

PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB, P.O. BOX 1217,  
PALMERSTON NORTH

## Newsletter - MARCH 2002

"I saw above me the sky was quite dark, and the sun as it fell on the mountain was far brighter here than in the plains below, because a smaller extent of atmosphere lay between the summit of the mountain and the sun"

Leonardo da Vinci, Zermatt, fifteenth century.

### TRIP REPORTS:

#### Mt Brewster

Tubing the full length of the Waiohine Gorge,  
tramping the full length of the Ruahine Range, visits to the Oroua  
Valley, Rangī Hut, Waikamaka, and the Pohangina Valley

Rock Climbing at Titahi Bay  
plus

A humorous list of mountaineering definitions

### CLUB NIGHTS

MARCH	14	BYO slides etc.
MARCH	28	Annual General Meeting.
APRIL	4	committee meeting
APRIL	11	Climbing, Tasman Valley, Bruce van Brunt
APRIL	25	Glow worms and Waterford Pub, Warren Wheeler.

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.

## UP AND COMING TRIPS & EVENTS

### Trip Grades

Trip grades can depend on many factors, especially the weather. As a guide, a reasonably proficient trapper can be expected to cover the graded trips in 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.

**March 14 Club Night**  
**BYO slides, photographs, and stories of your recent exploits (not too many please). Always a popular show.**

March 16- 17 Howletts Hut M  
 Tony Gates 357 7439

Replacing Dave Henwood's Ruahine classic (shifted to the following weekend), Tony wants to visit the delightful Howletts Hut merely to burn some coal that PNTMC donated, and read the newspaper. Depart Saturday, via the Tukituki.

March 17 Ruapae Falls E/M  
 Warren Wheeler 356 1998

Depart 8.00am. From the Putara Rd end (behind Eketahuna) we will follow the Herepai track along the Mangatainoka River for 30-40minutes to the swing-bridge then drop into the streambed and rock hop for 1.5- 2 hours up to the interesting falls. Return route includes some bush travel to practice our navigation skills.

March 17, 22- 24 Basic Bushcraft  
 Mountain Safety Council

Run by Noel Bigwood, who can be contacted at 06 351 3600 (bus), or 06 357 0116 (h). The cost is \$40.00. There are more similar courses later.

March 22- 24 Hawkes Bay Ridge F  
 Dave Henwood 326 8892

A Ruahine classic, visiting tussock basins and rocky crags of the upper Kawhatau catchment. Depart Friday evening from the Tukituki side of the ranges, then tramp into Waterfall Hut area.

March 23- 24 Risk Management  
 Mountain Safety Council  
 Cheryl Wright, 06 358 3300

Do you want to do a Risk Management Course? This will be the only one held in the Manawatu this year. NOTE: There are Risk Management

courses being held in Wellington and Taranaki. The location is the Makahika Outdoor Centre, Levin. Start time 8.00am. You may arrive from 7.00pm Friday night. Cost approx \$75.00. For an enrolment form, either email, ring me, or use the form in the MSC Lower North Island course brochure, and forward to me at P.O. box 9036.

Cheryl Wright, Chairperson, Manawatu MSC, 06 358 3300 (Hm), 025 222 0488, 06 354 9425 (Wk-non work matters urgent only), fax 06 355 5980

March 24 Coppermine Creek E  
 Terry Crippen 356-3588

Depart 9 am. Coppermine Creek is near Woodville in the SE Ruahines. This is a short interesting tramp with historic mining activity still to be seen; the old explosives magazine and tram line rails. If we want, we can complete a longer circuit via the ridge and Billygoat track for some good viewpoints.

**March 28 Club Night**  
**Annual General Meeting**

Starts 7-45pm. This is the club's Annual General Meeting. 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. Have your say on who & how your club is run. See you all

March 29 - April 7 (Easter Week).  
 Lewis Pass NLNP F,T  
 Terry Crippen 356-3588

An 8 day trip plus a day each way for travel. The Spencer Mountains form the boundary between NLNP and the Lewis Pass-St James Walkway areas. Gloriana, Faerie Queene and Una are the three main peaks. We will attempt them from the East and West branches of the Matakita Valley. Access will be either in and out via the main Matakita Valley; or as part of a Lake Rotorua to Lewis Pass route. We will take a vehicle across, catching the 9:30 am ferry on Fri 29th and returning on the 6pm ferry on Sun 7th. Transport costs will be about \$140 plus passenger ferry

tickets - which you will have to book. Places limited - contact Terry well in advance.

Day Easter Eggmont M  
Warren Wheeler 356 1998, 952 2849 (bus)  
Depart 6.00am. A day-trip to climb (steep walk) the East Ridge of Mt Taranaki, via the Plateau Carpark behind Stratford. It takes about 4 hours to scramble up to the Sharks Tooth, and over to the summit proper. Our descent will include the exhilarating long scree run to the Mangahau ski field. This trip is weather dependent, so we may go on one of the other Easter days.

