

HERETAUNGA TRAMPING CLUB (INC.)

" P O H O K U R A "

Bulletin No. 99.

April, 1965

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C L U B T R I P S .

No. 760.

Dec. 5-6th.

WAIKAMAKA HUT - WORKING BEE

From the road end at the Waipawa River we set off in cloudy weather with occasional drizzle which cleared around midday. It remained warm and fine for the rest of the weekend.

Two 'bods' were left to mark a new track from the Waipawa Saddle to the river of the same name. The old track had eroded a fair amount just above the bush. The rest of us reached the hut after a record $5\frac{3}{4}$ hour journey. The hole in the wall was patched, wood was chopped, the saw was re-sharpened and a troublesome log which was causing erosion in the stream was cut up.

The following day two 'bods' set off to cut a new track from the Waikamaka Stream to the Saddle. This track is marked by a disced pole slightly south-west of the saddle. Also two others set off to complete their job on the east side.

We were joined in the morning by the two Jims.

Work done, everyone packed up and with a few sunburn moans, set off back to the truck. Three rather ambitious

types came out by way of Rangit saddle, Rangit and "69" to meet the main party on the saddle.

No. in Party: 13. "A B U 7.0" Leader: Graeme McColl.

Annette Tremewan, Nancy Tanner, Diana Way, Christine Prebble, Douglas Thompson, Graham Griffiths, Graham Thorpe, Russell Berry, John Feigler, Anthony Daly,
Sunday Party: Jim Glass, Jim Wilshire.

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No. 761. Dec. 20th
TUKITUKI via MIDDLE ROAD.

A large party of twenty-two left Holt's at 9.30am on an extraordinarily nice morning to picnic along the Tukituki. As nearly everyone had lilos the river was alive with bodies drifting peacefully with the current or struggling to become re-floated. This, with sun bathing, made a pleasantly lazy day, very different to the usual tramping club Sundays.

No. in Party: 22. "S S" Leader: Barbara Butler.

Christine Prebble, Diana Way, Heather McKey, Nancy Tanner, Jeannie & Brian Erikson, Brenda Butcher, Simon Easton, Louise Thompson, Douglas Thompson, Peter Lewis, John Feigler, Graham Griffiths, Graeme McColl, Graham Thorpe, Dempster Thompson, Derek White, Dick Howell, Noel Evans, Graeme Evans, Jerry Holdsworth.

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No. 762. Jan 1st - 4th.
BACK HUT - ROCKS AHEAD - MANSON -
STUBHOLME'S - MAKAHU
(NEW YEAR TRIP)

Prospects for this trip did not seem too bright. A party of sixteen is a bit large for fast travelling; we were going into country where none of us had been before; there were only five over twenty-one and the ages of the rest ranged down to fourteen; nearly half the party had not done much tramping, and the weather promised to be anything but good.

As most of us, including the driver, came from Napier, Rona kindly offered the few Hastings bods a place to spread their sleeping bags, so that they would not have to come out from Hastings in the morning. Other H.T.C. bods also turned up at her place for a singsong which lasted until well after the New Year had begun.

On New Year's morning, we left the truck at the saddle between Middle Range and the Black Birch, and plodded up to Makahu Hut while the black clouds gathered. We had our first pause, to patch a blister, halfway up to Little's Clearing. We had lunch at Makahu Hut. Makahu Spur seemed twice as high as usual. The air was so humid that all our sweating did not cool us much. Clouds closed around us as we reached the top, thunder made some fine echos among the rocks, and for the rest of the way down to Back Hut, it felt as though we were walking under a waterfall. No-one seemed keen to go on to Rocks Ahead; several were not feeling too good, and later, after the evening meal, we heard a thump and saw one bod had fainted, and was flat on the floor. The Back Hut rain guage collected 0.8 of an inch between 4pm and 7pm. Bill Morison's party arrived later, three of them generously spending the night in a wet tent to relieve crowding in the hut.

On Saturday morning the rain was only occasional at first. We wasted some time following an old blazed track which led down a ridge off Back Ridge towards Rocks Ahead stream, but luckily an opening in the clouds showed us that we were too far north, so we climbed back up and found the track we wanted.

After lunch at Rocks Ahead Hut, several usually fit bods who were feeling crook were doubtful if they could continue, and we also had some difficulty in finding the start of the track up on to the Manson. At last the track was found and we crossed the Ngararoro, about waist deep, while huge drops of rain mixed with a few hailstones splattered down. Graeme Evans did a marvellous job of setting a steady pace which we could just manage to keep up with, and yet not so fast that we had to stop for rests. The track gains height quickly; we seemed to climb endless hundreds of feet up into the clouds, towards the thunder, which was going well. Near the tops, which are not so steep, and covered with small tussock and native grasses among the bare, eroded patches, the clouds thinned to give visibility of several hundred yards. We began to swing left; west, then south-west, then south to Manson Trig, then south-east towards the old hut site. We went for a quarter of an hour down the wrong ridge before discovering that we were too far north, so retraced our steps and arrived at the old collapsed hut just on dark. We did not find any new Forest Service hut there (no wonder, since it is outside the forest boundary), so spread our sacks on the spot, regardless of rain, mist or wet ground. Some were so sleepy they didn't even wait for food, and the rest of us were not too lively.

Sunday morning brought improving weather, a downhill

track, and, at last, sunshine! During a long morning tea/lunch stop at Kiwi Mouth Hut, wet gear was spread out to dry, rather unsuccessfully because the humidity was still high. Some went for a swim in the river intentionally, and some accidentally when they stumbled into a deep spot while crossing. After lunch we went up Kiwi stream and, missing the take-off of the track up to Kiwi saddle, continued up stream for a while and climbed out on to the main knob between Kiwi saddle and Castle Camp. On top of Kaiarahi the wind was unpleasantly cold, and we were glad to arrive at Studholme's Saddle Hut as the last of the daylight left us.

