



**PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.**

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - February 2000

Our Biggest Ever . . .

Bumper MILLENNIUM



ISSUE!

CLUB NIGHTS

FEB 10	Climbing in South America	Scott (City Rock)
FEB 24	Summer trips / BYO Slides	
MAR 2	Committee meeting	
MAR 9	Wildlife in Alaska	Yvonne van Leeuwen & Scott Bowater
MAR 30	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	plus David Round (FMC)

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**. All club nights commence at 7:45 pm **sharp**, winter or summer. The PNTMC Committee meets on the first Thursday of each month.

At the club night: Please sign your name in the visitors book. A 50c door fee includes supper.

Cover photo: Sunrise over Hawkes Bay, from the Kaweka foothills, January 1, 2000 [*John Phillips*]

FROM THE EDITOR . . .

Well here it is – our first PNTMC newsletter for the Third Millenium! (pedantic arguments aside) And what a bumper issue it is – snippets of people’s comings & goings on New Millennium’s Eve/Day (yeah, plus the odd sunrise photo...); poetry (or is that ‘poetic licence’ Warren?); a hilarious round-up of annual club awards from the 1999 Xmas BBQ; a salutary spiel from our club president; and of course the trip reports – including Peter Wiles’ extended trip to the fantastic South Island back country of Erewhon.

Well, its nice reading about it all, because I could only sit and dream about it this year (tramping, not motorcycling) – I’m hoping for a not-so-frustrating end to the summer if I can get fit enough to use up some of my rather extensive holiday leave entitlement I’ve now accumulated.

Not that I was short of dreaming material over the new year break – one treasured Xmas gift was a copy of “Classic Tramping” by Rob Brown & Shaun Barnett (see Tony’s review in this issue). For those of you not so fortunately bequeathed with such splendid armchair reading, this first 2000 issue is all you need! Happy New Year folks - read on!

The Editor

Millenium Moments...

What were *you* up to on *that* day? (but yes, we do reserve the right to censor...)

“I was at Lewis Pass with a few friends, curled up in the pit, in the tent, as the millenium rolled over. T’was a misty evening distinctly lacking in inspiration, and the morning was no better, with more mist and drizzle. I think that most of the South Island had similar weather.”

- Tony Gates

“We watched the sunrise through a slight break in the clouds over the wind farm whilst sitting on the table at the top of our stairs. The streets were completely empty and although we didn’t see the sun we got some good colours from the clouds. We then went and swam in the plunge pool of Waihi falls in the rain which was really beautiful as each raindrop made its own little splash. A longish drive for a swim but a brilliant setting.”

- Laurence & Heather Gatehouse

“New Years eve I was drinking beer on the Queenstown waterfront.

“Since then I’ve come back from Lake Hayes where I had a great break for 2½ weeks. Had two good short trips into the hills: one with Christine where we spent 3 days doing the North Branch

Routeburn-Rockburn loop over North Col, Lake Nerine and Park Pass and the other with Christine's brother where we went up Kea Basin to Wright col and Esquilant biv with the intention of climbing the East Peak of Earnslaw. Access to the summit from Esquilant was a little more serious than I had anticipated and after rubbing noses with the bluffs decided it was no place to have a total novice despite his confidence. Still a great trip not having done any tramping or climbing all last year!"

- Barry Scott

"I was sitting at home, on call, by the phone, waiting for possible Y2K computer problems that never happened."

- Peter Burgess, Software Engineer

"I can't really supply a photo of this one [*perhaps just as well* – Ed.], but at the stroke of midnight on new year's eve I was stark naked up to my neck in the waters of Lake Pukaki - not too sure why, looking back, but there you have it!"

- Harley Betts

"I was introducing a friend to the glories of the Abel Tasman National Park. Unfortunately the weather didn't see it the same way; the day started drizzly, developing into full rain and a 6' swell as we boarded the water taxi that was taking us in. It did ease up a bit while we were walking, but I surely didn't enjoy sitting around on the beach waiting for the boat to pick us up again. Still, could have been worse – several people at The Gathering on Takaka Hill were checked for exposure the day after..."

- Duncan Hedderley

"Along with Jean Garman and Ivan Reinks we were camped well down the Roaring Lion River in the Tasman Wilderness area in Kahurangi National Park.

"It was day 7 of a 10 day trip and at 300 m we were at our lowest point. It was too wet to have a fire and we celebrated with a small bottle of bubbly and some chocolates before bed at about 9 pm. Next morning it was business as usual – down river a little to Club Stream and up Club Stream a short way before starting the very slow 1000m climb through the bush to Kakapo Spur, our route back to the Peel Range and the Cobb Valley.

"How did we get there? It started with the 6:30am, ferry on Xmas Day, a long hot drive and a 2-hour walk before a nice Xmas dinner camped

in the Cobb Valley. A nice sunny walk on Boxing Day to Island Lake was followed by 2 days of rather interesting rocky ridge travel along the Domett Range – with very limited visibility and absolutely no views. Another shorter day in better conditions saw us camped by nice tarns near Centre Mountain, overlooking Lake Aorere. We abandoned our planned route along the Marshall Range at this point owing to our slower than expected travel + a bad long range forecast. And so after a trip up Centre Mountain next day we dropped into the head of the Roaring Lion for 1½ days of scrub bashing – which brings us to the 31st..."

- Graham Peters & Janet Wilson

*And where was our president on the night before?
Why none other than the soaring heights of the
Foxton sand dunes...*

SUN SETS ON A MILLENIUM . . .

"Like many other places around New Zealand the millennium ended on Mt Cook (58,000mm above sea level) with a sunset in glorious shades of black and white. Perhaps this was a sign that there are greater things to come. Perhaps the less than arduous solo traverse of the East Ridge to the summit was insufficient to warrant a rosy reward from the Powers That Be. Or perhaps, I pondered aloud to the three hardy young locals present on the summit, my outrageous polypro top and long-johns had sucked all the colour out of the sky. As I had nothing else to change into I was relieved that this suggestion received little support from the three pragmatic teenagers. All was not gloom and despondency however and our determined joviality was rewarded by the ghost of New Years Past who lent a magical moment to the evening by popping the cork out of the waiting bottle of bubbly right on the dot of sunset. With the party officially opened we made Merry on Mt Cook with the Marque Vue, Macadamia Milky white Chocolate, and fresh Mango to End-the-Millennium with a Marvellously Memorable Moment."

- Warren Wheeler

OUT OF TIME - THE WAIRARAPA COAST
by Pete McGregor

All time is unredeemable

- T.S. Eliot

John asks for a note on what we were doing at the dawn of the 21st Century. The facts are these: I hobbled around on a hilltop on the West side of the Pohangina Valley, waiting for the sun to rise over the southern Ruahine. Unlike most New Zealanders, I saw it - saw the clouds gradually changing colour, the pale turquoise light above the dark hills, white mist in shreds along the river or lingering in gullies, and, at last, a weak cap of sunlight on the summit of Maharahara. Then the cloud lowered behind the range and the light went out.