Another option is to climb by moon-light, for dawn on the summit - this involves a 3.00am start on the mountain, so requires an overnight stay in Taranaki, departing 5.30pm the previous evening. Please contact Warren with your preference

#### April 4 Committee Meeting

April 6- 7 Track & Clue awareness I  
Terry Crippen 356 358  
Pacing sticks, sign cutting, night tracking, etc are some of the techniques that may be explained and practiced during this full-on weekend, for SAR team members. At this stage I don't know if it is the basic or advance course. Keep in touch for level, venue etc.

April 6- 7 Blue Lake TNP M  
Harley Betts 354 2094  
This photographic gem of Mt Tongariro is one of Harley's favourite places. We will camp out, and

enjoy the lovely scenery. Please note, Harley is overseas until early April

April 7 Herepai Bottles E  
Liz Flint 356 7654  
A leisurely day's tramp in from Eketahuna, visiting Herepai Hut for lunch, then the upper Mangatainoka River if the weather permits. Depart PN 8.00 AM.

**April 11 Club night.  
Climbing, Tasman Valley, with  
Bruce van Brunt. Bruce has spent some time  
on the slopes of Mt Cook (and others). He has  
reached a few good summits, and has a few  
tales to tell and slides to show.**

April 13- 14 Waiotaru valley- Kime Hut F  
Christine Taylor 357 0132  
This tramp commences at the Otaki Forks picnic area, and will follow an interesting circuit though the Waiotaru catchment, including some beech forest, leatherwood, and tussock tops.

April 14 Takapari trig (with MTSC) M/ F  
Janet Wilson 329 4722  
West from Dannevirke there are several good tramping tracks, and a few very overgrown ones. The dominant hill on which Takapari Trig stands has an old track known as "the Lost Track", which Janet wants to follow. Good views.

#### **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), Janet Wilson (329-4722) or Stephen Liddall (357-69).

**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 Janet Wilson (329 4722)

#### NOTICES

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES can be Emailed to [tony.gates@horizons.govt.nz](mailto:tony.gates@horizons.govt.nz), or stuff can be delivered to him at home or work.

c/- horizons.mw

11-15 Victoria Ave, PN

If you're e-mailing, we'd prefer you 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, which can be typed it directly into the e-mail.

Note that e-mails with certain attachments (particularly scanned photos) will be filtered by a "quarantine" system. you will get an e-mail reply from the horizons 'postmaster', confirming this. Don't worry about this, all material gets through to us once it is checked for viruses etc. by horizons' staff.

The deadline for anything for the Newsletter is the **FIRST THURSDAY** of the month.

**REMINDER ABOUT TRIP GRADES. By Terry Crippen, trip coordinator.**

Now that autumn is here and daylight hours are getting shorter, it is important that club members remind themselves about what is meant by the grade of a scheduled club trip. This hopefully will avoid trips being delayed in getting out and/or inexperienced people ending up on trips that are too difficult for them. As noted in each newsletter, and on the Events Card the grade of club trips is based on the time it would take a **reasonably proficient trampler to do the particular trip.**

Thus an trip graded as Easy (E) **is not an easy walk**, but will take about 3-4 hours for a reasonably proficient trampler to complete. Likewise: Medium (M) about 5-6; Fit (F) about 8 hours; and Fitness Essential (FE) more than 8 hours - in each case for a reasonably proficient trampler to complete.

And, for example, an Easy/Medium trip (E/M) would take approx 4-5 hours per day for a reasonably proficient trampler to complete.

Newish club members should not over estimate their tramping ability, or that of friends who express interest in a particular trip. Likewise leaders should ask specific questions of a person who may want to go on a trip, and if necessary inform them that they cannot go on a particular trip due to mis-match of ability and Grade.

**FOR THE TARARUA BISCUIT COMPETITION, FOR AGM NIGHT (MARCH 28)**

These are excellent biscuits to take on extended or otherwise trips, as they are quite robust, keep very well and are very tasty. Eat them on their own or use them instead of bread or crackers for your butter/jam/cheese etc spreads. This recipe makes about 45 biscuits. You use about 3 to 5 biscuits per lunch. You will end up testing them each day before your tramps so make more than you think you'll need. Make two batches.

1.25 lb oatmeal

0.75 lb flour

0.5 lb sugar

0.5 lb butter

0.5 heaped teaspoon salt

1 heaped Tablespoon malt extract, or golden syrup slightly warmed

Melt butter and rub into flour, oatmeal, sugar and salt. Mix in warm malt extract or golden syrup. Add enough water to make softish dough. Roll out till about 6mm thick and cut into rounds using an upside-down cup or glass. Bake in a moderate oven 30-40 mins until pale brown and hardish. Finely chopped raisin can be added to dough if you want.

PS Don't over cook them otherwise they will be harder than Tararua rock!

