

HERETAUNGA TRAMPING CLUB.

Bulletin No. 36.

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OVERSEAS NOTES.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of Xmas Cards and Greetings from the following members. Thank you.

Sealy Wood, Keith Bullock, George Denford, Nora Finn, John Collin  
Ron Craig, Catherine Crompton, Dudley Sheppard, Sam Haraldsen,  
Cliff Hunt, Ronagh Black.

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SEALY WOOD: Writes us a very interesting and entertaining account of life in New Caledonia from an entirely different angle, that of a doctor. We would very much like to hear more in the same strain. All the best from the H.T.C.

HUCK FINN: Sent us Xmas greetings by letter and card for which we were very grateful. Her descriptions of minor trials and tribulations together with the lighter side of life on active service are always welcomed by us all and we look forward to letters from her. What about joining us at Waikamaka Hut for Easter, Huck? Love from us all.

RON CRAIG: A chatty epistle from Ron to hand with news of much interest to us all. Yes, the historic cabbage tree still stands Ron, as a reminder of very happy times with the Club. Glad to hear you can give us first hand information of Huck and Nancy. Cheerio from us all back home.

JOHN VON DADELSZEN: You are a faithful correspondent John and we're glad to hear your parcel arrived in good order. Let's hear from you again soon. Best of luck from us all.

HARRY RICHDALE: A long letter dated 23:10:43 has been received by the Club for which many thanks. You kids have certainly moved around since Alamein. Cheers from the Club.

ARCH LOWE: Many thanks for the airgraph Arch. Let's have that letter soon. Loads of the best from the Club.

CLIFF HUNT: We have recently had a lovely long letter from Cliff with an account of all his doings. He also mentioned having seen Nora and Nancy and Ron Craig, so H.T.C. members in the Middle East still manage to get together on occasions. Cheers and beers from the Club, Cliff.

JOHN COLLINS: We have had several letters from John recently for which many thanks. Glad to hear all your mail arrived intact, John. All the best from the Club.

NANCY WILLIAMS: Is fit and well from all accounts. You must enjoy catching a glimpse of "old familiar faces" occasionally. Nice to think H.T.C's are sticking together. It was great to hear your good old tones over the air Nancy, and thank you for your message to us all. Love from the Club.

DUDLEY SHEPPARD: Hullo Duddles. We're going up to the Waikemaka for Easter & how about it? We would love to have you all with us. Don't apologise for your letters - we look forward as eagerly to getting them as you look forward to ours. Cheers from us all.

SAM HARALDSEN: Your airgraph has arrived Sam. Congratulations from us all on having been Mentioned in Dispatches. Glad to hear your card and parcel have reached you safely, and hope they were a little bit of home. Cheerio.

POP COLLETT: It was lovely to get your card and to know you're fit and well. Chin up and best wishes from us all, in the H.T.C.

JACK HANNAH: Yes. Jack, your card has arrived and was much appreciated, and also letters thanking us for parcels and card received. Your long letters are always read most eagerly so keep up the good work. All the best from the Club.

GEORGE DEBFORD: Trust George to organise all home comforts! Hope you sleep well on your rubber sprung stretcher. Cheers and all the best George.

DAVE LYNCH: How about that letter Dave? We are anxious to hear first hand how you are faring over there. Loads of the very best from us all.

BRUCE BEECHEY: Howdee Beech, we love your long amusing epistles and hope that some more are being "cooked up" for us in the near future. So pleased to hear you are well, but sorry that you are slowly freezing to death - summer won't be long! Cheers and the best from us all.

FRANK SIMPSON: Thank you very much for your letters, cards and airgraphs Frank, and for the latest picture "graph you sent. Glad you had an opportunity to visit "Ireland". We are looking forward to hearing all about it. Good to hear your voice again over the air. Cheers.

LINDSAY LLOYD: We are looking forward very much Lin. to your first letter from the "other side" and do hope that so far you are enjoying life as much as you can and that soon you will have some good old reunions with the other kids over there. Wish you were coming with us at Easter. Loads of luck and cheers from us all.

HAROLD COOPER: As your whereabouts are so uncertain at the moment Harold, we just don't quite know what to say - however we hope that we may see you soon instead of that long looked for letter. Hope so anyway. Loads of the best from us all.

JOE ARMITAGE: We are eagerly looking forward to hearing from you again soon Joe. We haven't heard for ages, and would love to know how you are faring. We often think of the good times we all used to have together and hope it won't be long before we are having them again. Cheers from the Club.

BILL HAYMAN: We have had several cards from Wobbly and he was fit and well when he last wrote in October. He seems to be getting quite a "hand" at running up a good mean on P.O.W. rations, and it will be good training for after-War tramping days! Cheers from us all Wobbles.

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#### SOCIAL NOTES.

The Club extends its warmest congratulations to Hope Low and Hilary Collinge both of whom are the proud possessors of new daughters, particularly fine specimens of their sex, so we are led to believe!

Spriggles Frame and Ezra Bartle have renounced bachelor life and recently entered the married state. Warmest congratulations and best wishes for your future happiness from H.T.C.

Mabel Wyatt has forsaken us for pastures new. A position in Head Office, Woolworth's has taken her to Wellington, and while we shall miss a long-standing member from our ranks we wish her all success and happiness in her new job.

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#### NEW MEMBERS.

