



PALMERSTON NORTH TRAMPING AND MOUNTAINEERING CLUB INC.

P.O. BOX 1217, PALMERSTON NORTH

Newsletter - August 2006

CLUB NIGHTS

Club nights are on the second and last Thursday of each month at the Society of Friends Hall, 227 College Street, at 7:45pm sharp. All welcome! at the club night: Please sign the visitor's book.

**10 Aug Club Night
Chris Saunders
Two Tries at Tappy**

Find out about climbing Tapuae-o-uenuku from the Clarence Valley as well as from the Hodder. Two great trips in the eighties. Another opportunity to reminisce about external frames and great hairstyles.

17 Aug Committee Meeting

**31 Aug Club Night
George Ionas
Under the Dark Sky**

Given the amount of time we spend under the stars, sometimes not too comfortably, this is a good opportunity to learn about our night sky. Certainly takes the mind off how cold it is. Pointing out the Southern Cross is about as clever as I am regarding the stars so this should really add something to the conversation the next time we head into ranges.

Articles to Lance gray.family@actrix.co.nz or post to 37 Parata Street, Palmerston North (by 20th of the month).

TRIPS

**Aug 5-6 Oturere M
Peter Wiles 358-6894**

A nice hut in the Tongariro National Park off the Desert Road. Provides an excellent opportunity for many interesting side trips to such delights as Ohinepango Springs, Waihohonu Springs and the obvious volcanic attractions. Plenty of snow for non-climbers to enjoy so contact Peter for further details.

**Aug 6 Palmy Walkways E/M
Anne Lawrence 357-1695**

This is a great opportunity for those of you who are not familiar with the walkways in and around Palmerston including some recently opened paths. We will set off from Countdown carpark at 8.30am and follow a loop passing near Massey and Pacific College before heading back to the Elm Tree for coffee. We will then go along the river walkway, loop around the racetrack before heading back to our starting point.

**Aug 12-13 Snowcraft 2 M/T
Mt Ruapheu
Terry Crippen 356-3588**

**Aug 13 Mangaweka Farm Walk EM
Malcolm Leary (06) 322-8533**

Hmm, I can smell the home-baked cooking already. Always a great turn out to look over another aspect of the Leary's

farm. The lambs are coming so get out there and enjoy them. Not for dinner I mean!

Aug 20 Play it by Ear EM
Richard Lockett 323-0948

Richard has kindly offered to take a trip in place of a trip I was to take. Richard said that given the weather he will play it by ear. For those of you who know Richard he has many good trip ideas and is always happy to accommodate options. Please contact Richard closer to the time.

Aug 22 (Tue) Snowcraft 3 evening for participants

Aug 26-27 Snowcraft 3 T
Mt Taranaki
Terry Crippen 356-3588
Bruce van-Brunt 328-4761

Aug 27 AkitioRamble E
Ian Harding (06)376-5707

Come along with local Eastern Wairarapa/Southern Hawkes Bay guide to a little visited part of the North Island. Akitio is a small beach community roughly located between Herbertville to the north and Castlepoint to the south. Plenty of interesting beaches to explore. Good opportunity to see how Ian's ankle is healing.

Trip participants:

Contact the leader at least 3 days in advance. Trips leave from Countdown carpark. A charge for transport will be collected on the day. Leaders should be able to give an estimate in advance. For general info, or any suggestions for future tramps, please contact Terry Crippen (356-3588), Janet Wilson (329-4722) or Tony Gates (357-7439).

Trips

Easy (E): 3-4 hrs Technical skills reqd (T)
Medium (M): 5-6 hrs Instructional (I)
Fit (F): about 8 hrs Fitness Essential (FE): >8 hrs

Trip leaders:

Please advise a trip coordinator, as soon as possible, if 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

Search and Rescue Thankyou By Janet Wilson

Thanks to everyone who has helped out with a number of recent SAR's. During the recent search for Mr Alexander, 12 club members participated over a number of days, contributing around 160 hours.

Club members have also been involved with a night time rescue in the gorge, a search at Ballance and a search and rescue for 4 overdue trampers in the Iron Gate/ Triangle Hut area.