PPS While these biscuits are known locally as Tararua Biscuits, in the clubs further north (eg AUTC), they are known as *Ivan's Biscuits*, named after Ivan Pickins, a northern trampler. And depending where your loyalty is, it can be argued as to whom introduced the biscuits to whom.

At the AGM, there will be tests for hardness, smell, taste, bounce etc. Who knows what "the most interesting" Tararua biscuit will be?

**CONGRATULATIONS**

Lawson Pither, our club Patron, has just celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday- congratulations. Lawson is an enthusiastic and energetic person,

who loves tramping about the place. Long may you still do so, Lawson.

### **NEW MEMBERS**

Welcome, and happy tramping to;  
Tim Odering, and.

Graham and Hilda Heap  
20 Keeling Street, PN  
Phone 06 353-5173  
heapnz@xtra.co.nz

### **FOR SALE**

Tramping boots, very good condition  
1 pr Garmont leather \$95 (\$250 new) size 12 UK  
1 pr Asolo cordura/ leather day-hike \$50 (\$180 new) size 11 UK. I'm not giving up tramping, but have bought new boots that fit me better!  
Regards, Stuart  
Stuarth@inspire.net.nz

And, from Ray Chettleburg, at 06 355 5737  
Macpac Saphire sleeping bag with reflex outer, 90/ 10, never used. \$400.00 (retail \$1000.00).  
Macpac Cascade tramping pack, with attachable side pockets, used once. \$200.00 (retail \$500.00).

### **TRIP REPORTS**

#### **RUAHINE RANGES, NORTH TO SOUTH, December 2001. By Jonathon Astin.**

It has always been an ambition of mine to tramp the length of the Ruahine range from the Taruarau river to Wharite peak. I'd set aside 9 days over Christmas to complete the journey, but recent rain meant that all the rivers in the range were the highest they had been all year! Not to be put off, I scaled my plans back and decided to enter the park at Masters shelter, thus avoiding a crossing of the Taruarau river.

It was with some trepidation that I waved goodbye my father and set off up the golden crown ridge track.. I hate the beginning of tramps, you are the least fit and your pack is the heaviest. However, by the time I reached the No Mans hut track I was enjoying myself immensely and Cassie my faithful dog and only companion wasn't complaining either. Three hours after leaving the road end I arrived at Aranga hut. This rather dilapidated private hut had little to offer so I tramped on. A poled route leads from Aranga hut onto the open tops of the Ruahine range. With almost no clouds the views from here were

magnificent. However, as I ambled south along the tops the clouds built up and eventually I needed to use the compass to find Kylie biv, my destination for the night.

The next day saw me up at daybreak to avoid the front predicted to come through that afternoon. As I climbed up from the bivvy, the full force of the wind took me by surprise. Luckily, it was fairly consistent, so by developing a lean I could make tolerable progress. Visibility was very poor, but after I found the right ridge off Tupari, the navigation was straightforward. As I passed Te Atua Mahuru the cloud cleared for a moment and I was rewarded with stunning views. After a stop at Sparrowhawk biv for lunch I continued along the tops to Sunrise hut.



Te Atua Mahuru, at the top of Colenso Spur. Hikurangi range distant. [Jonathon Astin]

That night the weather deteriorated and wind buffeted the hut, making sleep difficult. In the morning it was no better and I had to time the gusts of wind in order to open and close the toilet door. I was planning to climb over Te Atuaoparapara and Rangioteatua, but instead I descended into the Waipawa river and climbed up and over the saddle to Waikamaka hut, then over Rangi saddle to Waterfall hut.

Christmas day dawned misty and I set off up the Kawhatau river, scaring a deer on the way. I had planned to climb up Tussock creek onto Broken ridge, but I went up the wrong creek and had to sidle around a waterfall and climb up a huge unstable slip before dropping into the upper Tussock creek catchment. It was a steep climb onto Broken ridge from here and rather eerie negotiating the rocky ridge in the cloud. The cloud burnt off as I climbed onto Ohuinga and here I stopped and rang my family to wish them a merry Christmas. It turned out to be a hot

windless day (my only one) and after 8 hours of tramping I found myself at Longview hut.

After a rest day, I headed south along the range watching the sunrise over Hawkes Bay as I went. Reaching the Apiti track, I followed it for a short while, then dropped into the Mangatewainui creek. It was pleasant walking along this creek and judging by the amount of sign, the deer agreed with me. About 30 min downstream I was expecting the track to Cattle Creek but instead I was greeted with a myriad of "Private Property" signs. After 1 hour of searching I eventually found the old track behind the derelict "Birch whare". This well defined track follows the ridge, past the Cattle Creek hut turnoff and into the Tamaki river. Just downstream Standfield hut waited. That night a thunderstorm passed over bringing bursts of heavy rain. In the morning I leapt out of my sleeping bag expecting to find a raging river, thankfully although it was discoloured it was fordable.