To the following new members we extend a welcome and wish them happy tramping with the Club.

Edith Mill, Muriel Shaw, Joan Carrington, June Hyland, Betty O'Connell, Betty Adams, Jessie Hunter, Norman Lee.

### CLUB MEETINGS.

Club meetings have been well attended lately with one rather encouraging feature, the presence of several new members.

Through the courtesy of Messrs. Ebbett & Gifford, we have for some time past been the occupants of three rooms in their building. However, as the largest room is now no longer available, we have to look further afield, as meetings, conducted in what was once our kitchen, are decidedly congested. Accommodation has been taxed to its limit but in the meantime we are carrying on there until suitable rooms can be found.

Talks, impromptu and prepared have given added interest to Club meetings. Hugh Nelson has entertained us on two occasions - the first a description of some of his tramping exploits, bloodcurdling and otherwise. From his description of his trips in the South Island we gathered that tramping is no gentle pastime. A few brief remarks on tramping abroad - on the Continent, in England and in Canada, rounded off a most enjoyable talk. A trip taken into the Urewera in Company with Campbell Clarke provided Hugh with material for his second talk, a tale of hardships which left the audience quite exhausted!

We were luck indeed to have Mr. Bernard Teague at a Club Meeting when he gave us a talk on the delights and possibilities of tramping in the Urewera country. Maps and photographs gave us an added interest.

On yet another occasion we listened to an account given by Rolf Keys of a private trip with Dr. Bathgate and party, when Otupae was the main objective.

Ian Wilkinson from C.U.C.M.C. was also prevailed upon to tell us of his experiences gained in the South Island and Angus Russell gave us a faithful account of a ski-ing trip he took to Ohakune Hut with Hugh Nelson.

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### KIWI TRAMPING CLUB.

From an early state in the career of the H.T.C., parties of Hereworth boys have been squeezed into odd corners of lorries and the sight of a skirmishing screen of green and black jerseys half a mile ahead of the main body has been fairly familiar. When routes had to be investigated for Club trips (and practically every Club trip has been made over ground previously pioneered), Hereworth parties frequently served as the guinea-pigs from whose struggles, an estimate of difficulty and of time necessary could be made.

The boys have now started their own tramping Club, proposing to run it with a minimum of adult aid, and have got away to a most enthusiastic start - their main difficulty being to keep the numbers down to a manageable figure. If a junior club of this type can maintain itself, it should, come normal times, lead to new developments in tramping which will provide a valuable ground, so far lacking.

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THE BULLETIN v. FATE.

A short account of the latest Club Match as played by the Editor and her colleagues, March 1944.-

The game started well with the Editor fielding a good side- 'Club Trips', 'Private Trips', and 'Overseas News', being well represented and 'Morale of Staff' high'.

The score was mounting well when the Editor retired( in good order) and left the team to carry on. It did its best but found the going pretty heavy.

'Kack of Stencils' was the first bowler to give trouble but fortunately 'Undisclosed Resources' stood his ground and blocked well.

The fast bowler 'Illegibility' gave Mollie some Body line balls but she hit him for six and reached double figures early in the game.

The 'Amateur' then went in to play 'tip and run' and was soon caught out, running off the pages. Even the 'Professional' who usually gives a good account of herself was off her game and 'Broken Typewriter' bowled four for one in an underarm fashion, (not done). Then 'Duplicator' took ~~xxxxxx~~ an over and the team was nearly run out (of the shop) by 'WrongNumbering' and 'Crooked Lines! Paper Shortage' bowled a clean ball but was hit to leg by 'Good Luck', and finally 'Page Five Missing' nearly finished the game. However with 'Urgent Telephone Rings;' the team managed to play the time out and the game was declared a Draw.!

And what a game!. Any Member desiring a more detailed account of this interesting match do not apply to the Management.

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And now seriously, As there is a shortage of paper we regret that we will not be able to supply Bulletins to unfinancial members,

The Treasurer is always at meetings and ready to receive subs.

Her postal address is on the front page.

CLUB TRIPS.

Trip NO. 214

NOV. 21st 1943

KAHURANAKI via THE GAP.

*album 3 p 30*

The 3 Hastings members picked each other up at 6.45 a.m. and cycled to Havelock where bicycles were left in Mr. Greenwood's shed. Ursula joined the party and we proceeded to the second gate where we were joined by Norman and 4 Boys. We journeyed on and arrived at the river at 9 a.m. This was very wide and slow flowing where we crossed with directions from Angus who was on the other side with Clem, Ezra and Mollie, these members having cycled to this spot.

Then began the climb up Mokopeka ridge and after an hour of this very hot work two of the party decided to return to the river and spend the day there. The others continued on up to the top of the ridge and then along towards Kahuranaki, the views being superb and most satisfying. At 12 o'clock the Trig still seemed a long way off so we decided to lunch under some willows conveniently placed beside water. After a pleasant hour or so in the sun we continued up and reached the trig about 2 p.m. More sunning as soon became evident by our faces and the trek home was begun. A pleasant walk back to the river sidling on convenient tracks and a still more pleasant meal and swim when we arrived at 5 p.m. was enjoyed, before we parted with the Napier members.

The river party were picked up and after a cool walk back to Havelock we arrived at Mr. Greenwood's at 7.45 p.m. The trip had been hot and fairly long but not really strenuous, and the participators felt the effort well worth while.