Courses

1. ***Above the Bushline Skills***
30 Sep to 1 Oct
2. ***Leadership 11-12 Nov***

Federated Mountain Clubs are offering these courses to be held later this year. The club has decided to offer a subsidy for up to 4 club members on each of these courses. They are aimed at club instructors, trip leaders and others interested in improving their skills. If you would like to attend one of these or to find out more about them, contact Janet or Terry.

Avalanche Awareness

There have been some big avalanches on Mt Egmont, and no doubt elsewhere in the North island with all this snow. Avalanches are one of the big dangers both in winter and summer snow country.

The NZ Mountain Safety Council runs short avalanche awareness courses (an evening lecture followed by a day on the slopes), as well as longer ones. Well worth going on if you are a trumper skier or climber.

The next one on Mt Ruapehu is Friday night 25 August and Sat 26th. For more info, the full listing of courses and also the link to the avalanche advisory (ie what the avalanche danger is currently at your favourite area), visit the NZMSC web site;

www.mountainsafety.org.nz



Enjoying the views and wind on top of Herepai (Report coming)

TRIP REPORTS

Roaring Stage Trip, Atene Skyline Walkway, Pohangina Pathways, Waoipehu Hut

Roaring Stag Trip 3-4 June By Warren Wheeler

Richard Lockett and myself made a rather small but highly flexible group for this Tararua trip. Our goal was to visit the new hut beside by the Ruamahanga River, with a side trip to see the Hidden Lake for good measure. We made a good start on the Easy part of the trip by stopping for coffee and carrot cake in Eketahuna at about 10.00am.

At the Putara Road end we engaged tramping mode. The track was a bit wet and muddy after the recent rain but the possum eradication programme seems to be quite effective as Richard observed much more

undergrowth than several years ago, especially in the upper areas of the track.

After lunch at the hut we had a chat with a couple of hunters who passed through after deciding to abandon the claggy tops and the freezing cold and wind-swept Cattle Ridge Hut. They had stayed at Roaring Stag Hut overnight and despite plenty of sign in the Ruapae Stream had not shot at any deer.

To get to the hidden lake we took the dry feet option, backtracking a few minutes up the track to the first stream and then sidling around from the waterfall into the river before dropping down a slip into the riverbed, which we followed upstream for about 30minutes, crossing the Ruapae Stream, and rock-

hopping beside the river with just a couple of forays into the adjacent forest and scrub to avoid steep or gnarly sections.

A well-trodden track up the bank on the river bend below the lake led us onto the terrace and around to the small lake below, which could be mistaken at first glance for the river, and easily missed. After dropping down and making our way passed the outlet we made a brief stop to enjoy the quietude beside the lake, and then continued around and back up onto the terrace.

Our return trip was on a compass bearing through the relatively open tall mixed rimu and beech forest on the terrace here at the Ruamahanga Forks. Crossing the Ruapae Stream we carried on the bearing up onto the terrace on the other side and soon reached the track back to the hut.

There is no gas at the hut so Richard fired up his cooker and had his one-pot kumara stew ready in no time. It wasn't cold enough to light up the wood burner and after a few games on Connect 4 (kindly left at the hut) we were early to bed, with one mattress as a curtain to dim the light from the bright full moon.

Morning brought showery gusts down the valley so we packed up smartly and headed out up the track, but it wasn't until we had dropped back down the steep muddy section to the swing bridge that we had to get our raincoats out. The showers eased off nicely as we changed into dry clothes at the vehicle – a good trip, celebrated with a coffee and cake back in Eketahuna for lunch. Home by 1.30pm.....Easy.

**Atene Skyline Walkway,
11 June
By Tony Gates**

Just before the big wintery blast of June 2006, three of us enjoyed a good tramp along the Atene Skyline Walkway, Wanganui National Park. It's fairly close to Wanganui town, is a well marked trail that follows a loop, and has some great bush scenery. Because it follows pretty close to a forested knife edge ridge for some of the distance, good views are easily obtained of some of the vast Wanganui interior.

We departed the car at a reasonable hour, despite these short winter days, and soon warmed up on the steep climb. The eastern end starts off very steep, ambles along the knife edge ridge till the half way shelter/clearing, then the gradient is much easier down to the western (upriver) end. Our tramp took about four and a bit hours. The half way shelter is not surprisingly located at approximately the half way point when considering time taken, but about one third the distance around the track.