The main range from Takapari trig, through to Wharite contains that largest continuous belt of leatherwood in NZ, this meant that travel along the tops is difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, I decided to follow the Tamaki river to the bush edge and drop into Rokiawhana stream using the old track. From here I walked along the bush edge until I reached Kumeti Hut and the track to Keretaki hut. This track involved a steady climb up through a tunnel of sub alpine scrub, a knee-popping descent to Keretaki stream and then a brutally steep 200m climb to Keretaki hut. Here I spent my last night in the Ruahines with two hunters and their active fox terrier.

My final day was the hardest. A good track lead from the hut down to the Raparapawai stream, but it took a bit of searching to find the track over to the Mangaatua stream. Once on the track it was well defined to the top, but it required a grovel through scrub to reach the stream below. Down the Mangaatua stream the track over to Coppermine creek was actually marked, however the track was difficult to follow and I couldn't find the turnoff from the top down to the Coppermine hut site. Losing patience I bush bashed down to Coppermine creek and picked up the benched mining track. The final climb up to Wharite was accompanied by the all too familiar cloud and gusts of wind.

## MT BREWSTER, Jan 16-20. Terry Crippen

Continuing Westland exploits of the JPHT team.



Brewster Hut, mountaineer, Mountain and Glacier. [Jonathon Astin]

After our couple of days or R&R in Haast and Jacksons Bay it was time for our attempt on Mt Brewster (2515m), which sits high above the Haast River towards Haast Pass. It's quite an easily accessible mountain compared to Hooker, but is a bit technical. The weather was going to be cloudy so we knew we would probably be spending a few days hut bound in the tiny Brewster Hut. So we set off, armed with reading material from the Marks Flat library, by bus to the Fantail Falls car park. It's almost all uphill to Brewster hut, 3 km with 1000 m of climbing, but doesn't take (Jonathan) too long. A couple of bods were over nighting in the hut, so Jonathan and I tented outside, while Heather and Peter took the low-slung lower bunk in the hut.

The next three days our world was all mist. Jonathan and I moved into the hut when the two bods departed. We spent one afternoon mist bound scrambling up the spur to Mt Armstrong for a view of \_\_\_\_\_, and putting in some cairns for later. We spent time playing 500, using Terry's rules after much discussion. Read a lot, the best read when you could nick the book off one of the others, being Walter Bonatti's "On the heights". Some of us did a mist-bound route recce up and over towards the Brewster glacier, up -grading the cairned route and getting 5 minutes. The rest of the time was spent eating, sleeping, popping outside to see what the mist was doing and in the (beginning predawn) mornings listening to the battalion of keas amusing themselves outside. Two mature kea would oversee the mob of juveniles in their activities.

One morning they decided the toilet needed intense investigation, another morning it was our longs and sharps (ice axes/hammers and crampons -stacked outside) that needed investigating and moving about. And lots of noise the whole time.

The fourth morning was to be the start of fine weather so we prepared for a 4 am start. It was cold and windy at first but the thick mist had lifted. By the time we had donned crampons, headed up the glacier and cut over the (main) divide onto the Makarora snow slope the wind was dropping. It was going to turn out a cracker of a day. The strand and the steep snow face leading up to the east ridge required some rope pitches. Then it was along a snow/rotten argillite ridge to the big rock step. We turned this on the north side. Jonathan found a grotty rock gully to take him up to the summit while Heather lead the way across a snow face and an equally grotty rotten rock slope then along to the summit. Peter and I decided to use the rope, so by the time we reached the summit the other two were well into their lunches. The views were ace: straight down into the Wills Valley; Hooker and Brewster beyond across the Landsborough; Sefton, Cook and Tassie to the north; and Aspiring, Caster and Pollux to the south.

After eating and lots of photos, we descended down the NW ridge a bit before cutting back to our ascent route. At one stage my ice axe and leg took on some airborne rock which necessitated some first aid to both. We roped down the steep snow face again then it was back across to the Brewster glacier and the hut. Up to our usual form on our South Westland exploits, it was pack up and move on. In this case it was head down to the road, overall a 2000m+ descent from summit to road. I went ahead to get to the road in time to hitch back to Haast to get the vehicle and return for the others, who at least could have a bit of a break at the hut. There were almost no vehicles passing though being early evening but with a bit of talking I got a lift, returning later to find the others well rested (?asleep) in the dark car park.

Back to Haast, then the following days; Franz (eating), Hoki (rest), Greymouth (eating and drinking, visiting Andy and Zoe, sleeping), then home. The team; Heather Bewick, Jonathan Astin, Peter Wiles, Terry Crippen.

### **TUKITUKI- OROUA DAY TRIP, January 27 2002. By Lance Gray**

This trip was originally a Rangī-Howletts crossing with Mick Leyland but ended up a fascinating day trip down the Oroua River with Tony Gates. Mick, Llew, Graham, Tony, and I left Palmerston North at a leisurely 7:00 am for the Kashmir Road-end where Mick, Graham and Llew headed off for a loop over Longview that took a bit longer than they expected! I joined Tony for a trip that was fermenting in his head as we drove toward the road-end. We must thank Mick for generously offering to pick us up at Heritage Lodge later in the day – like 9.15pm!