Monday morning was fine, and our route to Mackintosh Hut mostly downhill, but the first three days of wet boots had made a mess of our feet, and sticking plaster was used in large quantities. Several pairs of boots were coming to pieces, knees were creaking, and some had raw patches on their backs where packs rubbing on wet clothes had worn the skin off. After an early lunch at Mackintosh, we crossed the Donald Gorge. It must have been quite an achievement for the Forest Service to establish a track there at all - the gorge is so steep, especially on the north-east side, which is quite some climb! Matauria Ridge is longer than we had thought, but by now we were like horses who know they are nearly home, and we made fairly good time, regardless of blisters, to Makahu and out to the track. The whole mob of us descended on Mr. & Mrs. Lewis, and once again enjoyed their tea and scones and sandwiches.

This trip, as it turned out, was a good sample of what we might one day have to do in the course of a search when the weather is too bad for aircraft. The younger and less experienced ones have some reason to feel pleased with themselves for the way they managed to be so cheerful and helpful. The distance we covered was estimated at 31 miles, on the map, by one of the party, but that did not count the vertical component. The extra weight added to our packs by wet gear made a surprising difference, but, for all that, most of us seemed to think it was well worth while.

No. in Party: 16. Leader: Peter Lewis.

Tui Maxwell, Barbara Butler, Rona Budgett, Graham Thorpe, Graham Sebastien, Graeme McColl, Graeme Evans, Noel Evans, Alan Culver, Alan Brown, Paul Frude, Ian Hargreaves, John Feigler, Douglas Thompson, Antony Daly,

No. 763.

17th Jan.

TONGOIO BEACH.

With the forecast for showers increasing in the afternoon and scattered thunderstorms, the grey skies that hung over us appeared far from salubrious. The truck was almost on time at Napier. A leisurely amble, unfamiliar to some more energetic members, was enjoyed as we made our way to Flat Rock where a brisk breeze necessitated a sheltered bay for a place of rest.

The crab population of Flat Rock was poked, prodded, chased. A few regular members felt pangs of nostalgia combined with hunger for the good old days when sweetcorn formed the staple diet, but a new delicacy, crabs' legs, took its place. After a boil-up and a swim we headed for home at a very respectable hour.

No. in Party: 24.

Leader: Christine Prebble.

Ray Prebble, Peter Lewis, Dempster Thompson, Derek White, Douglas Thompson, Graham Thorpe, Dick Howell, Graeme Evans, John Feigler, Graeme McColl, Harry Stewart, Heather McKay, Barbara Butler, Nancy Tanner, Brenda Butcher, Tui Maxwell, Kath, Alan, Jan & Ross Berry, Doreen, Jim, Susan and Karen Glass.

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No. 764.

Jan 30 - 31st.

BIG HILL - NGARURORO - TARUARAU(a) Weekend Trip:

Our plans were to go over Big Hill, down to the top end of the grassy river flat which they call the Macindoe, and then work our way up the Ngaruroro for a while, perhaps camping before the gorge narrowed too much and before all our gear was wet. (Ha! Ha!) Next day we could go up the gorge as far as was convenient, and come back down river on our lilos.

For several days prior to the trip the weather had been bad, and some members had been unusually sensible, because only seven members turned up. At Big Hill station we were warned that the river was running high, and as we climbed the hill the rain began again. Reaching the river bank, we had a boil-up and early lunch.

The river was mostly waist-deep to shoulder-deep, fortunately almost clear, but too swift to stand against. Like most of these rivers it wanders from side to side of the gorge and travelling up or down it involves a crossing every few hundred yards. We tried the diagonal method,

where you run downstream with the current, at the same time working across, and if the shallow reach is long enough you come to the far bank before you are carried down to the next deep pool. The current made us run too fast and there were some nasty extra large boulders scattered here and there on the bottom for us to trip over. After half a dozen crossings, two of the party had been bowled and we had had enough of this method. It is not a very nice sensation to take a tumble and go hurtling along expecting to catch your head or knee or stomach on a rock at any moment. About all you can do is try to turn around with your feet downstream and then when they touch bottom the current may stand you up.

For the rest of the crossings, which were so many that we lost count, we formed a line by cross-linking arms, with a heavy bod on the upstream end to break the force of the water for the others, while they helped him to resist it. This was much better, as long as the linking-up was done securely enough. Higher up, where the river was narrower, we would feel our pack-straps slacken as the water came to waist depth, then a few more steps and the packs would be holding us up with our feet clear of the bottom. We just kept on walking on nothing, and in a surprisingly short time would feel the stones speeding past underfoot as we came near the other bank. We mostly managed to stumble out no farther than twice the river's width below where we had gone in.

We arrived at the junction of the Taruarau about mid-afternoon. There was a good camp site, complete with a fire-place, on the point of land between the two rivers, and although the rain had become heavy by this time, the abundant manuka firewood saved us any difficulties with the cooking.

Sunday morning, the rain had stopped, but we looked out of wet tents to see the Taruarau running thickly yellow, almost liquid clay. The Ngeruroro was just as bad, and where the two met was a horrible patch of whirlpools and foam. As one of us had not had any experience of lilo travel, and another had no lilo at all, all thought of coming down river was ruled out. Though the rise was only about six to ten inches, it had probably doubled the speed of flow. We tried to cross the Taruarau so that we could come out over the Northern Rushines, but it was far too strong for us. There looked to be at least a one in ten chance of some of us not surviving if we were washed down into the rapids. We could hear boulders rumbling on the bottom. To come out over the Comet to the Taihape road might have taken a couple of days, so the only alternative was to cross the Ngeruroro higher up where it was wider, and come out over Longfellow.

The crossing was a bit rough, but the climb not too long, even if steep. After lunch on the S.E. end, we dropped down on to the large scrub covered terrace above the Omahaki

stream. It is not my favourite type of country. The manuka, mostly 10 to 20 feet high, must have been badly crushed by a snowfall many years ago. It was twisted and tangled, and there seemed to be hundreds of acres of it. Down at the river at last, four waded across, but three of us were determined not to go home without some use of the likos we had carried, so they were duly set afloat. About half a mile down, and not many minutes later, we found ourselves heading towards some drifting trees which had broken branches sticking out at all angles, so paddled to the bank and followed the others out over Big Hill. The water was much colder than on the previous day, so there was little incentive to stay in any longer.