Down South, Ashhurst, Palmerston North and beyond were hidden beneath a strange mist, a kind of cloudfog; up North the new sun filtered through to turn Te Hekenga and the Whanahuia pink and grey and weak blue - it was as if the 21st Century had exhausted itself being born and had no energy left for strong or strident statements. I picked up the tripod and packed away my camera with its film full of disappointing photos - they turned out to be as much of an anticlimax as the event - and limped back down the hill.



Sunrise over Maharahara, southern Ruahine Range; 1 Jan 2000.
Photo: Pete McGregor

third millennium -
waiting for dawn the same smell
of summer grasses

...

So those are the facts. I guess that if you weren't on the Chathams the Ruahine was as good a place to be as anywhere, but by now you'll know from other people's accounts whether the guess is right.

But for me, the significance of the event was before, and to a lesser extent after, midnight/dawn. I don't believe I was sucked in by the hype, but during the week between Christmas and New Year I couldn't forget that these were the

last days of the 20th Century. In the 20th Century there would be no more Mondays (yay!), no more Tuesdays etc... That knowledge conferred on events a particular intensity, a reflective appreciation of the uniqueness of each day and each part of those days. I'd have liked to have spent them in the Ruahine, but that plan had been wrecked in late November when I ruined an achilles tendon. So, just four days out of a cast, I headed for the Wairarapa Coast to explore places I thought I'd never been and instead found places I seemed to know. Dusty roads... I came around a corner and drove into a dream - the same dark under pines, the hill sliding down to long grass and a fenceline; in my dream I'd had a crook leg too, but the dream was months ago, long before I'd ruptured my achilles, long before I'd driven alone to the Wairarapa Coast. It wasn't déjà vue; it was a distinct, clear memory. How could that be? Had I imagined the dream? That's too much to accept. Perhaps it was just coincidence, the certainty of improbable events, but maybe narrow concepts like linear time are simply and hopelessly inadequate. Someone once speculated that the universe was not simply strange, but stranger than we can imagine. I'm sure he was right, and besides, he was a mathematician.

At Castlepoint I lumped my leg across the beach, past a dead ray half-buried and drying in the sand near the boardwalk, up onto the track, past the old fence peeling paint like the noses of sunburnt kids, up beyond the lighthouse to peer down at the evil sea heaving a chaotic swell at the cliffs, a seasurge in all directions, the sort of place that makes mums shiver in horror and yell "stay away from that edge!" to their kids.

I enjoyed the smiles, but there were too many people at Castlepoint. I found a beach elsewhere, beyond tarseal, camped there with steep hills and scrubby gullies behind and drank beer in the evening, watching the sea creep over the rock shelf to cover the tide pools. A shag hung its wings out to dry on a rock pillar in the late sun; a heron flew past then slowed and stepped down from its wings to alight on the edge of a pool. The evening light... the sea greygreen and dark, then the sun lit a line of brilliant green water out towards the horizon... it faded, then returned to light up startling white surf, then vanished again. Another wave rushed up the remains of the beach then slid sizzling back down the shingle. Far out where the rock shelf ended, a white craybuoy dipped and swung in the swell. It had collected a streamer of kelp; from the beach it looked like a drowned diver, white skull articulated on a wet-

suiting skeleton. I woke from time to time during the night, surprised by showers of rain on the tent, but the insistent sea eased me back to sleep.

evening tide -
the shag's rock
becomes an island

...

The next day I travelled South, pausing at horrible Riversdale, a dreary suburban infestation of people, judder bars, dogs and semi-sundried turds I hoped were dog but may not have been. I parked the car, walked onto the beach, looked up and down, and left. I should have guessed - it's tarseal all the way. I found a metalled road and followed it down valleys and around hillsides, through dusty pine forest and ragged scrub, past a farm called Glenstrae, the same name my parents gave to the property where I sat as a boy at dusk on a hillside looking out at Pegasus Bay and wondering if I'd see a hare feeding among the tussocks, listening to Little owls calling and beetles zuzzing and droning through the night air... again, that strange feeling of time mixed up, the past and present entangled.

At the high point of the road I stopped the car and peered out the window. A blue sea stretched wide and far below. Hillsides of scraggy pasture and flowering manuka; old cabbage trees rattling in the wind. I drove in second gear down the steep mile to the coast, tyres scrunching and bouncing on the corrugations. Along the coast the road was separated from the sea by a wide, undulating plain of marram and furiously seeding high grasses. Here and there, widely separated, small, sand-rasped, sunbleached baches with grimy windows were anchored to the road by single lines of old wooden power poles, emphasising a sense of desolation and apparent abandonment. There were no people.

keyclick.
the fly on the windowsill
walks back and forth

...

At the bridge I parked the car and pulled on a threadbare swanndri. A grey sky, cold wind, the small, clear stream skittering over stones to the sea... My leg ached. I wandered to the bank and stared seawards. As I stood, hands in pockets, shoulders hunched, I saw a woman climb over the fence. A dog wriggled through behind her. I turned and limped back to the car, pretending not

to be waiting. She had grey hair, perhaps 50s early 60s, shorts, T-shirt, daypack, running shoes. Her dog was a border collie. It looked up at me, eyes sparkling, then lay down close to my feet, still alert, tongue panting. The woman seemed ill at ease. I probably seemed the same to her. A lone man, miles from anywhere... I quickly seized an opportunity to disclose how I'd busted my achilles: a kind of "look I'm incapacitated, therefore harmless..." statement. She relaxed; we chatted briefly. The dog kept panting and looking up at me as if were waiting for me to notice it. The woman asked where I was from. "Pohangina," I said, "do you know Pohangina?"

She nodded. "Just tiki-touring around?"

"Yeah" I said, "camping on beaches and stuff. Looking around, having a bit of an explore."

"Good onya," she said, as if she really meant it, as if she knew; genuine encouragement. She told me which bits of the beach to avoid because of quicksand, and we said goodbye. I wanted to say, "nice dog," but the words didn't come out. But I think I was in love with that dog.

Pied stilts, black-backed gulls, black oystercatchers with hard red bills and red eyes, all roosting on a sandbar piled with driftwood at the mouth of the stream. A steep beach, the marram-covered dunes ending abruptly in a bank a couple of feet high... and that beach, sliding steeply down and under the thunder of surf. Not a swimming beach. I watched the foaming sea rush up the sand then suck back down. Every now and then it'd drop a dumper, an unexpected whuumph!! - usually when my thoughts had wandered off. I think the sea knew just when to do it to scare the crap outta me. Not far along the beach a vicious rip, discoloured with sand, subdued the surf - a sinister seething line where breakers broke down, their power overcome by something deeper and stronger.

at sunset
the oystercatcher's bill
a deeper red

...