J. Lovell-Smith, 13 i  
in Party.

Trip NO. 215

NDEC 4&5 1943

TUKI TUKI via MIDDLE ROAD.

*album 3 p 35*

This route goes 9 miles up the Middle Rd. from Havelock North, turns to the left up a grassy road, over a low saddle and proceeds past a virile black bull,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles along the river falls to an ideal swimming hole bordered by willows.

Clem and Angus cycled against the wind from Napier on the Sat., June Muriel Nancy Fanner, and Peggy arriving by car at eventide. Moonlight, a big roasting fire and sleep under a starry sky was the party's lot. In the gloom beneath the willows silent figures were loitering by the gurgling river.

Those asleep were suddenly aroused by piercing shrieks and heavy dull thuds. A rescuer saw a writhing form among roots at the water's oily edge, but in an instant it slipped away into the dark depths. The river still flowed silently on. That big one was gone. No fish for breakfast.

Sunday was perfect. A day demanding restfulness and after gentle swims six horizontal trampers strenuously perfected their technique of relaxation, with sunbeams dancing on their cuticles. The lagoon was busy with stilts and paradise ducks, but scared

Trip NO. 217

NORTHERN and CENTRAL RUAHINES

Dec. 28th 1943 to Jan. 3rd 1944

*Album 3 p 31, 32, 33.*

Why do Club Captains' beards go white? A month of additions, subtractions, suggestions and alterations to the scheduled trip bandied about between Auckland, Wellington and intermediate points. At the last minute the Auckland party decided on a fresh schedule, the leader pulls out and the trip starts.

Our objective was primarily botanical. For three years the Ruahines have been largely abandoned except for a few outings by guides platoons and deer stalking Marines. Tramping, and with it the half completed botanical survey of the range had to be abandoned for more pressing duties. Now here was a chance, and those who could jumped at it with both feet.

To make the best use of our time called for a rather complicated schedule - probably the most ambitious attempted by the H.T.C. - and some explanation of this is necessary. In 1940 a preliminary traverse of the N.W. Ruahines had shown the importance botanically of the Reporoa Bog area. South of this the complicated problem of the boundary between forest and tussock needed further examination. Next was the distribution of grasses, and other high mountain plants along the divide as far south as the head of the Waipawa. Finally a separate erosion problem on the Mokai Patea.

Two seven day parties started simultaneously, on the H.B. side from Big Hill, on the Rangitiki side the Aucklanders went in from Taihape, being fortunate enough to pick up the Mangaohane truck, thus saving the best part of a day. The H.B. party did it the hard way, crossing by Herricks and No Mans to ~~the~~ Pohokura, thence up Wild Sheep Spur (a sticky scramble) and on the afternoon of the second day sighted deer on the move near the rendezvous, then human figures.

Two emissaries dropped packs and slipped up the ridge to bring them down to the camp site which the rest were preparing. With mutual curiosity we observed their dehydrated foods and 'Bart' packs, they our Mutch., Wilson tent and vegetarian members. Next morning, the hastily formed Anti-Botanical Club got away early with day packs for Wild Sheep Spur, Pohokura, the hot springs Otupae and Mangaohane, while the backbone ~~of~~ moved across for ~~for~~ a happy day on the Reporoa Bog.

The Bog lived up to its reputation for botanical surprises and produced several new species in spite of the previous days combing it had received. By 3 p.m. we were temporarily surfeited but the time was rather late for any distant project, so as a compromise between the individualist and communist schools of plant study we agreed to strike south, pick up a belt of scrub forest, then bear east to the Makirikiri tarns and so home. An hour later the more prudent members saw the red light and went home. The rest found their bush, dropped 700' to the plateau and reached the tarns after a switch back across several deep gullies. By now it was dusk with the mist settling down fast, and the visit was little more than perfunctory. Campbell, with Jane at his heels, was soon a dot in the distance on a bee line for home;



Vic and Laurie 'hid' the swamp in one uninterrupted curving trajectory and the rearguard were soon following them. We contacted Campbell, veering out to the right, just as the mists shut down in earnest. 'Cliffs to the left! It seemed crazy out in the plateau, but it was so and for some puzzled minutes we skirted a sheer walled ravine till it disappeared at a small waterfall which Tony recognized. We now struck for the scarp intending to saddle it, say N.W., into the saddle and so home, but the first scarp slewed us N.E., forcing us to break off and try another line of cliffs (The place was apparently full of cliffs, mostly nocturnal in habit) The next hour was spent below interminable shadowing cliffs with an uncomfortable S.W. trend which did not make sense. Steering by compass we made ~~on~~ the ridge leading to camp after nightfall and silled our way down till we could pick up Clem's belllike note. xI It was necessary to work down in a semicircle to clear the bush and we worked round on sound-location principles, but soon got off the regular silling and into a herd of still more nocturnal blocks and slabs, as big as houses. At long last a landmark, a glow (Joans torch) and at 9.30 p.m. camp with supper on, a bright fire and practically below mist level. No sign of the Anti-Botanists- hardly expected.

Next morning was beautifully clear and we had hardly finished breakfast before the stop-outs were sighted having come some fabulous distance since sun-up from their fire and foodless bivouac on the slopes of Mangaohane. After a feed and a spell they were ready to move on, so we packed up and jogged over to the Makirikiri tarns for lunch- noting with some amusement landmarks of the previous night's perambulations.