This trip was the final one for several pairs of boots. Some were tied up with string or bits of flex at the finish, with their owners stepping delicately to keep off the sharpest of the nails!

Back at Big Hill Station, Christine, not satisfied with all the water we had seen, decided she was thirsty and begged a glass of water from the people at the homestead.

No. in Party: 7.

Leader: Peter Lewis.

Graeme Evens, Graham Thorpe, Heather McKay, Christine Prebble, Harry Stewart, Dempster Thompson.

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(b) Day Trip

Eight of us left Holts in two cars soon after 7am for Big Hill Station. The weather was cloudy and very humid as we toiled up the track to the top and then along to the northern end above the Ngaruroro. The river looked very high and dirty from above and closer acquaintance confirmed this impression. It was also very swift and sinisterly silent - definitely not an inviting lilo prospect.

We lunched lazily by a clean creek, till a short sharp shower disturbed our torpidude. About ten minutes up the river bed brought us to the delightful grassy plateau, MacIndoe's flat by name, I understand. The pronounced earthquake fault that runs along this eastern flank of the Northern Rushies cuts across this flat. We sat on the upper edge, about four feet above the lower level, and contemplated our course. To follow the fault itself up to where the bulldozed track running up the valley to the yards crossed it seemed a good bit - and it was. About an hour

and a half later we were at the new forestry hut near the broom yards. A leisurely boil-up here fortified us for the toil up Big Hill.

Looking back we saw bods down by the yards and were soon overtaken by Heather. Coming down Big Hill is just about as painful, though for different parts; as going up, but we were down at the cars by 7.

No. in Party: 8.

Leader: Nancy Tanner.

Helen Hill, Barbara Butler, Jim Glass, Graham Griffiths, Paul Frude, Noel Evans, Alan Brown.

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No. 765.

Feb. 14th

PUKETITIRI HOT SPRINGS -

LILO DOWN THE MOHAKA.

Due to previous heavy rain and a suspected swollen Mohaka this trip was not all that had been anticipated. However, with a very noticeable nip in the air and a few patches of snow visible on the Kaweka tops twenty-four well packed beings duly left the twin cities behind, and after dropping off one passenger at the Lewis's the remaining twenty-three finally came to rest at the Mohaka River by Cokk's Cottage.

After a nice leisurely stroll, the Hot Spring was reached at about midday by all but four energetic bods who had decided to visit Makino Hut. For the majority, at the Hot Spring, lunch was next on the programme and this was spread out over a period of three hours during which time all partook of some desired pastime be it eating, drinking, smoking, sleeping or splashing in the hot pool. But no-one was game enough to attempt liloing in the chilled, swift moving waters of the Mohaka.

By the time we came to leave the Spring, at 2.45pm, the weather had warmed up considerably and it was suggested by the keener few that we take the truck down to the Pakatutu bridge and try out the lilos from there. So after a slow walk out to the truck, which was reached by 5pm, the Makino Hut visitors having rejoined us along the way, we took off for the Pakatutu bridge where seven dare-devils gallantly entered the water equipped with lilos while the rest of us cheered them on. About a mile and a half and ten minutes later we assisted seven shivering bodies out of the water and were soon heading for home. We reached the Lewis's at about

seven o'clock to pick up Miss Bingham, our twenty-fourth passenger, and all twenty-three of us were invited inside by Mrs Lewis for tea and eats.

Town was eventually reached by about 10 o'clock with everyone tired after a lazy day.

No. in Party: 24

Leader: Heather McKay.

Miss Bingham, Susan Cowrick, Helen Hill, Cherry Holder, Diane Linyard, Madge McConnell, Tui Maxwell, Jenniger Sanko, Leslie Yeoman, Nancy Tanner, Peter Bevan, Alan Brown, David Butcher, Noel Evans, John Feigler, Dennis Harrison, John Healey, Peter Lewis, Graeme McColl, Bertie McConnell, Dempster Thompson, Graham Thorpe, Jim Wilshire.

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No. 766.

27-28th Feb.

OTUPAE

As quite a bit of travelling time was involved eighteen of us left Hastings soon after 6.30pm on Friday evening. 2½ hours later Gentle Annie was behind us and we were settling down for the night on the comfortable beds in the shearers' quarters at Timahanga Station, on the Napier-Taihape road.

Another 12 miles on Saturday morning brought us to the Mangaohane stream just short of the Otupae homestead and the start, at 9am, of the foot-slogging. There was mist on the tops, but the sun shone down on us as we toiled upwards by devious routes, mainly through tussock country with some scrub. After lunch at the foot of the Otupae range a miscalculation combined with a deep gorge took us half way (it seemed) up the range - there was a convenient saddle a little lower down, but !!!

The night's objective was the old Wild Life hut on the Makirikiri stream to the south of the Otupae range. It was known that this hut was incorrectly sited on the map - an earlier party thought they had almost reached it however, and we were full of confidence. We sidled the face just below the high limestone bluffs south of Otupae and followed a good track down the second ridge, but it petered out in the scrub. Head-scratching and map and country contemplation induced us to cross a scrubby, steep gully to the ridge south of this. A recce party dropped down to find the Makirikiri running in a deep gorge with no sign of possible hut sites. So, hoping the third visit might be lucky, we revised our ideas and went up the ridge looking for a suitable camp site. A very pleasant spot was found in a tussock basin on the bush edge just below the bluffs at about 6pm. Only 2 ½ of the 4 tents were used as it was a beautiful starry night.

Our camp faced just south of east across the Makirikiri and Ikawatea streams to trigs E and D behind No Man's in the Rushines, and further south to Hut Ruin and Piopio. Sunday was a bit hazy and cloudy all day (fortunately for our comfort). We were away about 8am, over and under the bluffs back to the sw foot of the Otupae range. It looked rather a grind, but even the slowest (me) was up at the Manganohane trig, 4502', at 10 o'clock. There is a very extensive view from this point - of the Rushines, Kawekas, central volcanoes (shrouded in mist except for one of Ruapehu's peaks sticking up above it) and to the SW towards Taihape. It was a pleasant 1½ to 2 hour wander along the broad top of the range to the Otupae trig, 4089', at the northern end. The line of old telegraph poles guided us down to the west and we had a boil-up and meal at the Cedars hut.