After New Year I returned, intending to camp, but abandoned the idea as the weather deteriorated in the late afternoon. I walked further along the beach this time, my leg less stiff and achey. Far away in the North where the beach curved beyond sight I saw what looked like old piers of a derelict jetty - a few irregularly spaced uprights reaching out into the surf. They were fishers, too far away even to see the rods. Who knows what they were

catching: kahawai perhaps? hoping for snapper? Maybe they were fishing mostly to forget everything but fishing. When I saw them there, distant and tiny, I thought this is how all beaches should be: empty except for anonymous figures on the border between vision and dreams. A black-backed gull flew past on strong, slow wings, rising and falling, yelping into the wind, and I realised there was nothing anywhere to say what century it was. Perhaps that's a characteristic of the wildest and best places - the fewer clues there are to time, the wilder and better the place you're in. It could be the other way around; or it could be just a correlation, not causal, but as I wondered about it, it occurred to me that maybe a reason we seek wild places is not so much to escape reminders of the oppressive world of noise and mission statements but instead to escape time. It doesn't stop out here, on long wild coasts or among deep mountains, but it's drained of its power to insist and oppress. When there's nothing to tell you which millennium you're in, it matters in no *real* sense whether today's Monday or Saturday. What matters is each moment.

And that's something we all know, but are mostly too busy to appreciate - that there's significance in every moment. Dawn on the first of January 2000 *was* a significant moment, but so was dawn on the last Monday of the 20th Century, so was 9/9/99, so was your last birthday of last century. There's significance in any moment you choose; they're all unique, and the more moments you appreciate, the more alive you are: the art of living is to appreciate the moment. It's why haiku can have so much impact - because they're about moments, and insight into their significance.

end of year -
 another cloud passes
 behind the mountain

I drove home into dusk and torrential rain, through the most spectacular light I've ever seen - dark hills fading into a red wash of rain, everything glowing... approaching Woodville I saw the glow fade and the clouddrumpled sky over the southern Ruahine turn bluegrey and luminous, like the beginning of the end of the world. I've seldom driven in worse conditions, and seldom felt so alive.

FROM THE PRESIDENTS PC

Hi everybody, I trust you have taken every opportunity to enjoy some summer tramping or mountaineering lately. Our first club trip of the millennium, PNTMC 2000, was not the auspicious start I had envisaged, with a party member falling and breaking her wrist. On the other hand it was a reminder that accidents can easily happen, that we need to be prepared and "manage the risk". We also need to be wary of being hot and tired and irritable, bite our tongue and focus on reassuring the patient, rather than following my example: "Why didn't you take the little steps to the side instead of the big one off the rock (!)". The first aid help from our party was great and the patient was happy enough to make a careful 2 hour walk out with a couple of the party before a drive on up to Taupo Medical Centre.

Coincidentally a tramper was helicoptored off the top of Ngauruhoe after a nasty face-plant just before our incident. And there was another casualty flown off the day before!!! So perhaps it was an auspicious start after all! It could have been a lot worse for sure.

I went along to the second local DoC User Group Meeting on the 26 January and we all listened fairly quietly during the brief presentations updating recent and proposed work in the Pest Management and Endangered Species areas. However the place hotted up when the subject changed to track and hut surveys. A group from Wanganui in particular sought reassurance that there was no hidden agenda to close any huts without first consulting with the User Group. Apparently DoC Wanganui has left the impression of walking rough-shod over the local group there, removing huts deemed unsafe or unsanitary. I left with the impression that DoC PN felt very strongly about not closing any huts in their area. Nevertheless it seems that the inspection engineers have the power to immediately close buildings not meeting the required standards. The horror stories from other areas of bridges and other structures being destroyed regardless of their residual value pending maintenance or replacement is a sad indictment on the way DoC is addressing the problem - over-reaction seems a not too heavy criticism. No doubt the book will be written one day, or an Inquiry held, and heads may roll. Meanwhile, pending the next DoC User Group meeting in May, when the results of the inspections will be known, I suggest you check with DoC before going on a tramp - the bridge or

hut you thought were there may not be! If you have any concerns about anything DoC is doing, or not, please let me know and I will raise it at the User Group Meeting, or contact DoC directly.

Unfortunately Maree Limpus, our club member in DoC has left to be the Visitor Centre Manager at Arthurs Pass. Congratulations Maree, thanks for all your help on committee, and good luck with your new mountain life - you will be sorely missed. And thanks for the invitation to stay if we are down that way.

Our condolences to Terry Crippen whose mother died while he was ending the Alpine Club Trip at Fox Glacier in mid-January.

Not much good news from me sorry, hopefully the year can only improve from here, except as all hardy pessimists will tell you, THIS is the apocalyptic End-of-the-Millennium.

Meanwhile, Viva 2000 !!!

Warren Wheeler
President PNTMC

UP AND COMING TRIPS & EVENTS

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 trumper would be expected to cover the graded trips in about the following times:

Easy (E): 3-4 hrs

Medium (M): 5-6 hrs

Fit (F): about 8 hrs

Fitness Essential (FE): >8 hrs

(T) refers to technical trips requiring special skills and/or gear.

Beginners should start with Easy Grade trips.

Feb 17 Thursday trampers
Sue & Lawson Pither 357-3033

Feb 20 Sunrise Hut E/M
John Barnett 355-0933

Depart 7am. The popular Sunrise Hut is at the edge of the bush in the eastern Ruahines, with great views east over the Hawkes Bay Plains and west over the inland ranges of the Ruahines. This is an excellent tramp for first-timers - with a well-graded & benched track - and rewarding for the regulars too, with nice bush & superb hut location and views.

Feb 20 Otaki Gorge - Penn Creek M/F,T
Tony Gates 357-7439

Depart PN 7am, return probably 7-8pm. The Otaki is a classic Tararua River, with deep gorges, bottomless swimming holes, and some exciting rapids to float down. This is a classic "gorge trip", when we walk up the sidle track to Penn

Creek, then tube back down the river. Anyone who has floated a Tararua gorge will never forget the fantastic scenery, and the thrill and excitement of tubing. You will need to be well prepared, with wet suit, waterproof gear, and guts, and you will just love this one. A small day-pack certainly helps.

Feb 24 Thursday trampers
Jill Spencer 329-8738

**Feb 24 Club Night: Summer trips /
BYO Slides**

Summer trip tales - what were we up to in the season of sun and snow?

