WARNING - RANGI TRACK

Please note that walking the track up to Rangi Hut these days involves negotiating a recent slip, which may present some nervous moments to less experienced trampers and family groups.

BUSHCRAFT COURSES

Being offered by Queen Elizabeth College at their Night School Centre (ph 359-1592), beside the QEC main entrance, Rangitikei St. Five Tuesday evening classes plus two weekends. Fee \$25, starting February 24. The complete beginner's guide to the outdoors, based on the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council's outdoor training scheme and taught by an enthusiastic and experienced team. There may be some additional costs - not large - for transport and food for the field trip, but you'll find this great value. A good idea for anyone just getting into tramping. Free Bushcraft manual on completion of the course

TWO BOOK REVIEWS by Tony Gates

Storms of Silence, by Joe Simpson (1997), Vintage, London

Dark Shadows Falling, by Joe Simpson (1997), Jonathan Cape, London

With his first book "Touching the Void" (Jonathan Cape, 1988), Joe Simpson joined the elite of mountaineering writers by winning the prestigious "Boardman-Tasker award for mountaineering literature. He has continued to write four more books, featuring (naturally) further mountaineering expeditions (to such places as Europe, Nepal, and Peru) as well as travel in general, autobiographical details, philosophical and political interest. These are

the latest two brilliant books by one of the best in the business.

Joe goes into incredible detail about some of his likes and dislikes (rather, loves and hates), and the books follow very diverse subject matter, slowly following his thoughts and theories as he progresses on his latest expedition to the mountains. There are many adverse comments on problems created by the huge crowds of people that have been attracted to the Himalayas and to the high mountain summits. Each book deals with several expeditions and situations. Joe's emotional, chatty, conversational writing style makes you feel as if you are there. It is as if he has written down some conversations word for word. He has obviously extensively researched the other subjects that he writes about (local information, history etc), and it all fits in logically. Its not all happy subject material, with death, disaster, avalanches, and failure featuring. Joe has proven that, to succeed, you don't really have to get to the mountain summit (However, the author does attach great prestige to a first ascent).

As a mountaineer, Simpson has done some pretty amazing feats (including first ascents), but not of the eight thousand metre hills. Injuries sustained from the "Touching the Void" climb in Peru left him with arthritic problems, but he has disproved doctors, and succeeded where mere mortals would fail.

As a traveller, Simpson has seen some amazing sights. I guess others would take the sights for granted, but not Joe, he studies, analyses, laughs, and writes about things like an English Pub scene, funeral rites on sacred Indian rivers, Sadhu's (religious men) performing feats of strength (one with his penis- and yes, there are photos of this!),

"Storms of Silence" relates to two British mountaineering expeditions. The first was to Cho Oyo in the Himalayas, with local mountaineer Clive Jones as a member. They encounter Tibetan refugees, and Joe then relates with great emotion the Chinese occupation and genocide of Tibet. He painfully asks why some British people passionately protest about animal rights while ignoring human rights, and furthers his ideas of why there are so many things wrong with

his world today. The second expedition was to the Huascaran area of Peru, completing several fine climbs, then a beautiful first ascent of Ranrapalca. Once again, many comments of politically inspired massacres and mountaineering deaths, and the story of the village of Yungay. It was completely destroyed in 1970 by a mud avalanche off Huascaran. 40 000 people were killed.

“Dark Shadows Falling” discusses the May 1996 tragedy on Mt Everest (when kiwi’s Rob Hall and Andy Harris died), and the following tragedy on K2 when Alison Hargreaves died. There are more expeditions, and more deaths in the Himalayas, and a wonderful story of a climb of (most of) Pumori.

Simpson’s books are vital reading for mountaineers, travellers, and laypeople alike. Don’t wait for next Christmas or your next birthday- get them now.

ANNUAL PNTMC AWARDS

presented at the Annual Club Xmas BBQ...

Service Awards

1. “Order of the Gestetner” - Peter Wiles.
For services rendered in many years of producing the old newsletter.
2. “Pravda/Gutenberg Medal” - John Phillips.
For organisation & upgrading of current newsletter.
3. “Tuku Morgan Public Trust Award” - Andy Backhouse.
For spending copious amounts of club money on new hire gear.