Leaving the hut at 3pm the main body headed out for the road, more or less following a bulldozer track out, while 4 stalwarts branched off down to fetch the truck up. We arrived at the road opposite a white gate below the distinctive triangular tussock hill 1 hour 20 minutes later and waited to be picked up. After a stop going down Gentle Annie to admire the Ngeruroro river far below and another at the bridge at Kuripapango, we reached Hastings at 8.30 - just under 3 hours for the trip back.

We saw several deer, mainly on Saturday and hoof marks and fresh droppings, also a few pig rootings, possum droppings and tracks, the latter going right over the top of the range, and hare and/or rabbit scrapings.

No. in Party: 18. Leader: Nancy Tanner.

Tui Maxwell, Annette Tremewan, Helen Lees, Harry Stewart, Peter Lewis, Roy Peacock, David Evans, Graham Thorpe, John Feigler, Douglas Thompson, Derek White, Noel Hadwen, Tony Daly, Alan Brown, and Warren Greer, Anthony Mort, Rodney Naylor.

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No. 767.

13-14th March, '65.

REPORT ON 1965 TRIAL SEARCH.

Purpose of Trial. Arising from the Neverman search at Tatarakina a pool of leaders had been formed in order that there might at all times be available persons recognised as having ability to lead search parties in the field. Those who volunteered to join the pool received further instruction in first aid, map reading, radio operation and search procedure during the months prior to the trial search. This year's trial was particularly aimed at giving party leaders

additional experience in the practical handling of search teams and it was also of course intended to maintain the maximum degree of competence throughout the organisation as a whole.

Area of Trial; The exercise was carried out in the Ruahine Ranges in the approximate area between Tupari in the north and Armstrong Saddle in the south, including the country eastwards from the main divide. This is an area of approximately 12 square miles of fairly rough country.

Assumptions. It was assumed that a solitary hunter with a reasonable amount of experience and local knowledge had gone in by way of Shuteye Shack with the expressed intention of shooting the tops for the weekend and coming out by way of the Makaroro River on the Sunday evening. In view of the fact that the weather had been fine during the weekend it seemed unlikely that the hunter should have merely gone astray and the indications pointed towards an injury. It was assumed that advice had not been received until Tuesday afternoon of the missing men's failure to arrive at the roadhead and it had been accordingly decided to mount a fairly massive search on the Wednesday morning.

The trail was laid by two H T C parties, one person remaining as the quarry, the search controller not having any information as to the movements or whereabouts of these parties.

The Operation. Police and private transport picked up the Napier contingent of searchers at 5.30 a.m. on the Saturday morning and the convoy eventually left Hastings at about 6.30. Further personnel were waiting at Hall's property when we arrived at 8.00 a.m., the total available strength for field parties being 39. The leaders of each of the seven parties (2 leaders to each party) had previously been determined and written assignments prepared. The rest of the available personnel were distributed amongst the various parties with an endeavour being made to have a good cross section of abilities and club affiliations in each party. One of the joint leaders was given his party assignment while the other was receiving instruction in the operation of the radio, the intention being that their respective jobs should be exchanged on the Sunday. In due course all parties moved off between 9.00 and 9.15 a.m.

The search HQ was set up in a small cottage on the farm and there then followed the usual quiet period as the parties moved to their areas. Two parties had gone in past Shuteye Shack, one to check Maropea Hut and to then proceed by way of Te Patiki to Gold Creek Hut, the other to head north up the range from Armstrong Saddle. The third party was sent to first check Gold Creek Hut, and to then climb to the tops. Parties four

and five were allocated a leading spur and likely creek respectively and party six had the fairly tough assignment of making its way as quickly as possible to Remutupo Hut and reporting back. Party seven went up the Makaroro River with instructions to proceed to the tops by way of a long spur leading on to Ina's Rock, after checking the Mid-Makaroro Hut.

There was very severe interference from a local electrical fault with the result that difficulty was experienced in receiving the first messages from the field. Base was moved several hundred yards across the paddocks after midday and no further trouble of this sort was experienced.

The first positive indications were received from the parties passing through Shuteye Shack, to the effect that a log entry confirmed that the missing man had passed that way. Other parties reported progress with their assignments but negative results.

An unexpected problem was thrown into the exercise in the form of a message which Norman Elder had quietly handed to one of the searchers to the effect that at 1 p.m. he had sustained a broken leg. Advice from party two of the accident was received with some mutterings at HQ but action was taken to cope with the emergency by instructing parties one and two to prepare an emergency stretcher from available materials in order that the injured man might be brought down to the shelter of Shuteye Shack before nightfall. The St. John's Ambulance man at base had his quiet Saturday afternoon rudely shattered by instructions to proceed post haste to Shuteye with a Tararua stretcher, a guide being sent down to meet him at the bush edge.

This left a blank in the search pattern but this was partially overcome by sending three members of party one to Armstrong saddle and thence up the Range.

It was not until 4.15 that the next information relating to the missing man was received, being advice that fresh footprints heading north along the divide had been found just to the north of trig 50. Sweet papers and a cigarette packet were also picked up. This was party one, who at 5.05p.m. reported a carcass to the north of trig 50, with a note that "Joe Bloggs" (the missing man) intended having a look over towards Te Patiki. This was the only positive information received during the day and as the radio reception deteriorated towards evening the parties established camp, most of them on or near the tops, and the radio link was closed for the day.

The exercise with the "injured", searcher was called off late on Saturday afternoon and a portion of party two was diverted

to the Te Patiki area first thing on Sunday morning. Subsequent information from party one however indicated that the missing man had proceeded up the range from the carcass and it was not long before reports of footprints and other signs began coming in from parties working further north. The radio with the party sent to Remutupo Hut had proved faulty and it was not until 10a.m. on Sunday that they were able to advise by way of another party's set that the missing man had in fact visited the hut. A log entry stated that he intended proceeding to Gold Creek Hut via the tops.