Feb 26-27 Daphne Ridge M
Peter Burgess 354-3533

Depart 8am. The aim of this trip will be to traverse the undulating ridge between Longview Hut and Howletts Hut in the Ruahines. The route starts at Kashmir road end with a moderate climb to Longview, before proceeding across the open tops towards Howletts. Depending on conditions, the keenness of the party etc. we can either continue as far as Howletts for the night or drop down to Daphne Hut before returning via the Tukituki River. This trip combines open tops, bush and river tramping in one fun-filled package!

Feb 27 Daphne Hut M
Sarah Todd 326-9265

Depart 7-30am for the drive out to the old Moorcock Base in the eastern Ruahines. A nice daywalk once you're up the farm hill as you drop into cool, dark forest for the descent to the

Tukituki River. Another 20 minutes wading up the river gorge to Daphne Hut for lunch. Back the same way.

Mar 2 Thursday trampers
Judy Calleson 357-0192

Mar 2 Committee meeting

Mar 4-5 Tongariro & Ruapehu M/F
Warren Wheeler 356-1998

Depart Friday night 6pm. Staying at Eivins Lodge \$16/night. On Saturday we will do the Tongariro Crossing "the best walk in the North Island" with a side trip to Ngauruhoe if keen. Other routes over north crater and Te Mari Craters are also alternatives instead of the Crossing track. On Sunday we will go up from the Whakapapa side to see the Ruapehu Crater Lake, either taking the chair lift or walking all the way.

Mar 5 Kahuterawa Valley E
Terry Crippen 356-3588

Depart 9 am Very close to Palmerston North, the Kahuterawa Valley has a pleasant stream draining a large area of regenerating native bush and is well worth visting for easy to hard tramps, swimming or just relaxing. A large part of the regenerating forest is part of the PNCC Water Reserve (but unlike the Turitea part it is not actually used for water supply), and so is not often visited. It joins the top end of the Tararua Forest Park. There is now a track going part of the way in and the stream offers pleasant travel. What we do will depend on who comes.

Mar 8-9 Thursday trampers
Bev Akers 325-8879

**Mar 9 Club Night: "Wildlife in Alaska"
with Yvonne van Leeuwen & Scott Bowater**

Scott & Yvonne went on a 3-month trip in March-April-May last year up to Alaska. They'll have some interesting photos & tales of the wildlife & countryside they experienced there.

[Note: The Climbing in South America talk from Scott (City Rock) was moved forward to Feb 10]

Mar 11-12 Mitre Flats M
Peter Darragh 323-4498

Depart 7am. This weekend tramp involves a walk up the Waingawa riverbed from 'The Pines' roadend to the luxurious Mitre Flats Hut, so we

can camp next to it! (plenty of room on the adjacent flats). There is a range of sidetrips possible from the Flats camp base.

Mar 12 Waingawa – Mitre Flats Loop M/F
Laurence Gatehouse 356-5805

Depart 7am. A one-day version of Peter's weekend trip (see above) for the fitter ones amongst us (but not *too* hard). Laurence will take us in from 'The Pines' up the Barra Track and, after lunching at the Flats, wander down the Waingawa riverbed back to the cars.

Mar 16 Thursday trampers
Liz Flint 356-7654

Mar 18-19 SAREX M
Mick Leyland 358-3183

The annual District Search and Rescue Exercise is based at the DoC Field Centre, Pohangina. Operation Tomo, a clue for what will be involved in the overnight search exercise. Training includes helicopter awareness, Outdoor First Aid Revision, Track and Clue Awareness, Radio Use, Search Technique and Management. We will be putting in at least one team of 4, so contact Mick if you wish to be included.

Mar 19 Glaciercraft M/F, I
Leader: Bruce van Brunt

NOTE: names and enquiries to Terry Crippen 356-3588

Depart early sun morning. The glaciercraft course will take place on the Turoa side of Ruapehu. The course will be a one day introduction to glacier travel and is essential for those contemplating heading into the glacier country of the Southern Alps. The departure time will be early to get the most out of the day. The course is open to those who have the requisite alpine skills such as those taught on Snowcraft II. (The course will be cancelled if the glaciers on Ruapehu are not in suitable condition.) Please contact Terry who is taking names and organizing things at this end since Bruce will be down in the BIG Mountains immediately prior to the day.

Mar 23 Thursday trampers
John Rochell 04 902-4415

Mar 25-26 Golden Crown, Ruahine Corner F
Tony Gates 357-7439

Depart Friday evening, return Sunday evening. The forests of Hawkes Bay contain some good native trees, and some remnant Kiwi populations.

Makarora-Golden Crown is a known kiwi area, and the trip leader can confirm hearing a kiwi screech very close to Masters Shelter, at the farmland- bush edge, approximately six months ago. If you want to share in this wonderful opportunity, then you can join Tony, who plans to camp at the shelter on Friday evening, and further investigate these kiwi. Saturday will then be spent sweating up to the Ruahine Ranges, and cruising along beech forest and open tops, past Aranga (Ruin) Hut, towards Ruahine Corner. It will probably be a bit too ambitious to reach Ruahine Corner, so we will probably camp in the shelter of the alpine beech. We would then have more time to explore this lovely section of the northern Ruahines, and possibly even listen for more kiwi.

Mar 26 Manawatu Gorge E
 Janet Wilson 329-4722

Depart 8am. Up bright & early-ish for this easy tramp (so we've got time to mow the lawns when we get home!). A one-way 4-hour tramp along this track, which is a little gem on PN's doorstep –

wide track with fairly easy grades, through superb forest and birdlife.

Mar 30 Thursday trampers
 Don MacLaine 357-0745

**Mar 30 Club Night: AGM
 + David Round (FMC)**

Starts 7-45pm. This is the club's Annual General Meeting, which will be combined with a talk by David Round, president of Federated Mountain Clubs. FMC is our nationwide umbrella organisation, and David will be talking about national issues concerning outdoor recreation & other relevant FMC matters – should be very informative.

Remember that nominations for Patron, President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and general Committee members really need to be given in writing to our Secretary (Sarah Todd) at the beginning of the AGM; nomination forms will be available on the night. Include the position, name of person you are nominating, your name as proposer, and name of a seconder on the form.

So come along for an interesting talk from David, grab some nomination forms, and have your say on who & how your club is run. See you all there.

Trip participants:

If you are interested in going on a trip, please contact the leader at least three days in advance.

Trips usually leave from the Foodtown carpark in Fergusson Street with transport provided by car-pooling. 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 or any suggestions for future tramps please contact one of the trip co-ordinators Terry Crippen (356-3588), Laurence Gatehouse (356-5805), or Peter Burgess (354-3533).

Trip leaders:

Please discuss with the trip co-ordinators, 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.