Miscellaneous Achievement Awards

4. “Hodges Award For Excellence In The Art Of Forgetfulness” - Nigel Scott.
For forgetting half of the party’s food in TC’s Arthurs Pass trip & instigating a Police callout in the process.
5. “Flash Goretex Award” - Kevin Hussey.
For being in possession of the most new gear on a club trip.
6. “James Bond 007 Award for interesting methods of travel to reach your tramping destination” - Dennis Moore.

For being in possession of (and known to use) an aeroplane, complete with on-board motorcycle.

7. “Rollex Rendezvous / Gorillas In The Mist Award” - Terry Crippen & Warren Wheeler.

For both leading separate parties to a planned destination (the misty summits of Mt Pureora) half an hour earlier than planned, only to bump into each other in the mist right on the summit.

8. “Jean-Paul Gaultier Fashion Statement Award” (aka: least-likely-to-make-a-fashion-statement-on-a-tramp award)

- Graeme Peters.

For audacity in tackling the pristine white slopes of Egmont in his 30-year-old yellow(?) PVC jacket & overtrousers.

9. “Victoria and Albert Museum Blast-From-The-Past Vintage Climbing Gear Award”

- Laurence Gatehouse.

For the genuine Williams harness used on Snowcraft II.

10. “Tramping Purple Heart Award, for injuries sustained” - Warren Wheeler.

For stepping on his own foot and thereby breaking it, while getting out of bed, thus precluding him from leading a trip.

11. “Best Salesperson Award” - Monica Cantwell.

For using a faulty pair of earplugs purchased from her own shop.

12. “The Complete Trumper Award” - John Phillips.

For bringing everything imaginable on a tramp including (but not limited to) striped pyjamas, a video camera, and a box full of chocolate caramel easter eggs.

13. “Jenny Craig / Weight Watchers Award” - Terry Crippen.

For weighing every pack on a trip (and chastising John for bringing too much, and then assisting John in consuming the box full of easter eggs).

14. “Sound Slumber Exodus Award” - Clive Marsh.

For managing to clear a whole room of fellow climbers in the MTSC Hut without even waking up.

3. “Mad Dogs, Englishmen, and Trampers Award for the hardest first club tramp” - Trishen.

TRIP REPORTS

TITAHI BAY ROCK-CLIMBING

December 7 by Laurence Gatehouse

Sunday morning, me and Heather were sitting having a leisurely breakfast with a civilized 8.30 start in mind and looking at the near perfect weather through the window when it happened. Ring ring "Hi its Dave Henwood, my wife is sick and I will not be able to lead the trip!" Arrgh I thought and slipped into controlled(?) panic mode.

Dave helped out by telling me that Peter Burgess, who was going, had been there before, the navigation problem solved. He, Dave, had Terry Crippen's guide book, scribble scribble on the back of an envelope address and directions for his place in Ashhurst. All the club gear was still at Andy Backhouse's place, more scribbling. OK, I used to do a bit of rock climbing in Yorkshire, Peter Burgess has been there before, Richard Lovell is pretty impressive in the gym, Dave Grant and Nigel K9VET (I've forgotten his surname but not his car reg. but that is another story) and Heather, I think we can still go.

Then rush rush getting ready with enough time to get to Ashurst, to navigate the mysteries of Kelvin Grove and get back to Foodtown car park without being too late. Actually we arrived there at ten to nine, not bad!! The others had also been rung and all were keen to go so five of us piled into Peter's car with all the gear and headed south, Nigel was already in Wellington and was to join us down there.

Titahi Bay is on the peninsula west of Porirua city and you drive out through a park and park pretty much underneath those tall red and white transmitter towers that are so prominent on the drive down to Wellington. We divided the gear, applied an extra coat of sunblock (I recommend Vaseline Intensive Care warp-factor 15, two coats, unless you expect to get wet or to sweat a LOT) and trogged off down a track down a gully in the cliff. This would not be fun in the wet but was OK in the dry.