By 2.30 we were on the southern boundary of the plateau and while some took a spell and located the start of the cullers track, the more strenuous took a run up the impressive crag which dominates the head of the Mangatera Valley, their path a strip of yellow and dark green Bulbinella to the very summit. At the S.E. angle of the plateau we left with regret its open, strange but pleasant, spaces and plunge into a queer open forest with swollen trunks and matted undergrowth on our way to the main range. Here we were to meet a three day party (the original official party) coming up from the south. We could then rearrange the parties so that the botanists became the southern party while the rest returned to Kerenn.

A mile short of the fantastic knife edges of Potae the track drops below the scarp and sidles into the head of the Ikaawatea just short of the saddle, forming an ideal camp site. This was a jolly evening, the Varsity party, in spite of having come right across the Northern Ruahine from the vicinity of Otupae since sun-up still having energy to run a singsong after supper.

Sunday morning on the way up on to the range the Aucklanders met their first leatherwood and we had our first sight of Davison's lake, both impressive. In spite of many halts for botany and photography it took little more than two hours with full packs from the camp to the top. The Hawkes Bay contingent obviously treading their native heath shot ahead in line abreast to the Tupari rendezvous. Here there was some delay as the redistribution of parties and food mainly affected the botanists, who were now well in the rear collecting for



the lick of their lives.

A little before time one of the southern party was sighted at the second rendezvous (Te Atua Mahuru) to which our advance party travelling light was already on the way followed by the transferring party. Meantime the Anti-Botanist club were attempting a 'first ~~xxx~~ recorded ascent' of the peak west of Tupari, to be called Akarana (when climbed).

Down by Te Atua Mahuru the wind was strong, the party unfed, ~~in~~ the hour late and the botanists later. We failed to tempt any of the southerners to come north with us and after a cup of tea returned to Tupari, in time for another cup of tea. (this is definitely a good idea.)

The Northern party were now an hour and a half late with thick weather settling in steadily and ominously from the S.W. and the leaders outline of possible stopping places had a mental reservation in favour of Apias creek where the track proper begins.

Well we made it. The last hour and a half was pretty sticky, but the plateau barely lived up to its reputation except for a few sticky minutes- just to show that the hoodoo was still alive- almost within sight of Apias.

It didn't take us long to pitch camp (8.15.) and get fed though one or two of us fell into holes and it turned out in the morning that both Campbell and the fireplace had been located in the bed of a stream. A smart shower cut short baking and conversation round the fire. The tent seemed a bit crowded and Graham the last man in had a lampish night.

We pottered round a lot in the morning. Campbell and the fire place had to be just about baked out, then after breakfast we baked another loaf, getting away finally at 10.45. Not unnaturally we were still some way from No Mnas at 12.30 and a discussion as to possible routes out ended in our going the short way over Three Fingers. Not so short either. An absorbing technical discussion led to our failing to pick up the take off for the First Finger, so we made a large and leisurely lunch elsewhere and jogged down the spur to find the lower end well grown up in manuka.

The Maoris had visited Herricks and stripped the trees of every cherry, so there was nothing to detain us and we arrived home without further incident.

The Aucklanders were particularly appreciative of the country and its possibilities and assure us that this is not their last visit that the A.U.C.T.C. will pay to the Rushines.

N.L. Elder, 11 in party.

645+3

Exp No. 218

HORSESHOE BEND

Jan. 16th 1944

*album 3 p 34*

A party of 7 grown ups and 4 children left Havelock soon after 9 to walk over to Horseshoe Bend. Arrived there all enjoyed a very pleasant swim, the weather was warm and the flies had been rather trying. Then lunch under the willows followed by a general laxe and sunbather. Hugh and the two boys went fishing but though several lar

large trout and eels were seen they weren't biting, After tea and another swim we left for home Hugh carrying his small daughter Jennifer aged  $3\frac{1}{2}$  happily esconced in his pack, and very sweet she looked too. All arrived home safely after a very enjoyable though easy day. It was very encouraging to see the way the youngsters travelled and we hope to see more of them.

N. Tanner, Leader  
11 in party.

Trip No. 219

CAPE KIDNAPPERS

Jan. 30th 1944

On Jan 30th a party of members had a day at the Kindappers. This was not a scheduled trip and was decided on rather hurriedly. The Kidnapper Expert assured us that the tide would be right but when we arrived at Clifton at 9 a.m. it was full in so there was nothing for it but to wait 3 or 4 hours for it to fall. We had a good swim and then later saw a fair sized shark cruising around just where we had been disporting ourselves. With the tide low enough the party set out for the Cape some cycling and some walking. At the Cape we found Dave looking rather sheepish over his misinformation; still he had the billy boiling for us so all was forgiven. Some of the party who we were new to the region went up to smell the birds and were duly impressed; while the others of us played around on the beach, swimming surf boarding and collecting sea eggs and pauas etc. The weather was perfect and towards sundown we drifted back in twos and threes.

Clem Smith, Leader //

Club Picnic,

WAIMARAMA

Feb. 12th & 13th 1944

Those who had already sampled Mollie's hospitality (last year) hastened to do so again when it was announced that the Picnic would be held at Waimarama. Five lucky members were able to leave town on Friday night and laden with corn cobs, peaches and goodies they set off. Sat. was a glorious day well spent in swimming, sunning, and eating a young bull providing them all with some entertainment. (Bulls seem to be quite a feature of our tramping nowadays).