Tony crossing the Tukituki River. [Lance Gray]

Tony, bedecked in Out of Africa costume, led me over the original track to Daphne Hut before a deep breath and heads down up Daphne Spur. We arrived at the promised land of Howletts Hut for our first view of the 400kg of coal donated by PNTMC members (thanks Derek), and ferried in by DOC chopper, which was a touch ironic given the stifling heat. A quick bite, then the adventure began. First, Tony was interested in looking for the remains of a plane crash on one of the south facing spurs in the Oroua but thankfully we gave that idea up or we would still be hunting around in there!! Second there was apparently a sizable waterfall that stopped us from initially just bombing directly from the hut into the Oroua River headwaters.

As it was, travel, while entertaining, posed no real difficulties from our point of entry, which was the spur directly after the first stream noted on the map along from Howletts – approximately an hour of easy travel. We only encountered one small patch of leatherwood along the spur and made it to the Oroua easily for a well earned rest only to disturb a hind and fawn. Time has dimmed the memory of the travel down the Oroua

except that it took us about 7 hours from the point we hit the river till we met Mick. At one point while sidling a large pool I asked Tony how he was going as I couldn't see him – at the moment he said he was fine, there was a “crack” and a big splash and I was convinced he had fallen in. Much to his amusement he had just pushed a branch into a pool instead. Mostly, tramping down the river bed was OK. From Iron Gates hut we resorted to the track to Tunupo Creek, which was a welcome respite, before joining the river again and that final stretch that seems endless after a long day. Thanks again to Mick for picking us up and bowling the odd hare on the way home. Cheers.

### **TUBING THE FULL LENGTH, WAIOHINE GORGE, Feb 8- 10. By Tony Gates.**

Friday afternoon, and Lance and I were sweating up and over Blue Range, destination the headwaters of the Waiohine River. Jean Garman and Brian Webster, our two friends from MTSC, awaited us there. We tramped rapidly through the Waingawa Gorge above Cow Creek. Despite making reasonable time, there was never any chance of surmounting the last hill (mountain). We wanted to enjoy a sunny morning on the tops, and Arete Forks hut had the fire box going and brew on when we arrived- luxury.

T'was a pre dawn start, then a hell ov a sweat up Pinnacle Spur. A few bananas kept us going, as we staggered on up in the mist. The summit of the Waiohine Pinnacles came quickly, which is unusual for a Tararua peak. Often, there are numerous false summits before the real one.

As forecast, the sun shone on the tops, and we had clear weather on the descent to the upper Waiohine Valley. More importantly, we followed a ridge clear of leatherwood. Parts were somewhat like Madrid- lots of Spaniards there!.

The upper Waiohine Valley is one of those really special places- the river flats and beech forests are just so beautiful. The area is quite remote, yet not far from huts and tracks. And we were excited at the prospect of following the river's course, from its source in the tussock, right down to the road end. We had all travelled some of it over the years, but never the full length.

We soon found Jean and Brian's foot prints- they were over an hour ahead of us, and we never

caught up to them until the evening. After 4 hours of variable but OK river travel on river flats and forest, we made it to Park Forks. A lovely, sunny place, and we had time for a brew at last. Onward and downward, the river wound through some remote and lovely central Tararua country, occasionally offering us views of the surrounding peaks- Nicholls, Kahiwiroa, and finally, Isabelle. The side creeks too, were steadily ticked off our list. We wore our wetsuits (there were several chest deep crossings), but you could probably get down this section of the river OK without one. The highlight of the day was meeting up with Jonathon, who had come in via Mt Holdsworth, then Mid Waiohine Hut. We were pretty tired by then, and he gave us encouragement and valuable route guide information. At the end of a 14 hour day, we were pretty keen to stop, rest, eat, drink and sleep. We staggered onto the helipad at Mid Waiohine hut about 8.00 PM, to meet Jean and Brian. A good feed, then we were soon all in the pit dreaming of the lower Waiohine gorge.

Sunday was lovely. After a sturdy breakfast and waterproofing session, we set off before 8.00 AM. Eleven hours it took us, to reach Walls Whare. Eleven hours of paddling, floating, shivering, tramping, and fun. We more or less all stuck together, but the river gods sometimes sent us down river sections at differing speeds for no apparent reason. Some parts you could float rapidly, and some parts almost motionless.

Maungahuka Stream, then Hector River, Totara Flats, Makakaka Creek, and the lower gorge. By then, we were in no doubt that we could reach the car park with ease. Some parts had a beautiful water level that offered us painless and rapid travel. Brian, a man who knows no fear, emerged from the bottem end of some rapids a little battered. Jean proved that walking was usually safer and faster than floating, due to the long boulder sections that she could cover in a straight line- the river continued to meander about. Some pools appeared to be bottomless- awesome. We even floated past (over) an eel, who was none too concerned about our presence.