At the bottom we found the collection of wrecked cars we had been lead to expect, it is remarkably difficult to recognise what they had been before their descent, and made our way round to the Nose where Peter had climbed before. This has lots of nice recent stainless steel bolts and galvanized chains to set up top ropes on routes of 10 to 15 metres which weren't too difficult. I remember Limpet and Plimsoll on the north side of the buttress and a nice slab (called The Slab I think) with a couple of routes up it on the south.

These, lunch, and also a fiendishly difficult crack which Richard alone of us got up (including an amazing save when he seemed to have peeled off for sure) kept us occupied till late afternoon. We finished off with the big crack where The Slab met the next wall, called Rigor Mortis, this was more a description of the state of my muscles by then than an indication of difficulty. Round the next buttress were, according to the guide book, some 40 odd metre routes of the same grade as we had been climbing but with no one who could lead and not knowing of an easy way up to set up a belay from the top these would have to wait for another day.

We slogged back up the cliff in a different gully complete with a wreck stuck half way down and plenty of loose-ish gravel, not a brilliant choice on my part. We piled back in the car and headed for the nearest ice cream shop. A pretty good day without a leader (a risk management lemon for sure) but we were cautious (does that make a risk management orange?) and still learned much of worth.

GLACIERCRAFT ON RUAPEHU

December 13 by Steffen Taubert

Leaving on a promising Saturday morning at 7:00 only the crowd at the fleamarket was awake. But vegetables did not interest us, we headed towards Ruapehu for learning how to behave on a glacier. Andy Backhouse and Bruce vanBrunt were the weekend lecturers and John Phillips, Richard Lovell and me (Steffen Taubert) were the weekend students. Because the chair lift was out of order this time of the year we had to walk all

the way up to the Giant cafe and further to the glacier. But that's what we are members of the PNMTTC for, climbing up and down mountains.

Here we joined Tony Gates and Warren Soufflot who came up a day before. For everyone like me who haven't been on a glacier before it starts here to be different from a normal tramping trip. Knowing nothing about knots, I had to be dressed up by Andy and Bruce. Now Andy started to tell us something about the glacier. He said the new terms you are going to learn are all strange because most of them are German words, the art of mountaineering comes from the Alps there.

Well I thought, that's going to be easy for me. However, while glacier and "Gletscher" sounds quite similar I have heard nothing like crevasse for "Gletscherspalte" [die Spalte =split] or crampons for "Steigeisen" before. But that is probably because Switzerland and Bayern is not Germany. We had a day like in the travel agency brochures, we learned how to look out for and cross Gletscherspalten on our Steigeisen, crossed the Gletscher and even went down a big Gletscherspalte using ice-axes and ropes. Finally we learned some rescue techniques. Now, if you want to learn more German or how to go on a glacier I strongly recommend to go with Andy and Bruce on the next glacier-craft, it is worth doing it.

I have two things to admit. The first thing I had to promised to tell otherwise this article won't become published. Don't take a \$99 backpack from the Warehouse. Even if it may be an bargain, Ruapehu demolishes it into funny pieces. And second: Thanks to you all from the PNMTTC for the great time I have with you.

HAURANGI FOREST PARK

December 27-29 by John Phillips

This was an informal trip with a couple of club members, Sarah & Dave, and their four-legged friend Zebedee, a 6-month old black Lab who was apparently keen on finding out what tramping was all about. It was 3-20pm on Saturday afternoon when we set off from the coast near Cape Palliser to head up a dry

dusty windswept Mangatoetoe valley. Following the creekbed & then a rough farm track for an hour or more, we reached Mangatoetoe Hut at the edge of the bush for a drink & snack. The hut was in a nice setting of kanuka trees & grass clearing, but we planned to push on to the next hut for the night.

Setting off in the late afternoon we made our way through quite interesting hardwood bush as we climbed towards the saddle over to Kawakawa Hut. There were heaps of emergent rewarewa above the bush canopy, which contrasted quite conspicuously with the flat canopy of the occasional kanuka. On the saddle itself were a number of quite impressive large hinau trees (as I found out from the DoC ranger later on).

Amidst the botany lesson, we were entertained by Zebedee's very puppy-like antics. Rest time for us was discovery time for Zeb, trying to catch cascading 'lumps' of water by snapping at a stream as it tumbled down between the rocks. He really got us rolling with laughter, however, when he left into the pool below, sniffing around trying to figure out where those 'lumps' of water got away to!