In the afternoon the rest of the party arrived and joined in the fun.

Sunday, the weather was not so good but with a roaring fire made by Angus, the time passed happily with reading, writing, knitting and just talking. Astroll was taken by some of the party and June and Mabel went walking alone having quite an exciting time escaping from geese, pigs and bulls. Altogether a not uneventful walk and one designed to discourage June from taking up Farming as a career. After a large hot meal the party broke up, some returning that night while others waited till the cilly dawn hours before they left the happy home. A most enjoyable Picnic? Thankyou Mollie.

J. Budd, Leader 13 in party.

EXTRACTS from LETTERS  
RECEIVED from OVERSEAS MEMBERS.

SEALY WOOD writes

From:- "New Caledonia has suffered a lot of abuse at the hands of the New Zealanders so I'll not add to the pile, but I must say that I am very glad to have plenty of work to do and a good gang to work with. I don't find the climate trying although it is hot and it can rain, but on the whole it is very pleasant.

There are bush covered hills throughout the Island, rather reminiscent of Kaweka country in some ways. So far I've not done much tramping largely owing to lack of time (plus the heat!) Part of our final training programme for the men before we send them out to huts is to send them on a hill climb behind our camp. It used to take half a day, but by combining the tramp with a bit of machete work, we have now created a bush track for, I suppose, two hours climbing, so that next time I machete it, I'll be able to have a presentable view of the district.

We are a long way from the flourishing (?) American city of Noumea, and the country round about comprises acres of hilly land overgrown with the "naïouli" tree, a medium sized eucalyptus, with here and there a farm run by French or half-castes. The land is largely hard and of clayey consistency, dusting very readily and mostly with poor soakage quality, causing endless trouble with daubs of very glaucous mud and torrents of dirty storm water surface drains in times of rain.

All the time, we are growing in the size of our unit, building of huts is proceeding, native-thatched shelters are used for entertainment halls, offices, sleeping quarters and the like, while patients come and go again the whole time. Entertainment is a big feature of the schedule, and occupational therapy in the form of arts and crafts, carpentry, metalwork etc is a growing baby, while we have already run several successful concerts, both here and for other units round about. With memories of a New Year's tramping dance, (or was it shipwreck?) I have gathered about me a few stray pianists, violinists, saxophonists, drummers and the like, and we have made quite an effective little dance band used mainly for our own little dances on a couple of nights a week. The presence of a staff of about thirty WAACS is of course no small contributing factor to the success of these evenings.

The whole idea of this outfit is to take the sick man or wounded as soon as he can get about and then give him a full day's work to do in proportion to his physical - and mental - capabilities. Those who can do little have access to hobbies, lectures, study classes. The others in various squads do physical training of gradually increasing severity, mixed in with a high proportion of games, walks, tramps and so on. A chap with a leg in plaster, instead of being left to hang around a base camp, and

encumbrance and a nuisance, comes here, goes out in the sunshine, takes walks, does his exercises, plays tourniquoit, archery or some such game and generally feels that he is not must a loose tag, but is really wanted and is doing something for his own good. The soldier is so accustomed to being organized that he is at a loss when catering for himself suddenly ceases, and it is our job to supply him with an interest until he is well enough to join the forces again.

My particular work consists of constantly checking them over, moving them up the scale of physical effort, coping with any complications which may crop up and sorting out their fears and their worries. The latter is probably the most important thing I do, and it is extraordinary how well a chap will work at his physical training once he realizes what was wrong and appreciates the benefits he gets from it.

Living conditions here are rather pleasant really, that is, as far as can be in a comparatively uninteresting spot like this island. I believe the lot of the lads further north is not so good. However, I hope to get the chance of judging that for myself later on, for we are sure to move about from one unit to another, and I would welcome a spell with one of the more active forward units -- there isn't enough "blood and guts" in the job to satisfy my taste for wartime surgery. "

.... "The local French peasantry are a mixed lot, mostly very poor but sometimes one strikes a well educated family stuck over here by the war. The farms without exception, reek. There is little or no idea of sanitation and drainage of disposal of refuse, housing of fowls and livestock - all such matters are primitive in the extreme. Houses are mostly of clay, with native thatched roofs. There are no windows except shutters, so that all rooms are gloomy but they are fairly cool none the less. In most cases, the locals are hospitable indeed and always pleased to see us. I was lucky being able to recollect my school-day French, and I rapidly picked up enough of the jargon to make a fairly thorough investigation of a pain in the belly or a sore foot and a limited vocabulary has turned me into a master of paraphrase. Sometimes the lack of a word needs several sentences of explanation together with a mass of more or less realistic gesticulations to achieve the result, so that you may well imagine I've had to put up a very bold and unembarrassed medical front. Fortunately the French are pretty natural and they don't make a fuss about discussing everyday things.

My violin was another easy road to their hospitality, for they sadly lack music in their lives. I have had several very pleasant evenings of a musical and entertaining nature more particularly in our earlier days here when we were situated in a much pleasanter part of the Island and when the work was considerably less too."

Nora Finn writes " The harbour which is really most attractive is just across the road. One gets a bird's eye view of all that goes on. I shall never forget before Italy was invaded. The harbour was just a mass of ships and Jerry never came near. When we first arrived up here we were all pop-eyed at the sunken ships sticking up everywhere. The harbour entrance is only a few yards wide -- very difficult navigation gets an average ship thro'. The Germans tried to block the harbour by sinking their own ships but the British blew a hole just large enough to get their own ships thro'!