A fantastic trip.

Gorge floaters were; Lance Gray, Jonathon Astin, Tony Gates, Jean Garman and Brian Webster.





Lance Gray enjoying deep water in the central Waiohine Gorge, near Maungahuka Stream. [TonyGates]

### **RANGI, Feb 10. By Laurence Gatehouse.**

Seven of us trogged off up the track to Rangi on as nice a Sunday as you could wish for. The slip on the track is still growing and looks like it will go all the way to the top of the ridge eventually, as well as widening out quite a bit. I wonder what DOC plan to do when it stabilizes? We passed over the slip quite easily on the well marked detour which was another 20 meters up from the last time I was there. We made surprisingly good time going up, I had thought we were strolling along, and had lunch on the veranda at the hut looking at the view. Ruapehu, Tongariro and Taranaki were all on display, nice! Some of the ladies then went off to do a little bathing at the pool on the track with the little waterfall. Duncan and I, as gentlemen, waited for 15 minutes at the hut. From the scream we heard at the hut I am convinced that someone went in (that water is really cold!) thus keeping up the traditions of the Palmerston North Tramping and Nude Bathing Club. When I arrived all was decorous though and so we wandered back down to the cars. We were Laurence (your scribe and leader), Fiona, Duncan, Maggie, Pauline, Judith and Monica.

### **WAIKAMAKA WANDERS, Feb 9- 10. By Martin Lawrence**

The Waipawa River was low, the day was warm but not too hot, and the walking was good up the Waipawa River, climbing relatively gently to the Waipawa Saddle, then down the very pleasant valley to the Waikamaka Hut for a late lunch.

Various options were discussed after lunch, but we eventually decided on a walk up to Rangi Saddle. This is great place in the Ruahines for speargrass enthusiasts. We ended up on the ridge by Rangi Saddle sitting in the sun watching another tramping party slaving along Hikurangi Range, as they were buzzed by a couple of gliders. There is a curious epitaph to a dog on this hill that is worth checking out also.

Various options were again discussed the next day. But cloud was quite low on Sunday so we simply walked straight out.

We were Llew and Jenny Pritchard, Stephen Liddall and Martin Lawrence



Steven, Jenny, and Llew on Rangi Saddle, with the slopes of Rangiateatua behind. [Martin Lawrence]

### **POHANGINA RIVER, FEBRUARY 22- 24. By Tobias Bunn.**

We all gathered at the front of the Foodtown car park at 6 pm Friday night for the long drive over to Moorcock Base. Off we set. With a short stop over in Ashhurst to pick up Dave, and sit down takeaways in Danniverke, we headed over to the start of our tramp. We got to the road end at about 8 pm, and headed up the hill towards Longview hut, where we were going to spend the night. Personally, I found out an interesting fact-if you have not been tramping for a long time, walking up a big hill takes a very long time!

After several short (and some not so short) stops to get my breath back, I made it to the hut at about 10pm. We settled in for a long and sleepless night, as there was one of the worst snorers I have ever had the misfortune to have to spend a night in the hut with. (not one of our party).

We got up in the morning about six and were on the track at about 7 am, down the slip and then down the river towards Top Gorge Hut, where we stopped at about 8.30. From here we set off to Leon Kinvg Hut for lunch. Along this section of the river we had to sidle around several gorges. I personally nearly cried with every single one of them, as I was not any were near fit enough to really enjoy these. Instead of enjoying the experience, I was fighting for breath. We got to the hut at about 1pm in time for lunch. At this lunch stop we tried one of Terry's crazy inventions- hot raro. (in spite of the sound of it, it tasted really nice and gave me the pick up that I needed). We set of to Ngamoko Hut, and along this section I personally had my trip highlight, that was seeing Blue Ducks in their natural environment. We arrived at the hut at 5 pm, and settled in for the night. Plenty of strong wind, and some rain meant the river came up a bit more.

In the morning we set off towards Mid Pohongina hut. On this section of the river you could really see the damage that the introduced wild life had done to the bush, it was disheartening. We arrived at Mid Poh. about 9 am, where we rested for about a hour, planning on walking out along the sidle track. This is the track that every one loves to hate. As the river was up a bit, and getting bigger, the narrow bouldery sections would have made crossings difficult if we had continued to use the river bed. Plus at least you get some good views from the sidle track. So onto the track, with a bit of ongaonga (stinging nettle), lots of up and downs and ins and outs high above the river. Plus quite a bit of wind-throw, and one very fresh slip. It was at this stage of the track were my fitness, (or more to the point, lack of it) really, showed. By the time Terry and I meet up with the day trippers we were half hour behind the rest of the group (who had dumped packs for a quick side trip to Centre Ck Biv). We stopped and had lunch (Well I did as the others had already had lunch.). From here we walked out with the day trippers, getting out to the road at about 3 pm. Then off to the Waterford Tavern, completing a good trip.