Descending steeply to a stream junction, we followed a streambed, arriving 7-30pm at Kawakawa Hut, our destination for the night. This hut was also in a nice setting of kanuka groves. Dave turned on his culinary skill with some steak casserole for dinner while Zebedee very audibly annihilated a bone.

We set off next morning over another saddle not dissimilar to the previous day's, arriving at Pararaki Hut for lunch. Zeb was doing pretty well for his first tramp, ambling along at a relaxed pace between the 1st and 2nd trampers (a bit wet behind the knees for the unfortunate first trumper). The afternoon was a reasonable grunt over another hill, encountering an impressive podocarp stand on the descent to Washpool Hut, our stay for the second night. The hut was in a rather puzzling location, a stiff few minutes climb above the streambed.

We encountered a number of trampers at the Hut, the first people we'd encountered on the

walk, but they decided to go and camp elsewhere (was it something we said?). The weather also began a turn for the worst, and we no sooner settled into the hut (about 5pm) when the rain set in.

It kept happening the next day too, as we set off for the sweaty 500m grind up over the last ridge on the track out to Te Kopi, the end of our tramp. Sarah survived despite a torrid time in her feet-destroying Garmonts, and Zebedee was as happy as the minute he started, despite looking like a drowned rat by this stage. I waved Dave & Sarah off at Te Kopi as I loaded my mountain bike for a cycle-touring leg across Martinborough country & over the old Rimutaka Incline to Kaitoke. Perhaps more about that another time.

A great trip was had by Sarah Todd, David Simcock, Zebedee, and John Phillips (scribe).

ARTHUR'S PASS

11-24 January 1998 by Terry Crippen

This is the 4th summer in a row that the club has run a 2-week stint of tramping and climbing in the Arthur's Pass area. There were 5 of us this year: Nigel, Richard and I crossing over on the 1:30a.m. ferry, meeting up with Ron and Gary who had just been doing some climbing in the Arrowsmiths.

The trans-alpine tramp had a route change halfway through due to the changeable weather (and a knee problem) - fine clear days alternated with spells of sometimes heavy rain and poor visibility. So we didn't manage to climb our original objectives, and we had more lazy starts and shorter days than usual.

A leisurely 10am start up the Waimakariri River with 9-day packs made Carrington Hut a welcome destination for the first night. The second day was over the White River (cage now fixed), up the Taipoiti, across Harman Pass, then boulder hopping down the Mary Valley to pick up the cut track through west coast bush to Julia Hut. This time the hot pools in the Taipo were "room for 2 and hot" - very pleasant. That night was the only time we met any others on the trip.

Day 3 was up the overgrown Julia River, some near-vertical scrub bashing, then sidling across scree and more scrub before dropping into the upper Julia basin. We checked out an excellent campsite in case the weather didn't clear - useful for future reference. However the mist lifted so we were able to find the route up to Popes Pass. Nigel and Richard checked out the steep descent into the Wilberforce while the rest of us levelled out tent sites in the snow, at 1500m.

Overnight the weather deteriorated, so instead of a day's climbing from our high camp it was an exit down the Wilberforce Valley to Park Morpeth Hut - nicely renovated complete with electric lighting (thank you CMC). Heavy rain overnight meant a compulsory rest day with "Five Hundred" and "Up and Down River" card championships. The Wilberforce was a brown raging torrent, with all the major sidestreams also uncrossable.

Two mornings later, with the Wilberforce near to normal flow again, we were able to proceed, past Urquharts Hut (1930s - built for goldmining in the area) down to the Unknown tributary of the Wilberforce. This was still high, so we backtracked upstream to a suitable crossing of the Wilberforce and the flood route track to the Burnett Stream. We found an excellent grassy campsite part way up the Burnett - much better than the swampy site at Weka Biv we used a couple of years ago - no sandflies or mozzies.

Day 7 saw us heading up the Burnett and climbing up to White Col. Ron and I spent some time drying out the tents while the other three climbed Mt Harper (2,222m), before we all descended down to Barkes Hut to watch the weather deteriorate again. Thick mist and wind cancelled any plans of climbing Mt Wakeman the next morning. So another lazy morning waiting for an improvement before we dropped down into the White and to Carrington for the last night.