The town is very knocked about but daily improves though a mass of junk is displayed in every window and prices are wicked - very common crepe material is 15/- a yard. Duddles is my shopping agent. He went off on a "shampoo hunt" one day and did very well by the parcel I received. One really manages extremely well and we hope for future developments and improvements. I cut the bottom off a cotton dressing gown and made a most successful brief bathing costume. As the males are reduced to wearing their underpants -- khaki shorts or any make shift garment, the females have to be reduced to makeshifts also. Really you would laugh for a week if you could spend an afternoon on the beach here. There is also the nudist colony and if one ventures out half a mile to an island, one unexpectedly meets up with the nudist colony. Colonizing on same island I chuckled on day when after struggling this half mile I felt I should return to civilization and not embarrass the poor fellows but they bobbed into the ocean and stayed underneath.

The remainder of the dressing gown has made a most useful dressing gown cum frock. I wear it to the bath and also to lunch at the Del Mahari. So much for the experiences and effects of war."

HARRY RICHDALE writes "Well it is now twelve months since we started off at El Alamein and now we are in Italy and so as you say it is rather an overdue letter I am writing.

I last wrote from Nofilia and from there I was sufficiently fortunate to carry on to Enfidaville without a scratch. The journey has probably been described many times in other letters but it had its highlights, especially when we were employed as wharfies in Tripoli. We lived very well for the next few months. Les Holt has probably given you all the low down. The country within a radius of some thirty to forty miles of Tripoli is very interesting as the Italians at great expense of money, time and labour with the help of a good well, were transferring a sandy scrubby waste into an oasis. Conditions for the colonists were hard and on some estates it was a scratch for a livelihood with a dim period of forty years waiting before they were allowed to own their own small holdings. However, Mussolini would definitely have had something in Lybia had he been able to keep his hands off what he thought was good loot. All Kiwis seem to have the same instinct as Musso but are definitely more successful. The Kiwi is an inquisitive and acquisitive bird,

Tunisia was more pleasant. Especially welcome was the unlimited water supply. There we were back in the olive orchards which we last saw in Syria but here they stretched for miles and between the rows of trees was a carpet of wild flowers, poppies daisies etc. It was a pleasant contrast. The dark green of the trees contrasting well with the red of the soil and colour of the flowers.

Then back to Egypt along the coast road where they were good enough to take us through every place of interest, Misurata, Benghazi, Bardia, Derna, Tobruk and back to Egypt again.

Two weeks leave, a four weeks rest and then back to it again in the heat of an Egyptian summer. Manoeuvres and more manoeuvres with those blasted things called gunpits to dig. However we came through and are now pleasantly sited in Italy.

We are on the higher slopes of a hill overlooking town and harbour a few miles away getting the benefit of what wind there is and missing those malarial mosquitoes on the flat. Leave is plentiful and the only limiting factor is money. Grapes, almonds pomegranates etc. are plentiful and reasonably priced and are having a very good effect on our livers. I'll leave the rest to the imagination. Food is excellent both in quantity and quality and we are the very fortunate possessors of an excellent team of cooks.

Every day we go for a route march of two to three hours at a pace varying from a fast walk to a gentle trot. The course is generally across country with quite a few gullies, an occasional water jump and every stone fence the major can find. However yesterday someone gave the Tally -ho and started singing "John Peel". The major gave a look round and promptly took to the road. The hint had been taken.

However he is not a bad sort and we feel so good with the cooler weather that you can take it in ones stride.

Some of the local villages are very interesting and one real old timer a few miles away is the favourite with an abundance of wine shops. You can get good wines too but at a price. We are in what is called the poorest part of Italy so it is a good augury for what is to come.

I see Dudley Shepard occasionally and last time he was fit and well."



JOHN von DADELSZEN writes "We are leading a quiet life at present, with rather more spare time than we have been used to. We have had no air raids for several weeks, though we get an occasional alarm.

Having more leisure, more attention is being paid to entertainment. We have an active committee within the troop and run a team competition every Saturday night - for example, 500, Euchre, impromptu speeches, a spelling bee or a quiz session. We have quite a spacious recreation tent, well furnished with tables and stools made from timber we have acquired. We also run ladder competitions for draughts and 500.

In conjunction with other units in the area, we have run two canoe regattas, swimming sports and a very successful concert. We have an enthusiastic choir, sadly handicapped by lack of music and accompaniment, but our conductor knows his job. We put on several numbers at the concert and are now practising Christmas carols."

RON CRAIG writes: "What have I been doing? Well, roughly half of what I should. Mostly learning to be a wireless operator. In my time off, I managed to do a bit of looking around mostly visiting people and having a good time. I picked up a book in a library over here, the N.Z. Alpine Club Journal and was surprised to see Frank Simpson, Nancy and Angus mentioned and accounts of trips they had done. Went to see some friends of Norm Lowe's one evening and was shown a book of which the host was very proud containing thirty thousand signatures of servicemen who have visited him since the war and eight thousand people in photos of garden parties held there. In the second photo, I saw who should be grinning at me but Cliff Hunt. I had a great time that evening despite being in boots and shorts among high ranking officers of several nationalities.