I would like to thank Richard for driving us to the road end on Friday night, and the day trippers for giving us a ride home on Sunday. And the big lesson that I learnt from this trip is that if Terry asks me am I fit enough, I will say no!

Terry Crippen, Tobias Bunn, Dave Henwood, Jonathon Astin, and Tim Odering.

#### **EASY TRAMP AND PICNIC AT CENTRE CREEK AND WATERFORD PUB, February 24. By Graham Heap.**

The day started well. There were clouds in the sky, but it was not raining. Stopping off at Foodtown first to buy some tomatoes we picked up Warren and headed for Ashhurst. "Now, we don't have to pick up Monica", said Warren, "Duncan is doing that and we had better not upset Pete's arrangements". Maggie joined us in Ashhurst, and the two cars proceeded to the information board where Tony was waiting.

After a while, it became apparent that Duncan and Monica were late. Tony rang Pete who rang Duncan. Duncan was back home having not been picked up. Sorry Duncan. After we went back and picked up Monica, we returned to the information board, met up with Pete, and finally headed off for the start of the walk, parking the cars in an anonymous field beside the Pohangina Valley East Road.

A few steps took us to the top of the track down to the valley floor. The views were exemplary, but the track was muddy and slippery. That safely negotiated, we soon found ourselves paddling up river. The river level was comfortable, but we thought we ought to practise our river crossings and do it properly. So, all linked up like an Irish Seven Step Reel, we marched across the river in fine style. That was the fun bit. The track up to Centre Creek Biv was less fun. Narrow, uneven, and blocked by fallen trees, it felt like hard work. Then one stopped to look at the views, and it all seemed worthwhile.

A note was left where the track from the Mid Pohongina Hut joined the track to Centre Creek Biv. However, as no pen could be found the message on the piece of paper ended up as hieroglyphics made with a stick rubbed in the dirt. Apparently, Terry understood it perfectly.

Another trip across the river, and a steep scramble found us at the Biv. I am not sure that words could ever do justice to the peculiar awfulness of the hut so I will not try to describe it. Lunch was taken by the creek. For such a small river, the boulders are indeed very big. Pete took more photographs, Tony brewed up and read the bits of the Sunday paper that had not got wet. The rest of us sat and pondered. A short discussion about the relative merits of returning down the river or back along the track resulted in a big majority decision in favour of the track. The two most disappointed people were Warren, who has long legs and does not mind getting wet, and Hilda, who has short legs and positively enjoys the wet!

On the way back, Pete shinned up an apparently smooth rock in bare feet and made it look easy. The rest of us watched but were not tempted to follow. The grand plan began to come together when we met up with the weekend trampers doing the Full Pohongina. Old friends were greeted, news caught up with, a late lunch was eaten and a group photo taken of the weary walkers. As we rejoined the river the rain descended, but not for too long. Soon, we were ascending the slippery track, which even newly rained on, was much less hazardous going up - for Toby and Hilda it was nearly a hill too far.

People and packs were shoehorned into the cars and the party reconvened at Waterfords where wedges were wolfed, cake consumed and drinks downed. Where the idea that Duncan would pick up Monica came from will probably remain a mystery forever. And the tomatoes? They got left in the car, but were eaten in the end.

We were: Monica Cantwell, Tony Gates, Hilda and Graham Heap, Pete McGregor, Maggie Shepherd, and Warren Wheeler.

### **ROCK CLIMBING AT TITAHU BAY, March 3 2002 by Graham Heap**

Things were looking a bit iffy on Thursday. Rain was forecast for the weekend. At Rock City, those of us who had never rock climbed before were introduced to harness, ropes and belaying, then expected to climb vertical walls of plywood with tiny little hand holes stuck all over the place. It was good fun and very tiring.

Arrangements were made to phone Laurence on Sunday morning. "Watch the weather forecast",

he said. So we did. Showers with a strong north westerly wind was forecast. Oh dear!

On Sunday morning, there were plenty of grey clouds, but it was not showering. Laurence confirmed the trip was on and shortly after 0900 hrs three cars with 10 people got underway from Foodtown Carpark. We travelled out on the 56 and wondered why there was nobody behind us. Just as we reached the junction with the 57 Terry appeared from the left. So now we know it takes exactly the same length of time using either the 56 or the 57 to get out of Palmerston North. I have often wondered.

The clouds gathered and a heavy shower proved the forecasters right. As we continued south, slowly the clouds disappeared. By the time we arrived at Titahi Bay the sky was clear, the sun was warming up and the wind was blowing very hard. Harnesses, helmets and ropes were distributed and the party set off down the steep track to the beach (where was the mud, Laurence?). As we descended the wind gradually disappeared and we found perfect weather at the bottom for rock climbing. After a brief paddle in the sea we arrived at the rock faces.