The period between 9a.m. and 11a.m. was rather hectic, with a large number of people milling around on the tops within a relatively small area. To add to the problems party one reported that the evidence reported the previous day as having been found on trig 50 had in fact been on Armstrong Top. Then there were the two groups of searchers who both claimed to be on Mareraree but as neither party could see the other around it was apparent that one was at fault. Just which one we could only guess.

As midday was approaching it was necessary to start the parties moving out by various routes, with instructions to each to check various likely spurs and saddles to try to establish just where the missing man had left the tops. Further evidence was found down one of the spurs but it was thentoo late in the day to follow this up. In the latter stages three parties were close to their quarry, without however having any certain knowledge as to his whereabouts. All parties were out by 6p.m. and the exercise terminated.

CONCLUSIONS The missing man had turned down a spur near Cross Ridge, had dropped into a side creek, climbed over the next spur and proceeded down a creek to a point near where it joined Gold Creek. The search was unsuccessful in that it did not find the missing man but it did nonetheless provide a valuable exercise for all concerned. Many of those taking part, especially from organisations other than the Club, had not previously participated in a trial search and the exercise was of particular value to such people. The area selected for the search proved to be too large and rough for the time available but one of major problems was that we could not locate the point at which the missing man had left the main divide. This would have been easier had the various parties been able to make greater progress on the Saturday but many of the spurs and creeks were slow going.

The practice in the use of radio was valuable, although there/ were fairly marked variations in the efficiency of the sets.

A number of lessons were learned from the trial on the organisational side and we trust that several pitfalls will consequently be avoided in future operations.

Personnel. The searchers were drawn from a far wider field than has been the case in the past and co-operation was received from most organisations likely to be involved in an actual search. Our thanks are due to all who participated in the exercise.

CHB Shooters Assn:

Durham, Castles, Kohleis, Hill, Barnes, Culshaw, Dick, Pedersen, Lee, Shirley, Knight, Knight G.

Lands & Survey:

Duly, East.

Police:

Inspector Bell, Sgt. Patterson, Constables Hamilton-Jenkins, Newcomb.

St. Johns:

Millyn R.H.

Radio Emergency Corps:

Carrell, Mote, Wallen (field), Taylor, Meyer, Alexander, Donkin (town).

Napier Deerstalkers Club:

Thomas, Cameron.

Scouts & Venturers:

Crowley, Millyn B., Bitters, Johnson.

H.T.C. (and attached):

Maxwell, Reed, McConnell B., King, Thompson Dempster, Garnett, Bradley Alan, Bradley C., Evans, Thorp, Mort, Daly, van Bavel, Thompson Douglas, Taylor, Feigler, McColl, Wilshire, McConnell M., Way, Brown, Hill, Berry R., White.

Town Base: Elder (HTC)

Field Control: Berry A. (HTC)

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STONEY CREEK - AHIMANAWAS

No. 768

March 27-28th.

A record may have set for 4 of us left Holts at about 10 past 6 to pick a further 4 up at Napier. The weather looked lousy but got better as we moved inland. We arrived at the point of departure from the truck at 9 O'clock and it wasn't long before we were off.

A track followed the river, then out up a spur. However where this met the bush we made our own. By this time it was overcast with rain and remained so for the rest of the day. We pushed on keeping to the right as the country dog-legs all over the place.

At 6.15pm we called a halt and camped for the night. Water was scarce though next morning we found a stream further up.

Next morning we broke camp at 9.15 and pushed on. There was a little doubt as to where the Waterhole was, marking the head of the Stoney Creek catchment. This was in due course found but the going was tough so, thinking "discretion is the better part of valour", we dropped off the spur into the river. The going was quite good and we arrived back at the truck at 6.15. For those who go deer-stalking - there was plenty of sign.

No. in Party: 8 Leader: Dempster Thompson.
Alan Berry, Douglas Thompson, Graham Griffiths, Harry Stewart,
Graham Thorp, Peter Lewis, Darrel Gibb.

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LETTER FROM CHRISTINE

The following are extracts from a letter received recently:-

"I'm in Christchurch at last after a rather dubious trip on the Ferry.

It's a strange sensation not seeing one familiar face or landmark but my board is excellent and everything has been so wonderful I can't believe it's me. There is an Arts Festival on down here so I've been trying to absorb a little culture as cheaply as possible. The rest of the time I spend exploring the country by bike (push bike) and climbing over the hills behind Lyttleton. The traffic constantly terrifies me and it's only through the courtesy of a few Christchurch drivers that I'm still alive. . . .

I've been to some weird exhibitions where sculptures have been created out of beer cans welded together. Electronic music gave an atmosphere. I feel as if Hawke's Bay is a long way away but I often think of the H.T.C. Happy tramping and I'll see everyone in May."

- 000 -

TRAMPING OF VANCOUVER ISLAND IS DIFFICULT

(Pam Hansen explains why she hasn't sent any contributions in to "Pohokura" recently.)

"It's rather difficult to get off the highways here for when the weather is appropriate, fire closure is on and one doesn't dare to go two feet off the road allowance. In the fall, no one in their right mind goes out because of the hunting season being in full swing and then in winter - well, this past winter and last year, too, people couldn't even get to the ski grounds because of the amount of snow. We seem to confine our effort to rock and fossil hunting on the beaches in the summertime."

— 000 —

HOLIDAYING IN CHILE

(The following are extracts from a letter written by George Lowe to his family:-)

"We've just returned from a month in the South of Chile in the lake district. We went more than 2,000 miles and camped all the time.....

We took the school landrover and went south of Temuco to Lake Villarica to a marvellous camp site on the lake. Virgin bush all around, full of birds, and a superb view of the volcano Villarica smoking on the other side of the lake. The farmer gave us fresh milk and we found him wonderfully hospitable when we knocked and asked for a site. Then we went by dusty bullock tracks (bullock wagons are the main transport) over to Lake Panguipulli and stayed there for five days. The farmer there lent us his private beach and his rowing boat. Glorious weather with warm nights when we slept out. We took a ride in a timber barge up to the head of the lake to a delightful valley where Sue and I want to return. We had no tent here and it rained and we slept the night in sawdust in a timber shelter.....