The next event of note was a visit to the home of a chap who is an official in the British Embassy in Cairo. My cobbler and I had some trouble getting there as the gharry driver wanted to take us to some low dive in town and when we did arrive at the Embassy were handed through several guards before getting wherever we wanted. We had a grand evening at his home being entertained most hospitably by him and his wife. An English Major who spoke rather like Gillie Potter and a Greek chap who dropped in were both very interesting. We nearly fell over backwards when supper was announced at 10-30 and proved to be nothing short of a three course meal. I was rather disappointed at not having time to get another visit in. You see Mrs. Peacock had promised us some female talent next time we called.

Just before leaving Egypt, four of us went to the races at Gezira, going the flash way into the best part amongst all the Generals and things. We saw more different types of uniform there

than we had imagined. There was plenty of female talent there too by Jove, but few of them spoke English. I had a trip down the Nile Valley before leaving for Egypt Italy. That certainly is a marvellous sight, probably the best in the country.

Our trip across to Southern Italy was quite uneventful and we were soon working on our camp. Rather like blazing a trail in the hills but we soon had quite a comfortable place to live. We are in among trees once again, some type of oak, it is.

The people are the peasant type around here most of them quite friendly but still a few who give us dirty looks as if we should not be here. I have noticed a few families with their belongings in a cart apparently coming down from the hills again. Every day there is a travelling market down at the camp gates where we can buy fruit and almonds to supplement our rations which incidentally are good but all tinned stuff.

The country here has little in the way of hills and is the main agricultural part. The soil is good but very rocky in most parts. Driving along the roads which are really excellent we pass through olive groves, fig trees, almonds, grapes and these oaks in groves also. I don't know what they are used for, if anything. Buildings are all stone and plaster, quite a number of them, especially in town are just rubble now, and dotted over the countryside make a very nice scene. Fences, where there are any, are of stone and the crops and pasture usually seem to run into one another. They grow oats and probably the usual grain and some type of turnip or mangold which I have not had a close look at. Their tools, in the field are quite primitive, bullock teams dragging a wooden single furrow plough, making a dainty scratch an inch or so deep winding among the outcrops of rock. Cattle are few and far between thanks to Jerry, but there are a few cows which wander round the camp at nights keeping us awake with their darned cowbells. Oranges and tangerines are grown not far from here but so far I have not seen them. Bari is the only place I have had a look at so far, but there is very little to see or do there. All the big shops have closed for lack of stock and the few poky little ones have nothing of value left as far as I could see. Bari is a big place and has been a grand city in its day but not now, most of its buildings were showing signs of wear. The only decent building I saw was one which has been taken over as the N.Z. Club and is a grand place, of five floors all nicely appointed and quite modern. I believe that it will even be better than the old one in Cairo. There is limited overnight leave there provided we stay at the hostel at the club, but usually the last leave truck is just after dark. There is nothing else to do in any case. Only two theatres are open and those only during the day as far as I know. Talking of pictures, I saw one in camp here of the Chateau and the Ski School under Ernst Skadarasky."

SPECIAL TRIPS.RUAPEHU SKI TRIP.

On Friday, Nov 5th, Hugh Nelson and Angus Russell left Napier by train and slept in Ohakune station. Next day, packed in nine miles with horse to Ohakune hut. Sunday was perfect so after Hugh's introduction to skiing, they climbed up the Maungahuehu glacier cutting steps on to the summit from 300 feet lower.

After sunning on the top the lake was circumvented and return was made from the saddle south of Paretaitonga.

Tuesday and Friday were spent skiing. Wednesday and Thursday cutting firewood and improving the hut between showers. Saturday another perfect day. The slopes of Girdlestone Peak at 8000 feet were visited and glorious runs to the base at 6400 feet. proved how apt a pupil Hugh had been.

On Sunday, Hugh went away up for Angus's skis in a howling snowstorm, time 2 hours. After a great effort the remaining food weight was reduced and in driving rain they began their three and a half hour trip of seven and a half miles to Mr. Hussey's. After a hot meal and dryout in that hospitable home they caught trains at 2-7 am, Monday.

The track is nine miles from rail to hut. 2000 ft. of a climb is muddy in wet weather, packing costs 25/- per 100 lbs. Hut fees 2/- per night, kapoc mattresses, two open fireplaces, 22 bunka, billies, frying pan, crockery and cutlery.

The snow was only suitable for edged turns, and not for skid turns like christies. The wide areas gave plenty of scope for fast runs and easy manoeuvring. The sunsets provided some wonderful atmospheric colouring on old Rua.

NOV. 27th - 28th in the SOUTHERN RUAHINE.

This private trip is worthy of record only because of its peculiar inversion of two commonly held doctrines.

Firstly, the Hawkes Bay is reputed to have a greater acquaintance with the Sun than nearly any other part of New Zealand; whilst for the West Coast is claimed the lion's share of dull days and wet weather. The unexpected reversal of these climatic conditions gave the adventure no little drama.

Secondly, a biological study of Trampers teaches that the male of the species is both harder and more capable than the female. On this occasion Angus and Campbell on the Saturday,

thinking themselves tough, condescendingly entrusted themselves to Joan and June. By Sunday evening they knew that compared to these latter two they were veritable "pansies" and that they would not again enlist in any femake led parties that aimed to go higher up the Tuki Tuki than the HorseShoe Bedd.