The last day was a slow hot plod (fine weather now!) down valley to the Bealey Tavern for a few beers and a big feed (a bit different to the Otira Pub - the finishing point

for the previous 3 years' trips).

With the changeable weather, the first day back in Arthurs Pass became a climbing day (instead of a rest day) for Nigel, Richard and Gary, who headed off at 6am to climb Rolleston.

The Arthurs Pass Peoples for 1998 were Nigel Scott, Richard Lovell, Ron de Rose, Gary de Rose, and Terry Crippen (scribe).

MT ROLLESTON
January 22nd by Richard Lovell

We arrived at the Bealy tavern to savour the culinary delights of real food (it was quite a novelty having to chew our food), and over a cold beer decided to climb Mt. Rolleston the following day (a day early) so that Gary could participate before leaving for Christchurch, rather than having a rest day. Terry was quite keen for the lads to have a true alpine start, but after discovering that it was only likely to be a 12 hour day we mutinied and agreed upon a slightly more respectable start to the day.

Eight different beds in as many nights led to some pretty disturbed sleep patterns for some of us, which provided a bit of colour to the trip. Sometime in the night before our day climb I dreamt that I was trapped underneath a rockfall. Suddenly I panicked and sat bolt upright in bed only to smack my head on the bunk above. At this point I thought that I was trapped for real and started to get a little worried about my 'predicament'.

I could make out two faint glimmers of light which suggested a possible way out of the pile of boulders. On hearing my rather loud "holy sh*t" exclamation the guys trained a torch in the direction of my bunk to see me in a contorted position trying to extricate myself from the rockfall!

After the remaining few hours kip we ploughed into the weetbix and sliced peaches before heading off at some ungodly hour of the day in damp conditions. Taking the Coral Track route we headed up the Rome Ridge, popping out of the bush some 50 minutes later. The sight of the surrounding mist filled valleys with the skeletal tops poking through

the cloud greeted us, and made for some interesting photographs. We scurried on through the tussock and over the shattered rock for another hour or so before reaching the 'gendarme' adjacent to the low peak.

Choosing to don crampons for the 60 degree snowslopes of the East Crow Glacier (and to squeeze off a few more frames!) we down climbed this obstacle rather than climb over it, to reach the base of the low peak at three hours. Initially we thought 'By Jingo's! the locals must be shagging around if they claim it takes 6.5 hours to reach the top of the low peak in good conditions'.

Scrambling for the next few hours across the greywacke and frequent bands of crushed argillite (read crappy rotten rock) we realised that the low peak was a tad further than what we initially thought. After a few more photo stops (priorities priorities!) we reached the low peak at 6 hours to find two very well fashioned rock bivvies, and the great views of the surrounding landscape. Mmm! these bivvies looked tantalising for a future overnighter to catch the early morning sun over the Phillistine - Rolleston traverse. By now the weather had cleared and the beautiful sunshine made for a brilliant day. We used the bivvies to provide shelter from the light winds for a lunch stop (more tararua biscuits and peanut butter).

Pressing on we passed a mature Austrian couple spritely zipping their way across from the middle peak. At the top of the snowfield we roped up to cross the bergschrund down onto the Crow Glacier. The views across to Mt Murchison and our stomping ground of the last nine days were magnificent (A great cue to flop out the machine and take a few more photos!). Cruising across the neve we spotted a suitable place to recross the bergschrund between the high and middle peaks.

After the only roped pitch of the day we found a level-ish spot to dump our gear and scramble to the top of the high peak for the great panoramic views. We took the opportunity to capture more photographs of the surrounding ridgeline traverses and high points in a mental calculation of next

summers assault on Arthur's Pass National Park.

On our way down we took a sidle route around the NE side of the middle peak to find the Otira Slide. Apparently snow conditions were down noticeably on former years (apparently the tops can get 35m of accumulative snow annually) so our exit took a while to find, no motoring along the snowfield like previous trips.