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

Enquiries to: Mick Leyland (358-3183), Terry Crippen (356-3588), or Laurence Gatehouse (356-5805)

NOTICES

ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER

All kinds of articles (trip reports, interesting information & anecdotes, book reviews, product reviews, etc etc) are welcome for inclusion in this

newsletter. Articles may be hand-written or sent by e-mail to the newsletter editor John Phillips (see address on end page).

It is preferable to include your article as an attachment (please use Microsoft Word Version

7.0 or Rich Text Format), unless it is quite a small article, in which case it is fine to cut-&-paste into the e-mail.

Note that scanned **photos** must be sent with a covering e-mail (or phone call to John) to:

postmaster@horizons.govt.nz.

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

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Harley Betts has moved down out of the clouds & is now living at:

86 Manawatu St
Palmerston North
ph 354-2094

CORRECTION

The phone number for new members Mike and Elaine Whitton is 354-6897, not 354-9553 as noted in the October Newsletter. Our apologies to Janice Lloyd and Richard Squires for inadvertently using their number.

CHRISTMAS BARBEQUE & PRIZE-GIVING

9 December 1999

About 20 people turned out for a fine end-of-millennium gathering at Ashhurst Domain. Mr Snow arrived a little early for some but no real complaints were heard above the chorus of licking. Warren Wheeler as Master of Ceremonies presented the Prizes with a pre-amble acknowledging the real achievements of club members. The prizes themselves celebrated the full gamut of the clubs activities, and were selected for outstanding contributions in each field. Here is a selection of the 13 awards presented.

The "Short Stick" Award - Warren Wheeler

for dragging in doggy-do at a Club Night

"Bugger It" Award - Terry Crippen

for finally trading in his Datsun Sunny on a Pajero, just for Club Trips

The "Last Straw" Award - Nigel Hough

for e-hiring crampons on Tasman Glacier and including a CD-player in the crippling load carried up to NZAC Hut Whakapapa

The "Totally Terryed" Award - Janice Lloyd

for helping out so willingly on Snowcraft

The "You-Are-Here" Award - Dave Grant

for navigational excellence in realising his group couldn't find the track because they were at the wrong Mangahao Dam

The "Into Thin Air" Award - Maree Limpus and Warren Soufflot

for a freezing near death experience after over-shooting Syme Hut in the mist and dark

The "Early Bird" Award for the Fastest Rescue of the Millennium - Mick Leyland

for his fully loaded exit from Howletts Hut at the same dawn moment as the helicopter arrived to take him out with suspected dehydration

The "Snowtex 3-Ply" Award - Sarah Todd

in tribute to alpine challenges, for having a roll of toilet paper blown away en route to the loo at Whangaehu Hut

The "YK2" Award - Laurence Gatehouse

in tribute to all the real mountaineers out there, for his version of the ascent of the South Face of K2 (32,000mm above sea level)

...and, almost as an oversight...

The "Dave Hodges Award - for Excellence in the Pursuit of Forgetfulness" - Warren Wheeler

for losing his pack on his solo Mid-Fold Traverse of the Tararua Park Map.

Appropriate prizes were given to each, such as a Bubble Wand for The Into Thin Air Award, and a drawing pin for the You-Are-Here Award. In more serious vein, presentations were made to Editor John Phillips and other club service providers. Tony Gates also made the inaugural presentation of the Tararua Trophy to Pete McGregor for his outstanding literary contributions to the Newsletter. Thanks to Phil Gibbs, manager of Liquor King (cnr. Fergusson & Linton Streets) for donating the bottles of port & champers.

MEDIA SNIPPETS: TARARUA GREAT WALK

Comment by Tony Gates

I saw a note in the Newspaper the other day about a proposed new track to cross the Tararuas. It was a plan by a Levin businessman who had not himself actually been to the Tararua Tops, but wanted to create some sort of "Great Walk" from Levin to Masterton. I was shaking my head in disbelief when reading the proposals, to follow the Northern Crossing route (or thereabouts), and upgrade the trail to make it suitable for a walking trail. He said that the route would be useable for at least 80 days each year. I had visions of the massive earthworks and vegetation clearances required to make a track that would soon fall to bits, and the subsequent environmental problems. Look at the DOC effort up on Table top, with imported metal on fibreglass matting and half rounds kept in place with waratahs- three or four

years and it has all fallen to bits. Then I thought of the weather, and had visions of people succumbing to those familiar Tararua storms. It seems to me incredulous that someone wants to reinvent the wheel, and make some sort of national or international tourist attraction (that is already there) into something special. The newspaper article did mention that DOC, user groups, and other trampers were against the proposal!

BOOK REVIEWS by Tony Gates

“NEW ZEALAND ALPINE JOURNAL 1999”
*Published by the New Zealand Alpine Club,
Edited by Bruce White.*

This is a regular feature on the NZ mountaineering scene, being the annual journal of the largest Alpine Club in New Zealand. It provides the usual club list of contacts, local, international, and scientific articles on trips (most with photographs), and obituaries. Some PNTMC members have featured in previous editions, and in this one, Crippen (with sunglasses), Gates (also with sunglasses), and Gatehouse feature. There are lots of good stories, plenty of reference material, and a few political comments on issues such as DOC VAMP. The NZAJ makes a good read.

“CLASSIC TRAMPING IN NEW ZEALAND”
By Shaun Barnett and Rob Brown, Craig Potton Publishing, 1999

With a name like this (and noting the publisher and authors), this has to be a classic book. It is destined to rank with the best. It is a fantastic

glossy book that deserves a place on all of our book shelves. It is the same format as some previous Craig Potton books, so is certainly not for carrying with you on a tramp. “Classic Tramping” is about philosophy and motivation of tramping for recreation as much as the route guides and photographs themselves.

The two authors have chosen 12 “classic” tramps in New Zealand, each in different areas, and each with their own attributes. Each essay is written by either of the authors, whereas photography has been shared (with a few guest photographers). I assume therefore that all of the tramps have been completed by either of the authors, and usually together. The tramps are not DOC’s “Great Walks”, but they all based on DOC land, most of which is on National Parks. They are all multi-day tramps, some including mountaineering, and other aspects of tramping that many of us know so well. Each route is described, mapped, and summarised, with the guts of each chapter being an essay of each tramp. Extra information within the context of each essay is provided to add history, botany, information on fauna (native and introduced, with scientific names) geology, glaciology, metrology, and even some politics. It was obvious that the authors conducted extensive research, then presented it in a very user friendly manner. Photographs are beautifully taken and presented. And I did note that many were taken when natural lighting was best, ie during dawn and dusk. With only three of the twelve chapters on the North Island trips, I completed “Classic Tramping” thinking of the next volume maybe including a tramp in the Ruahine Ranges.