Arriving at Thompson's Mill at 10-30 am in steady rain, they were informed that it had been raining since the previous evening and that there were as yet no indications of improvement whatsoever.

The passage up the turgid tumid, turbulent and torrental Tuki Tuki river was not forced without some little danger, a few minor mishaps and much that in retrospect amuses. The varnish of superiority that is the prerogative of men was somewhat diluted by the dampness of those deeps. Yet if time and the girls had allowed, Angus and Campbell could have nursed their remaining powers and no putty filled holes would have been apparent. But dusk was already seeping through the water soaked bush when the party were still clawing their way up the lower fortifications of Daphne Ridge. This gave wings to those who were responsible for the party's safety and they flitted up this timber baulked ooze smeared precipice at a speed that draped humility over the deflated carcasses of the men.

At 7-30 pm, as the last rays of daylight were obliterated beneath the vapours of a wet night, Joan was throwing down her pack on the portals of Howlett's Hut (4150')

On Sunday morning, the rain had temporaly ceased but the moisture saturated fog laid beads of moisture on everything and these gradually coalesced into drops that fell to earth and made puddles deeper and mud more slippery. The pointlessness in climbing a few more hundred feet merely to rest their wet selves on Tiraha's (5472') cloud veiled head was apparent to all. Yet probably none had any wish to return the way they had come. All realised that it was hardly in character with tramping tenacity to admit defeat without a fight. So by 7-30 am they were on their way to "give it a buck."

By 9 am when still several hundred feet from the peak, they climbed through the uppermost layer of cloud into the clear sky and sunlit panorama of the monarchs of the Ruahine Range. The very abruptness and unexpectedness of the change gave the extraordinary conditions a real piquancy - behind and below vision obliterating vapours, above and in front the alpine peaks in air of sparkling clarity.

The conditions on the top of proud Tiraha were sublime. Above the sun shone warm from a cloudless sky, yet the eastern half of the North Island was obliterated beneath a vast puckered snowwhite eiderdown of cloud that stretched to the horizon. The Ruahine Range acted as a bulwark that prevented this downy bed cover from moving westward before the merest ghost of an easterly breeze. Though in fact through several low saddles, like some

rain and the temperature was cool enough for jerseys and coats.

By 6 pm they were down once again on the river bed having another meal. Soon after 8 pm they wedged their tired bodies into the car and at 10-30 pm in Heretaunga Street, the party that had for thirty six hours acted as a corporate body now dissolved in the night into its original component parts

MOKAI PATEA

16th - 20th Dec. 1943.

The trip had two objects. To examine the western bushline and to get the boys out on a proper trip. Surprisingly enough the combination worked excellently. It took the whole of the first day to reach the Waikamaka. The boys (carrying 28 lbs) were outspoken in their opinions of the route; the leader (51 lbs) felt it equally.

The second day, by the ridge to Rongotea, then down to the roofless whare was also heavy and took a long time. However the third day was fine and visiting Colenso with day packs was a holiday for everyone.

As the Hikurangi Range was too big a job for the strength of the party we had proposed to return via the Sixty Six ridge and Shut Eye but the day started overcast and by midday it was coming on thick and starting to blow. We slid down Collin's Creek scree and reached the Waikamaka as rain started so were glad to go upstream to the hut.

On the last day, we waited on the weather as long as we could before starting for home. It was easing off in the Saddle and lifting as we drove off from the mill. Next day was clear as a bell, but that is the luck of tramping.

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N.B. continued from page 6.

' by the overnight tragedy not one tuna or kura was seen all day. Once more we passed Ferdinand but this time his eyes were looking far away over the fence and a following wind wafted the party homewards. Easily led by the leader, Angus Russell, 6 in Party.

TRIP No. 216 MOTE O LAKE cancelled due to wet weather (very) but one tough tramper from Napier called on the leader to know where the party was.  
A.C. Clarke, Lesler.

F I X T U R E L I S T.Easter -- August. 1944.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Date.</u>	<u>Place.</u>	<u>Leader.</u>
223	April 7th - 10th. Easter.	<u>WAIKAMAKA HUT.</u> (Maintenance of hut and improve- ment of route in.)	Joan Lovell-Smith
224.	April 23rd.	<u>MOKAPEKA</u> - of speleological interest to those who like that sort of thing.	Noel Fendall
225.	May 7th.	<u>OTATARA PA</u> Redcliff Bridge, carrying out a suggestion of visits to points of historical interest close at hand,	Clem Smith
226.	May 21st.	To be arranged. <i>Mokapeka Craggy Ra</i>	<i>Joan L-S</i>
227	June 3rd - 5th.	<u>KAREKA HUT</u> (Maintenance of Hut and Track.)	June Budd.
228.	June 18th.	<u>OHITI PA</u> Fernhill.	Peggy Morris.
229.	<del>July 1st</del> - 2nd.	<i>Craggy Range.</i> <del>OCEAN BEACH VIA CRAGGY</del> RANGE General +dea.	Molly Molineux.
230.	July 16th.	<u>KONINERAKAU</u>	Nancy Tanner
231	July 30th. <i>Wu</i> <i>ES 11 km</i>	<u>CLIFTON</u> and <i>100m trip</i> Matarau Track. <i>12</i>	Dave Williams.
232	August 13th.	<u>OMARANUI PA</u>	Angus Russell.