Periodic weak winter sunshine faded as we sweated up the hill, and slipped and skidded around some fairly smooth, damp clay pans. The weather did however progressively improve, so we experienced several good bursts of sunshine. And we were pretty impressed with the good forest- beech on the ridges, rimu and the like, as well as the expected usual fern and understory mix. Sadly, goats were evident, with a very junior kid posing for the cameras, then scarpering pretty quick when I got closer that about two metres from it in my rugby tackle pose and a sharp knife in my pocket. Some goats left their trademark unpleasant scent in the air.

An early lunch at the shelter, then a rapid descent soon saw us on the old hydro exploration road. During the 1960's, the government explored hydroelectric possibilities here, but never built a dam due to geologic instability. There were numerous slips on the road as it progressively wound its way down the easy ridge to the farmland. Some fifteen minutes up from the end, DoC have made a new lookout point, and benched, stepped, and gravelled the track to it. The end was a road walk of a kilometre or two- hardly a traffic jam up the Wanganui River road.

We were; Martin Lawrence, Duncan Hedderley, Tony Gates.

**Pohangina Pathways
9 July
By Janet Wilson**

A big group gathered at my Pohangina Valley house on a frosty but clear morning. After a quick discussion as to where people

preferred to walk, we settled on the Fern Walk for our first pathway. Monica, Helen and Jill set off, declaring that they would be the slowest and therefore needed to head off first. Anja went with them and the rest of us followed at a leisurely pace, looking at the views, the lovely trees and birds. We stopped for morning tea at the 2nd seat, but saw no sign of the first group here. The birds are very plentiful at this spot and you could sit there for hours watching them. However, we moved off quickly but didn't catch up with the first group until we were back at the cars. They were just finishing an early lunch!!! - so much for slow.

The rest of us had a very quick lunch and then we moved on to the Old Coach Road walk, or what remains of it. We started at the carpark a kilometer or so further up the valley. I don't think the part of this walk directly opposite the Fern Walk goes very far at all these days as the river has taken a lot of the river bank in this area. We split into 2 groups for this walk (depending on which month you were born in) and met up 1/2 way around the loop. Another leisurely walk, looking at some nice big trees along the way. This pathway has recently had plenty of maintenance and is easy to follow with lots of signs. About an hour to do this one.

By the time we were all back at the cars, everyone seemed to have done enough walking and plans for some of us to do the Beehive Creek Walkway were abandoned in favour of coffee/tea and cake for afternoon tea back at my house. It was a nice winter's day out.

We were Peter Daragh, Janet Maessen Croad, Warren Wheeler, Monica Cantwell, Jill Collins, Helen, Anja Scholtz, John Feeney, Martin Lawrence, Barbara, Tim, and Janet Wilson (leader/scribe).

The Waiopahu Circuit, 16 July 2006. By Tony Gates

For very good reason, Andy and I stalled on our respective winter club trips- mine to Howletts Hut, Andy's to the new Elder Biv- it was the atrocious weather of July 2006, heavy rain warnings, and all that. All was not lost, however, as we joined forces on a day

stroll Mid July up into the Tararua mud on Waiopahu, and peered west into the Tararua Murk. We were in the clear all day, as Waiopahu is like that when easterly clag hangs about the main range. And the high Tararuas looked disgusting, clothed in damp mist and deep snow.

So, we set off at dawn, stomping up the well worn Waiopahu Ridge track. The mud puddles were expansive. Lots of others had been there before us, with the three main Wellington Tramping Clubs all featuring. Hutt Valley, Tararua, and Wellington Tramping Club members were all up at Waiopahu Hut for the Saturday night, and many were still there when we arrived at about 10.00 AM. It must have been quite a crowd.

Waiopahu Hut catches both the morning and afternoon sun, so was pleasantly warm as we chatted to the residents. A quick half hour there was enough, then we were soon on the sunny tussock of Waiopahu peak. From there, the high central Tararuas looked like a pretty miserable place to be. We were happy, despite the seemingly endless mud, splashing along with the Hutt Valley's. There was one difficult section- snow and wind damaged leatherwood trees over the track- but the route was mostly OK. Richards knob, sunshine, then the endless Gable End, with probably the best mud puddles of the trip. After six hours, I was getting a bit tired. Real nice sunshine on the Ohau farmland (but still plenty of mud).



Tony Gates and Andrew Lynch with friend

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