TRIP REPORTS

SUNRISE – WAIPAWA
21st November, 1999
by Janet Wilson

There was a good fall of snow on the tops to admire as we headed into Hawke’s Bay. Six of us

set off for Sunrise Hut, leaving the road end at a very civilised 9:30am. A good pace was set up for the easy benched track and we soon reached the hut where we paused for a look at the views before continuing on to the tops for lunch. A bit colder up there and as we moved on we were very

nearly snowed upon. A short walk down the ridge to the start of Warrens chosen scree run. Well chosen too, as most of us were quickly at the bottom. A bit of a clamber down a small stream to the Waipawa River. From here on it was a pleasant tramp out with a short side trip to check out Waipawa forks Hut. A pleasant day out and a good chance for a couple of people to try out new boots before big Xmas tramps.

We were Warren Wheeler (Loader), Graham Peters, Lawrence Gatehouse, Jenny McCarthy, Clive Baxter, and Janet Wilson.

MICK-WAITATAPIA

11-12th December, 1999

by Peter Burgess

I wasn't sure that this trip was going until the barbecue a couple of nights before, however in the end there were four of us, which was just right. Back at Easter I had done a trip in which I attempted to get to the top of Mick from the Waitewaewae Stream and then return to Otaki Forks via the Waitatapia Stream. I say attempted, because I didn't quite make it to the top of Mick due to the horribleness of the leatherwood, and dropped down into the Watatapia via a side stream. This time the idea was to scale Mick by the more established western track from Otaki, then drop right into the head of the Watatapia and follow its full length.

After dropping my car off at Otaki Forks, we all piled into Warren's worthy vehicle and drove back through Otaki and up to the Waitohu road end, which was where we made our first mistake, by driving up the private quarry road (more of this later). Warren ably lead us past most of the potential false trails on the way up and after paying a visit to the Ventura crash site we made the top of Mick in time for a late lunch at a little after 1pm, having taken 3 hours for the ascent. Mick is one of the less interesting hill-tops around, with a splendid 360 degree view of some tree trunks, but then I didn't promise views on this trip!

After lunch we proceeded along the ridge track for a short distance before hanging a right and beginning the bush-bash to find the head of the Waitatapia. The bush in this part of the valley turned out to be much easier going than it had further down on my Easter trip, so things were sweet. Warren and I had some disagreement about whether it was better to follow the stream bed or stay up above it early on, however both

routes got to the same place in the end. At about 3pm the forecast rain arrived and although quite light, it made the going rather slow due to the slickness of the rocks.

I knew that there was a very good camp site in the lower part of the stream, however it would have taken us many hours to get there and so we decided to look for a suitable spot around 5pm. This was forthcoming with a shelf on the stream bank having room for a tent and a fly, though we had to do quite a bit of gardening to flatten out our fly site. Next day of course we found a perfect spot 2 minutes down stream! Deferring to Warren's vast experience I allowed him to arrange the fly, only to notice after we were in it that it was the wrong way around. This would have been ok, except that the seam leaked!

Despite the rain we got an excellent camp fire going and grilled our sausages to perfection. It wasn't until quite a bit later that the rain really started to come down heavy. Although I had my bivvy bag, I had foolishly not got right inside it because it was a bit warm. I realised the error of this on waking in the middle of the night with a stream of cold water running down my back inside my sleeping bag!

Next morning the rain eased off and eventually stopped around 9am, but the stream had risen quite a lot and I decided to wait for an hour or so to let it drop. By 10:30 the flow had eased considerably and we did not have too much difficulty in the end. As we approached the Forks, however, it was clear to me that we would have no chance of crossing the Otaki, so instead we bashed our way up to the Waitewaewae track, through a rather nasty mixture of bracken and bush-lawyer.

After driving back around to the Waitohu end we found to our consternation that the gate of the quarry was now locked! It was only at this point that we read the sign saying no unauthorised admittance etc. Luckily the second house we tried turned out to belong to the caretaker, though he was out checking his stock. We soon spotted him driving through a nearby paddock on his four wheel bike. Warren chased off after him in bare feet and must have attracted his attention, because he showed up eventually and unlocked the gate, through which Warren drove some time later.

The caretaker was quite understanding and for future reference if you want to park your car up this road, just contact: Dave Moore, 353 Waitohu

Valley Road (first house past the quarry entrance on the right). ph (06) 364-8937. Mention that you are with the club.

The party were: Warren Wheeler, Adam Johnstone, David Miller and Peter Burgess.

RUAPEHU CLIMBING & GLACIERCRAFT
11-12 Dec by Terry Crippen

Since Glaciercraft was down as a one day trip on the Sunday, five of us decided we would make a weekend of it and go up to Ruapehu for the two days; Richard coming up from Wellington, Nigel from south Taranaki and the rest of us from PN. Our comfortable base in Ohakune meant we could make frequent visits to the local bakery/dairy to enjoy numerous fresh goodies such as chocolate eclairs, doughnuts, and apple turnovers.

As it turned out Saturday was the only day when it was possible to venture up into the snow on the mountain. The five of us headed up past the deserted ski field and onto the Mangaehuehu Glacier. This was still well covered with snow; only one hole had appeared in the surface exposing a crevasse below. Excellent crampon conditions took us quickly up the western face of Girdlestone, with a pitch or two of rope work for practice. Most of us had not been on its summit before. Excellent views were had in all directions.

Clambering down the ridge off Girdlestone the mixture of snow and rock produced the usual dilemma as to whether to take crampons off for the rock sections or leave them on to save time.

After a lunch spell in the lee of the Girdlestone-Tahurangi Ridge and discussions centred around seeing the country side by Skyhawk jets, we decided to tackle the rock band on the last section of ridge up to Tahurangi. This rock band was about a rope pitch of steep rock – quite enjoyable. A plod up to the summit saw us being enveloped in thick mist with the wind getting stronger. The descent down the mountain was, as a result, interesting - not the best conditions for glissading.

Sunday morning turned on wind and rain. By cell phone we discussed possibilities with Bruce about the glaciercraft day. We could at least do some of the basics in out of the weather in Ohakune - roping up for glacier travel. So Bruce and the Sunday carload came on up, and we all hoped for

a change in the weather. We made one attempt to head up the mountain, but with extremely strong winds and poor visibility we abandoned it and headed back to Ohakune for instruction in pleasant conditions. Terry had peoples roped up for glacier travel prussiking up a rope up a tree, simulating being in a slot; while Bruce had peoples anchoring to a tree trying various extraction methods. So all was not lost and we all learnt something about the complexities of glacier travel and extraction.

To hopefully get better weather and glacier conditions the club will repeat the Glaciercraft in March next year (Sunday 19th).

The weekenders were; Terry, Maree, Nigel, Richard and Chris. The Sunday peoples were: Bruce, Phil, and Janet.