The top of the Otira Slide was a bit on the steep side for glissading so we down climbed it, but after realising that this was too time consuming we scrambled down the edge of the snow tongue on the rock. Easing of the slope angle enabled us to walk down from here to reach and cross the bergschrund. The snow conditions were still too poor for glissading but passable for 'wayning' which proved to be lots more fun. The running proved to be far more successful than the intermittent glissades, with the long descent maximising fun on the way down.

Heading back down the Otira River valley we passed the Austrian couple again who had found an idyllic campsite amongst the herbfields (real macpac picture stuff!). Noting that we had 18 minutes to make it a rounded 12 hour daytrip Gary decided to bait us by running off down the valley in fits and starts (no doubt aided by his miniscule pack), so we set off in hot pursuit. Surely some of the handful of tourists that we passed must have given us funny looks when they saw three guys with climbing gear speeding off down the valley.

After a swift stop to imbibe the crisp cool waters (by this time our water had run out an hour or two ago) we continued, and rising to Gary's bait overtook him and forced him to run all the way to the road end, with some interesting boulder leaping on route. We arrived at the carpark sweating with shorts pushed down by our packs (builders bum syndrome) a smidgen over twelve hours after setting out.

We were Gary DeRose, Richard Lovell (me), Nigel Scott.

MANAWATU GORGE

January 25

by Duncan Hedderley

It was hot, the day we did the Gorge. A group of four of us met in the Foodtown carpark at 8am and headed out to the Manawatu Gorge. We met up with Richard Lockett at the carpark at the western end of the Gorge road; and leaving Richard's vehicle there, John drove us on to the carpark at the Woodville end, where we parked and set off. The path was a bit muddy in places, but there were no crises, no icy streams to wade up, no landslides to scramble over - just a 3-1/2 hour walk (with plenty of lookout stops) through broadleaf/podocarp bush, and a good good introduction (for 3 of us) to PN's immediate environment.

In the final hour we passed a fair number of people heading the other way (i.e. from the west end car park). We got to the west end car park about 12.15; Richard and John recovered the car from the start of the walk, and we were back at Foodtown by lunchtime (leaving me with no excuse for not tidying up the flat in the afternoon - sigh).

We were: John Phillips (trip leader), Robert Simpson, Cathryn Simmonds, Richard Lockett and Duncan Hedderley.

NORTH RUAPEHU AND TAMA LAKES

February 1st

by Peter Wiles

Since there were only two of us and Saturday's weather was poor, the weekend trip was restructured as a day trip. We reached the Chateau at 7.30am Sunday and shortly afterwards set off up the road for the ridge track onto the Pinnacle Ridge. (Unfortunately, I failed to notice that the track started directly opposite the car!) So after a few hundred metres up the road and the map consulted, we turned around and started again. Martin led a brisk pace up the track and after a few minutes we were clear of the bush. The weather was fine and clear with a slight but cool easterly. After gaining 300-400 m, we sidled to the left of the ridge and descended a lava bluff before sidling across a couple of streams that drain the northern slopes of the Pinnacles. Evidence of recent rain was apparent and the damp ground smelt sulphurous from the recent ash deposition. We sidled further eastwards until

we were able to descend to the 20m waterfall that is at the top edge of the northern lava field. After some photos we dropped down to the lava field and then sidled to the crater about 400-500 m further across. We climbed up 20-30m to its rim and sat for a while taking in the view and the colony of seagulls that inhabit this area. (What do they feed on?)

We dropped back to the lava field and headed in a northerly direction along its length towards its terminus just above the saddle on the Around-the-mountain track. We crossed the track and continued to the edge of the Lower Tama lake, a short walk beyond. Here was a good place for lunch. Any breeze had died out and the temperature was rapidly increasing. A snooze was a very tempting proposition but we still had to reach Upper Tama. We plodded up the eastern ridge and gained some respite from the heat with some westerly puffs of breeze. On the ridge above the upper lake, we had another drink and took a couple more photos before starting the journey back to the car on the regular track. Several trampers of mostly overseas origin were now evident. (We noted with interest one chap utterly laden - front and back - but his female companion was not carrying anything.)

We arrived back at the car at 3 pm and indulged in an ice-cream (thanks Martin), and returned to Palmy.

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Vice President	: Terry Crippen	356-3588
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