Equipment was put on, checked and double-checked. Laurence appeared at the top and threw a rope down. Pete began to lead climb up another part of the face with Sarah on belay. Terry and Duncan disappeared round the corner to set up another climb. Warren was first up the 'easy' climb and the rest of us followed in turn. Pete and Sarah had set up another climb that was a bit more difficult. Round the corner, we were told that there was a climb up a 'slab'. A slab, as Laurence told us, is not vertical and climbing it is more about balance than brute strength. Intrigued, we went to have a look. I reckon climbing it is more about not having slippery boots.

In the afternoon, we all seemed to end up in the cove round the corner where two ropes gave access to several climbs of varying difficulty. The beginners contented themselves with the less technical, the more experienced were up and down all over the face and Pete chose to tackle something quite separate and much more difficult. After he had managed to climb it, he threw the rope back down, not realising that Sarah wanted to have a go. So he did it all over

again, so that Sarah, Sam and Jonathan could attempt the climb. They all succeeded after a bit of a struggle.

A steep climb to the cars brought us back into the wind which was still blowing a Force 6/7. We followed Terry to the TipTop shop, but before we could get out of the car he set off again. We followed, not being quite sure how to get back onto the main road. On and on we went. "Perhaps they decided not to have an Ice Cream after all." "No, that's not like Warren." At a set of traffic lights we lost sight of Terry's car. Suddenly, Jonathan was spotted at the roadside waving frantically. He was outside Lindale Dairy just north of Waikanae. We turned round and went back and were just in time to get some excellent ice cream. The shop had just shut, but they let us in anyway. Laurence could not resist a last climb on the big cheese.

As we approached home, the clouds thickened and it rained for a while. All in all a very enjoyable day. We were Jonathan Astin, Terry Crippen, Laurence Gatehouse, Hilda and Graham Heap, Duncan Hedderley, Pete McGregor, Sarah Pettus, Sam ? and Warren Wheeler.

### **THE A TO Z DICTIONARY OF CLIMBING TERMINOLOGY. (to be continued)**

Alps: cries for assistance, most commonly heard in alpine areas.

Ascend: the part of a mountaineer opposite that on which the head is located.

Barometer: scientific instrument used to locate mountain taverns.

Bong: sound made by a climber after a fall.

Boot-ax belay: highly developed technique for ruining an ice ax, destroying a rope, and shortening a climbing day.

Carabiner: oversized diaper safety pin.

Clean climber: One who neither smokes, nor drinks liquor, and who changes underpants daily.

El Capitan: Trip leader in a Spanish country.

Fall: good time of year for climbing.

Foot jam: offensive accumulation between toes caused by wearing same socks for several days.

Free climb: climb done without expensive equipment. there are cheap thrills too.

Goose down: Get slow climber to descend quick.

Gorp: mealtime sound made by a hungry alpinist.

Handhold: what two climbers do during long bivouacs on narrow ledges.

Hardware: metal which when draped around the neck gives a musical accompaniment to a climb and provides ballast to regulate a climber's ascent.

Jamming nut: very painful way to climb.

Knot: configuration often discovered in the middle of a rappel rope during a rappel.

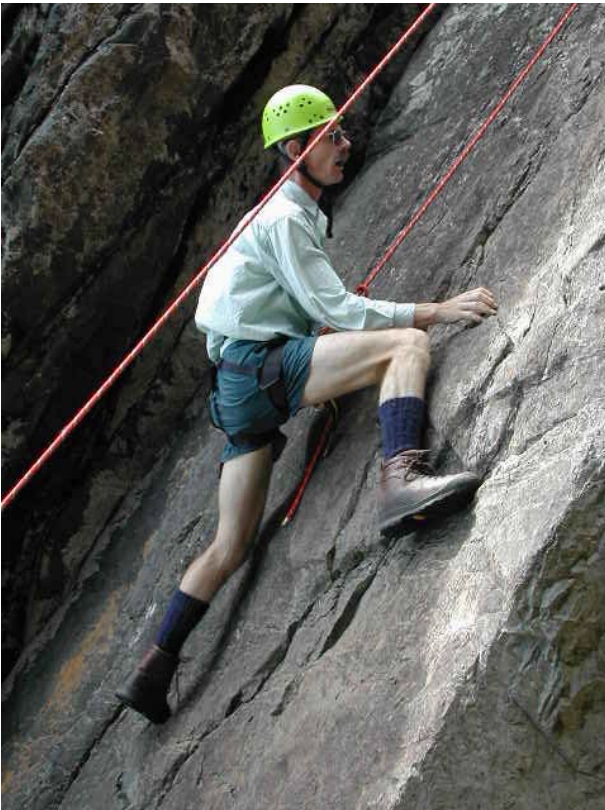
Layback: Climber looks forward to this after the end of a hard day.

Mohair: hair of a mo. see scree.

Moraine: forecast for a period of wet weather.

Myth: Adventure related by a mountaineer.

Navigation: science of becoming temporarily disoriented. Because instruments don't lie, and because art is truth, mountaineers are never lost.



Action and scenery on the rocks at Titahi Bay You should be able to recognise some of these characters. [Grahan Heap]

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