Then on to Lake Rauco to perhaps the nicest place of all - very wild and close to the Argentine Border. We drove then to Puerto Montt..... Puerto Montt is the end of the road and railway and it's the beginning of the fiords and canals which lead to the southern tip. The port is full of little sailing boats trading from the islands and from the distant farms. Launches bring in the pigs and sheep tied on deck and the cows stuck down in tiny holds. They swim the cattle ashore and lasso them before they run wild into the petrol station on the water front. All wild and frontier-like. Sue and I like Puerto Montt. We then drove back by other lakes and got here just in time for my first governors' meeting....."

-oOo-

NEWS OF KEN TUSTIN

Ken writes as follows:-

"You may be interested to know that during the 'varsity holidays ($3\frac{1}{2}$ months) I was employed as a shooter in a Research Team on thar in the headwaters of the Clyde River, Lawrence River and Rakaia River. We also had a look in the Mathias River, S. Ashburton River, Cameron River and a brief look over on the West Coast via the Whitcombe Pass and did a few climbs in the Arrowsmith Range.

Also last year I managed trips (shooting, mainly) into the Waipakihi Valley (Kaimanawas), and to the Cobb Valley (N.W. Nelson), as well as a few other smaller ones. so my life in the hills is still an active one."

-oOo-

PRIVATE TRIPSWAIKAMAKA HUT

27th December 1964

The recent club working party to Waikamaka indicated a return visit with a new Hut Log Book (in a container - in this case a cake tin embellished with a suitable mountain scene), a refurbished axe, a new handle for the pick and the return of a slasher brought out in error. The Sunday after Christmas seemed a good day - and it was. 18 bods eventually left Holt's on a lovely morning. The scent of mahoe in bloom filled the lower reaches of the Waipawa, and the many flowering spikes on the spaniard bushes above the bushline and among the tussock near the hut were truly magnificent.

Some more work was done on a new route up through the bush. The stream is followed on the left (true right) a bit higher than the old takeoff, then crossed and up a steep tussock face, through a new leatherwood cut and then a sidle brings us back to the old track near the stream crossing. We were at the hut in good time for lunch. The return was via the new track leading above the waterfalls in the head of the Waikamaka and a few snow poles were put in. It was quite a relief when thunderclouds obscured the sun and made the return from the saddle a bit cooler. The water in the Waikamaka was tepid and the Waipawa only cool. Back at the truck by 6 we were in Hastings soon after 8 p.m. The youngest member of the party (aged 8) was still fresh as a daisy after skipping in to the hut and back, no trouble at all.
No. in party: 18 Leader: Nancy Tanner

Graeme, David and Noel Evans, Fred, Dale, Ray and Christine Prebble; Branda and David Butcher, Russell Berry, Peter Lewis, John Feigler, Dempster Thompson, Helen Hill, Rona Budgett, Barbara Butler, Susan Reid.

MAKINO HUT

7th February 1965

We were told that the trip into Makino took five hours from Cook's cottage and as we wanted a leisurely day we left Napier on Saturday night to sleep in Jack Nicholas's hay barn. It was a perfect night though rather chilly. The next morning the mist came up several times from the river giving the sun the appearance of a gleaming white disc. After the turn off we were glad of shade from the bush as the sun, in contrast to the previous trips, was blazing down with fierce enthusiasm. Three deerstalkers on the track told us in morbid detail of the rugged country to cross. Two hours from the turnoff we reached the hut much to our amazement as the sign indicated that the trip should take $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours and we had been travelling at a leisurely pace. Also we had not yet struck the rugged country that had been promised us. Several hours were spent at the hut sleeping, eating or just gazing at the scenery. The bush is really beautiful

one of the nicest walks we had been on. Going back was hotter than ever so the stream proved a wonderful way to cool off. We stopped at Makahu stream for a brew then back to Napier stopping many times on the way.

Christine, Fred and Dale Prebble, Harry Stewart, Graeme Evans
Peter Fyfe.

WAIKAMAKA HUT

23rd-24th January 1966

Saturday morning dawned gloriously clear and in our enthusiasm we were ten minutes early in collecting one Hastings bod. By the time we started up the Waipawa the rain and the wind had joined us. The latter was to be our devoted companion for the weekend. A brief stop at the forks had a rather chilling effect so we were soon plodding on again. The wind and rain increased with disgustingly healthy violence. We stopped below the saddle and decided to push on despite the weather. We had meant to visit Waterfall Creek hut but once on the saddle and exposed to the full force of a howling freezing gale we instinctively headed for Waikamaka. We would have lost Dale but for Fred's restraining hand when Dale's oversized parka inflated and he was almost last seen heading for Napier by air. The track going up to the saddle from Waikamaka is most satisfactory but going down one tends to dutifully follow the trackcutters (dubious deviations - resulting in leatherwood and a few unspoken thoughts. It was five frozen dripping drips that dropped into Waikamaka that day to spend a lazy afternoon and night in residence. Plenty of cold air filled the hut that night as the door blew open and no one thought to close it.

Sunday morning the rain had stopped but the wind still lingered. Walking straight out would have been too depressing so with "66" in mind we clambered up "67" only to find it too windy to go any further. From there we went down to the saddle and met two deerstalkers who were going over three Johns.

Lunch and a long sleep was enjoyed at the Forks as it was indecently early to return from a trip. The weekend certainly taught us to expect any conditions even in the middle of summer.

Christine, Fred and Dale Prebble, Graeme Evans, Harry Stewart

FORESTRY TRIP- ELLIS'S HUT

3rd December 1964

Last year Kath and I with some forestry trainees doing most of the work had run a line about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile long into the old mill workings a little north of Ellis's Hut. It runs

through one of the stands of young rimu of which there are several hundred acres. Palmerston, Wellington, Whakarewarewa and Napier all have different ideas about managing it; one idea being to replace rimu by radiata and this was a gathering of the clans to see if some scheme for handling rimu could be worked out.

A fine day, car beyond the hut as far as the skids, a good poke round but no conclusions.