EREWHON - LAWRENCE - SINCLAIR TRIP
5-15 January 2000 by Peter Wiles

We arrived at the Wellington ferry terminal in good time for the Lynx sailing but were dismayed to be informed that it was cancelled due to rough conditions in the Strait. At the peak of the holiday traffic we expected to have to wait a considerable period to access unbooked ferry space. Luckily, we got on the next sailing of the Arahura and were in time for a late lunch at Nigel's dad's place in Blenheim.

We reached our destination of Mt Somers motorcamp for the night at about 8.30 in the evening. Next morning we were off to a good start for the journey to Erewhon. The weather had improved a little with the odd patch of clear sky showing through the low cloud as we progressed further inland. At Erewhon we introduced ourselves to the owners, filled in the intentions book (no other parties in the Clyde/Lawrence area), organised the final bits and pieces of our gear and then headed for the Clyde riverbed's vast expanses of shingle. The river was low, so fording various braids was easy and after about 2 h we reached the Lawrence junction. We were glad of the cool conditions but noted signs of fresh snow on the peaks appearing through the cloud. After another hour or so we had lunch at the Lawrence hut (DOC). Following vehicle tracks and in increasing heat and increasing tiredness under our heavy loads, we reached the Hermitage hut (Erewhon Station) by mid

afternoon. We were glad to drop our loads and relax for the rest of the day.

Next morning we got off to an early start as we wanted to complete as much of the 800 m of height gain as possible before it got too hot. Initially we travelled up the Lawrence valley in dense fog and for a while we got disorientated ending up crossing the river by mistake. That sorted out, and with compass guidance we started climbing up the grassy slopes on the true left towards our eventual target of Mt Arrowsmith (2781 m). The plan was to climb a spur for 800 m and then sidle along the 1600 m contour for about 1 km northwards before arriving at a basin (directly opposite Outlaw Stream) and just south of Moses Creek (which is opposite the Lawrence Bivy). This route proved to be good although the scree sidle proved to be hard work. We climbed out of the fog after gaining about 400 m and spent the rest of the day in full sun. We reached the basin around midday and almost immediately found a good campsite (at 1620 m) beside a couple of small tarns that were not marked on the map. We built camp.

From our camp we could not see Mt Arrowsmith and although we planned to use the Moses Creek route we were unsure whether or not this was in fact the best route. Terry and Peter did a reconnaissance late in the afternoon, climbing up to 2100 m to examine a couple of alternative route options. They found an effective route to Ashburton Peak which would be useful later in the trip, but concluded that Moses Creek was the best option, especially if we could sidle the scree rather than having to drop too far down into the creek itself.

Next morning we arose at 4 am to a clear morning and were off at 5 am. We found that our sidle plan was not viable and we were forced to descend almost 200 m to the moraine rim along Moses Creek. After much scree and 200-300 m of steep moraine we reached the snow at 2000 m. Crampons on, as there was a good freeze, we headed up over avalanche debris which added extra effort to the climbing. The ground became quite steep at the head of the lower basin before emerging onto a broad snowy shoulder. Instead of consulting the map, we turned to the south along a snow ramp that headed up steeply into a gully to our right. This proved to be a major blunder as we arrived shortly after 10 am on the summit ridge about 100 m south of the summit

and about 25 m below the top overlooking the South Ashburton face (impressive) with nowhere to go as the ridge was blocked by a large overhanging block. With the limited gear we had amongst the four of us we decided we were not prepared to try to get around this obstacle and using the rope for a couple of pitches extracted ourselves from our tricky position. Once back on safer ground we had lunch. We resolved to try again once we had recovered from our efforts. So with a retry in mind on the return we placed a few cairns on some the broad screes that we would need to cross on our return.

Fortuitously, next day the weather was poor with cloud and drizzle at our tent site for the whole day. It was the right day to rest the mind and for the body to recover. Next day was fine and clear so we headed to Ashburton Peak (2359 m). We walked up the screes from our base, crossed a col and sidled around to another col at the top of Moses Creek which placed us at the base of Ashburton Peak. Removing our crampons we ascended a rock gully; belaying for a pitch at its top. Once out of the gully, we scrambled the rest of the way to the summit, where we had a leisurely lunch and made a couple of cellphone calls. Afterwards we scrambled along the ridge before the going got too difficult and we dropped down a scree and completed a sidle back to the initial col that we had crossed from in the morning.

Next morning we decided to try Arrowsmith again, and again got up shortly after 4 am. This time it was thick fog (cloud) but as there was no wind and the barometer had risen we opted to go for it, thinking that the cloud would break up as the sun came up. We retraced our previous route finding the cairns unexpectedly handy in the mist, but getting out boots full of water from the saturated grass that we waded through. Nigel G decided to return as his Achilles was sore. At the snow, the cloud cover had limited any freezing during the night so additional effort was required on the snow. However, as we gained height it did get firmer and we began to see glimpses that we might emerge from the cloud. At 2500 m, in clear sky, where we had turned to the right previously, we instead continued basically straight up the snow onto a small glacier and at the top of this found the mouth of a narrow gully heading upwards which initially was full of loose rocks. The gully rapidly opened out into a snow slope that took us to the ridge-top immediately to the

north of the summit. A short scramble saw us at the top looking down onto a sea of cloud filling the entire Canterbury region with only the major Arrowsmith range peaks thrusting up through it and some of the higher main divide peaks to the west. It was magic. We rested over an early lunch and were amazed to see a bird hopping around watching our antics with interest. The return was uneventful apart from returning back into the damp dense cloud that persisted all day back at camp.

Next morning it was clear again and we packed up and dropped down a handy scree for a rapid 800 m descent back to the Lawrence river. We crossed and immediately started heading up Outlaw Stream with the eventual intention of crossing Musterer's Col at its head at 2020 m to the Sinclair Valley (a tributary of the Clyde). From our previous camp site, we had had a direct view into this valley and thought we had located an effective route up it that got us around the 40+ m waterfall and associated gorge that forms the hanging valley. The planned route was going quite well until we unexpectedly struck a 10 m vertical drop into a steep ravine that had been hidden from our view. We dropped our packs and commenced a scene examination, where, from initial observations our options seemed hopeless. From a narrow grassy ledge we found a tricky but feasible route where the rope would be required. We lowered our packs on the rope first, before one by one climbing around the critical bluff. Once we were all into the ravine (and two hours later) we continued up valley without difficulty. In hot conditions, we opted to stop at 1450 m to find a campsite amongst the scree. Nigel S and Peter did a reconnaissance up to the col to confirm the route down into the Sinclair for the next day. At least 20 thar were sighted by us in the valley (take note Tony). Terry and Nigel G located the best tent site and spent considerable time and effort forming a flat bench for the tent amongst the rocks.