N.L.E.

TAUHERENIKAU RIVER
(Tararuas)

December 5th/6th
1964

A river-crossing and firelighting instructions trip by the H.V.T.C. provided a good excuse for spending a fine weekend in the Tauherenikau valley. Unlike most of our instruction trips, some junior members did come along on this trip. Because of the amount of thought put into their work by the leaders we all learned something.

A trip was to begin at 8p.m. on Friday but the carrier who was to supply the truck decided not to turn up, so the scheduled trip had to be abandoned and private transport ran a shuttle service to a nearer roadhead. Unfortunately those of the party who had gone ahead did not know of this, and went to the Waiohine instead. Makes one appreciate our old truck.

It wasn't an energetic weekend, but jolly good fun with that crowd. We spent the night under the stars without the Tararua weather playing any tricks. The river was not too cold. On our return, one of the girls kindly invited the whole mob of us over to her parents' place for tea which was most enjoyable.

P. Lewis.

FORESTRY TRIP

OPAWA - 6th April, 1965.

A hurried trip to look over the goat proof plots in the Southern Ruahines before the noxious animals committee were helicoptered in the following week.

Sunny and rather hazy, very pleasant.

What was a sort of low grassy slope under dead trees has become in four years a 6-foot thicket of Coprosmas and mountain cabbage-trees. Though the effect of this is spoiled by the general growth outside, since the goats were knocked back. Animals are about though. Six goats had been shot here the day before and four stags were heard roaring.

N.L.E.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

(Quoted from F.M.C. Bulletin, July, 1964.)

Report on a non-fatal accident in the Waiohine Gorge.

A 16-year-old tramper travelling on his own on Saturday, 7th December, 1963, in a fairly remote part of the Tararua Ranges fell down a 20 foot bank and suffered a double fracture of his leg. After lying for several hours, he had the exceptionally good fortune of being found by the dog of some forest service officers who were in the area by chance three weeks earlier than planned. They made him comfortable and being equipped with a radio transmitter, were able to summon a helicopter which took the boy to hospital. The journey lasted less than half an hour instead of about two days required for a stretcher party. This was particularly fortunate as the weather was deteriorating.

The accident underlines once again the foolishness of travelling alone in remote areas, and only a chain of fortunate incidents prevented much more serious consequences.

From the Search and Rescue angle it also demonstrates the usefulness of helicopters in the evacuation of injured persons from areas where ground access is difficult and time consuming.

Report on the deaths of Heather McElligott and Brian Lamb near Harris Saddle.

During the Christmas vacation 1963/64 a trip over Harris Saddle via the Routeburn track was organised for a group of 15 thirteen- to fourteen-year-old children by two Roxburgh teachers. Leaving Roxburgh at 5.30 a.m. on 18th December and travelling by car, steamer and bus, the party reached Routeburn Lodge at about 2 p.m. and then walked up the valley to the huts where they spent the night. Next morning they left at 7 a.m. in indifferent weather and during the ascent to Harris Saddle strong, gusty wind with rain and sleet was encountered. On top of the Saddle it was snowing and everyone was wet and shivering. After a short rest, the leader decided to carry on as they would be travelling "with the wind", and the party continued over open country for about 1½ hours in deteriorating weather. A number of children were showing serious signs of fatigue. At a short but steep uphill section before the track finally descends to the bush some had to leave their packs and Heather McElligott, who appeared unconscious, was actually carried by one of the teachers who also had to assist another distressed girl. To do this he left his pack behind. Finally the teacher, unable to carry on, sat down with the two girls. He heard a cry from further down the track (the party was now spread out in an effort to get as many as possible quickly into the shelter of McKenzie Hut) and on investigating found Brian Lamb very distressed and unable to speak coherently. The teacher took a sleeping bag from the boy's pack and put him into it

and then returned to the girls. Heather was by now in a deep coma and the other girl was delirious.....

Conclusion:

After commending the teachers for their devotion to the children and to their outstanding efforts to keep the tragic toll to a minimum, there still remains the duty to point out the mistakes which led to the predicament.

Firstly the composition of the party was too vulnerable. If children of this age are to be taken into such country there should be an experienced and fit adult to approximately every three children. This would also allow a distribution of loads which leaves children with lighter packs than 27-30lb. as carried on this occasion. The success of a fine weather trip with fewer adults does not invalidate this requirement.

Secondly a tight schedule at the beginning of a trip should be avoided. A heavy day on the second day of a trip, especially if combined with a long approach journey and a poor night's sleep, finds the strength of the party at its lowest ebb. That this can be masked by excitement especially in the case of children, should not deceive an experienced leader.

The next is probably a cardinal point and this is the incredibly loose organisation, particularly as there were only two experienced people in the party. One would have expected the party to move in prearranged order so that each person had at all times contact with the persons in front and behind, and that one adult would have led and one brought up the rear. The pace would be taken from the weakest members who normally travel fairly close to the leader, and any breaking of the chain should be immediately relayed to the leader who stops until the gap is closed. In this way no energy is wasted by inexperienced members, no one wanders off the track, everyone is under constant observation by others (important when fatigued or distressed) and assistance and resources of the full party are available in any emergency.

Lastly a serious error of judgement was made in not returning to Routeburn Hut when the weather broke. Travelling downhill, the shelter of the bush could have been reached in about an hour, and in the worst case help was known to be available from the Routeburn while both McKenzie and Howden Huts proved to be empty. Strong parties in the Routeburn said that they would not have attempted the crossing on that day and confidently expected the children and their leaders to return.....

FLOOD DAMAGE TO THE WAIKAMAKA HUT

(On Friday, March 26th, Mr. Gilmour of the Forestry Department rang Alan and told him that the Waikamaka was very high and that the Club would have to move "either the river or the hut." As a result the day party planned for Sunday switched to the Waikamaka. The following is Maury's report:-)

Two vehicles left Hastings at 6.20am on Sunday 28th March on a fact finding mission, and, on visiting Mr. Vic. Brosnan, Forestry Field Officer, Wakarara, we learned our first fact.