With Nigel and Peter's report favourable, next morning we were away close to 6 am as we wanted to climb as much as possible before the sun reached us, as we were now on the sunny side of the valley. We made very good progress up scree/rock/snow to reach the col at about 8 am for another fine clear day. We descended an excellent snowslope to the valley floor and emerged from the end of the glacier near a green tarn at 1600 m at about 9 am. Here was our

campsite. The day was yet young; so time to climb. Nigel G opted to be camp manager while the others headed up the bluffs towards Crossbow Saddle (2074 m) directly above the camp. We turned to the east onto a small glacier and onto the divide between the Rangitata and Rakaia watersheds. We crossed the ridge to a large snowfield on the Rakaia side and headed up Mt Outlaw (2394 m). Another peak, with a final rock scramble and another lunch date at the summit. We gazed across to The Warrior (2580 m) and its cousin Amazon (2480 m) beside it. The Warrior would be great if we could climb it but it appeared oppressively steep. Descending from Outlaw, Peter opted to continue alone to climb Renegade about 500 m further across the snow basin and another 200 m scree scramble. Once reunited, we dropped down the glacier avoiding the crevasses without problems. The evening was spent yet again lounging in the sun.

Next morning we set off for Amazon/Warrior shortly after 5 am. We headed back again up the scree and rocks but this time directly to Crossbow Saddle. At the snow we were surprised and concerned to be confronted with hard glacier ice – and relatively steep. There was about 150 m of this to climb and as long as one kept ones balance and did not lose a crampon for any reason, progress was okay but nerve-wracking. (Self arresting was not a happy prospect.) For the return we decided to avoid this and use the adjacent but less direct glacier that we had used for Outlaw. Once at the col, it was steady cramponing on firm snow for 300+ m. When the sun caught us up we had basically climbed the bulk of the snow. We turned our attention to a rock buttress that either needed to be traversed or got round to reach the base of Warrior. We tackled the buttress. About 80% of the height of this was on a narrow snow arete, which was quite straight forward, but once on the rock things became more complicated. We found ourselves belaying along and round shattered argillite blocks with fearsome exposure on both sides. By the time we had got clear of this we decided that enough was enough and that Warrior was out of our reach. Once we were back off the buttress it was nearly mid afternoon, so after lunch we headed up the much easier snow slopes of Amazon. The snow was very soft and prone to surface avalanche. The heat - fierce. Nevertheless, the view from the summit of the main divide and the expanse back to the Arrowsmith range was worthwhile. A glissade of

nearly 200 m gave us a buzz on the return to the col, where we detoured to the alternative route back to our camp. Some swore by the ice water treatment on their feet by standing for at least 2 minutes in the stream from the glacier.

We could afford to take our time next morning as we packed up and headed down the Sinclair valley in full sun, yet again. We stopped briefly to check out the bivvy rocks located further down valley and stopped again for a snack once we were past the scrub and bouldery section. As the confluence with the Clyde was approached, the heat on the river bed increased and we soon wanted shade and a stream to drink from - something not often found in combination on the Clyde riverbed. We detoured a short way up a side creek to have lunch under a patch of bush before continuing with the riverbed and Black Bluff (no problem as the river was very low). We reached the Erewhon station hut at the Clyde-Lawrence confluence by mid afternoon. Despite a few sandflies we relaxed for the rest of the day.

The final morning saw cloud down to almost riverbed level as we completed the last section of about 2 h down the river back to Erewhon station. The journey back to Mt Somers and across the Canterbury Plains was very much like the drive in - low cloud and drizzle. We pigged out for a late breakfast at an eatery at Rakaia.

Team: Terry Crippen, Nigel Scott, Nigel Green and Peter Wiles

PNTMC 2000

14-16 January 2000 by Warren Wheeler

Powering north to Mangatepopo comfort
 Price negotiated, thanks mr. caretaker
 People naturally tired, meekly crashed.
 Possum nocturnal, thy manner criminal.
 Post-dawn nibbles then muesli crunched
 Proceeded nimbly, trackless, muffled cursing
 Puffed, not to mention chuffed
 Pukekaikiore nailed, then merry Cheryl
 Plunged, not too much crying
 Panic not, tiny millennium crisis.
 Plastered nicks, treated many contusions.
 Patched 'n' taped, managing cheerfully
 Painfully north, Taupo Medical Centre-wards.

Parted now, Team Millennium continued
 Proceed now three more carefully
 Peaking Ngauruhoe to moody cloud

Picnicked nicely, then made circuit
 Passing numb tourists midst clagg
 Photo necessary to mark celebration
 Posed, Ngauruhoe - thousand metres climbed.
 Proceed now three mightily cheerily
 Plummeting, nay totally madly careering
 Pondering not the Medical Centre
 Pleasure now the main concern
 Pausing, noting the magnificent cone
 Primordial Ngauruhoe. Thanks. Memory charged.
 Perhaps next time more cloud-free.

Pasta next, that masticatable carbohydrate.
 Pondered nervously towards mangled Cheryl.
 Precisely 9-o'clock Team Millennium convenes
 Plausible, note-worthy, tales, many conveyed
 Practically notorious, that Medical Centre.
 Playing now the main concern
 Playin' 'n' talkin', merrily carousing,
 Practise'n'teachin', marvellous cards.
 Please now, the mercying call
 Play not the more cards
 Place now the mind commatose
 Peace now til morning comes.

Porridge naturally took my choice
 Preference not, to muesli crunchers
 Packing neatly, the morning commences
 Performing now together, Millennium Crew
 Plaster not troubling mis-adventured Cheryl
 Parted nevertheless to minimise clambering.
 Passed Ngauruhoe Teams morning congregation
 Proceeded north, traversing marvellous crater
 Peaked naked Tongariro, morning coffee.

Pondering naturescape, the magic continued
 Perambulating nervously the magnificent crater
 Putrescent, nostrils tickled, mordant charm.
 People now throng momentous Crossing
 Perhaps needlessly touring many countries.
 Picnicked next to 'Merald's colourfulness
 Paused, noting truly massive crater
 Positioning not Taupo midst cloud.
 Perimetered non-molten tongue mid Crater
 Propounded normal trail to Mangatepopo
 complete
 Preferring not Tongariro Mangatepopo circuit
 Perfect now, Team Millennium cried
 Please not too much challenge

Pukekaikiore Ngauruhoe Tongariro 'Merald
 (Lake) Central (Crater)
 Our first PNTMC 2000 metres of the Millennium.
 Hooray!

We were Mike and Elaine Whitton, Cheryl, Janet, David Miller and Warren Wheeler (leader and poet).

NEXT MONTH: Terry's Fox Glacier trip . . .

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President	: Warren Wheeler	356-1998
Vice President	: Terry Crippen	356-3588
Secretary	: Sarah Todd	326-9265
Treasurer	: Peter Wiles	358-6894
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