1. We must leave vehicles for a while at Triplex Creek as a 20 foot hole had been left by water action over the retaining logs and although it has been filled again it has not consolidated sufficiently for use by cars.

2. A largish slushy slip is down between Triplex Base and where we normally leave the truck.

3. The riverbed at the ford is a shambles.

4. If you have a bike at home take it with you next time you go this way and it could be ridden all the way to the forks except through the gut just below Shut Eye Creek. The riverbed is all new shingle and quite a bit higher than the old bed, very flat and no defined channel.

5. The N. Waipawa has brought down a bed of shingle approx. 30ft high of which 12 feet covers the cullers' fly camp. The door of the safe that was at the camp is now in the shingle below the gut.

6. The two big rock faces on either side of the little bushy spur the old track goes up are well scoured out. In fact, the one on the northern side just above the bush, used to be about 9 feet below the ridge is now at least a 60 foot precipice. Beware!!

7. The shingle slide over the saddle is no more (at present) and the best route of descent is via the new cut track if you can find it. Coming out from the hut go straight up the stream heading for the snow pole at the top of the old shingle slide. The going is steepish in places but there are plenty of small footholds provided a little care is taken.

8. One or two new slips have appeared above the hut site but generally the stream travelling is easier than before - not so much Spaniard anyway.

9. The riverbank is now vertical and in line with the door of the Dog Box and as the hut is 4 or 5 feet nearer the stream the need to open the door no longer exists. You merely stoop down, go two or three paces and straighten up.

Approximately 4' of floor has gone, the line being from the corrugate in the woodshed to the outside edge of the fireplace.

I don't think the hut is in immediate danger of being washed away, but naturally it must be dismantled in the near future and eventually re-sited and possibly altered to suit today's requirements.

Hut building (sorry, rebuilding) can be a lot of fun, and hard work, too, but honestly, a club that has never built a hut has missed one of the best phases of life in the outdoors. There is a comradeship and sense of achievement when, possibly, those not as fast as bigger built fellows can show accomplishments in another field; although one and all, fast and slow, still get enjoyment out of their chosen sport - tramping.

When those working parties show up don't be bashful. There will be plenty of work for all and more besides. Well, that's that, folks. See you on the track to Waikamaka.

No. in Party: 8

M. Taylor

Tui Maxwell, Noel Evans; Nancy Tanner, Annette Tremewan, Joy Park, Graeme McColl, Helen Hill.

-oOo-

THE STORY OF THE WAIKAMAKA HUT

April, 1965.

Janet has asked me to rehearse the history of the hut for this number of "Pohokura". (Enthusiastic historically-minded types might like to refer to Pohokura No.29, p.17; and also the working party summaries in No.20, p.4; No.21, p.10; No.23, p.9.)

The H.T.C. started in 1935, the Internal Affairs deer-cullers came up from the south in 1937 and we were in cahoots with them over tracks and maps. We also shared an interest in huts. Apart from the H.T.C. Kaweka Hut (1936) a few derelict Rabbit Board or musterers' huts (Iron Whare, No Man's, Shut Eye, Pohangina Saddle) were the only ones of much use to them.

As Saturday was still a $\frac{1}{2}$ -day for many club members our policy aimed at siting huts as far in as could be reached in an afternoon's travel to open up as much country as possible. (The hisssers were finding that the popular Kaweka Hut had become a stopping place and resting place for far too many bods; - hence, incidentally, the Studholme Saddle Bivvy.)

The Central Ruahines looked pretty interesting country, K.M.E. had sighted the tussock triangle at Waikamaka Forks from 3 Johns as early as 1933, a Wellington party had visited Weka Flat (Upper Kawhatau) in 1935 and an Internal Affairs reconnaissance, mistaking the Waikamaka for a head of the Waipawa had come out at Hunterville.

By January 1939 things were hotting up. Internal Affairs were suggesting a hut at Weka Flat on a 50-50 basis and an H.T.C. reconnaissance had visited the Waikamaka Forks. This was as far in as we could operate as a club, so in spite of the attractions of the

Kawhatau we compromised on the Waikamaka site.

A decision was made in April and three parties went in that month prospecting routes over the Waipawa Saddle and over to the Kawhatau. In May the site was pegged out and levelled and an ingenious thatched bivvy put up which remained weatherproof for over three winters.

Meantime Chas. Higgs had designed the hut and the framing was cut and numbered on our lawn at Havelock North. As everything had to be carried from the roadhead over the Ruahine divide everything had to be as light and as compact as possible.

Carrying started in June and continued until the end of July, dumps being made up the Waipawa at about half-hourly intervals and the bottom plates and most urgent parts of the framing being sorted out and taken forward. This proved unfortunate as an exceptional snowfall buried this specially selected dump for two months during which there was an unbroken snow-field from the Waipawa shingle right over and down to the Forks. It was then that Clem Smith went astray in fog and snow and the "Morris dwang" was later recovered from near Peg 67, a thousand feet above the Saddle. The working party camped at the hut site in four feet of snow at the beginning of September had the unforgettable experience of returning to the saddle, watching the day party labouring up the snow slope and being hailed "We are at war with Germany". No more work on that trip.

The first effect of the war was that the erection of the hut as well as carrying fell on the H.T.C. and this was pressed on with mainly by private parties while manpower was still available. A New Year party made the hut habitable and throughout the war it was used by a surprising variety of parties, one of these even including a few U.S. Marines.

Some time during the war Forestry heard about the hut. Our secretary received a map (inaccurate and on a fantastic scale) with a curt note requesting him to mark the position of the hut and please explain. When he replied that we'd acted in good faith on the authority of the Internal Affairs Department the fat was properly in the fire. This had its funny side but involved us in a variety of commitments, some of them impracticable. We could not for example limit the use of the hut strictly to club members and departmental officials while on duty. In fact the variety of users shows up all through the log entries.

The temporary piles put in hastily after the cement had set solid while waiting at the road head, lasted better than we could have hoped; however the back piles and bottom plate were renewed by Wally Romanes' party who simply rocked the hut over by brute strength to allow the new creosoted piles to be slipped under.

Excessive compactness and smoke have been Waikamaka features. No one has yet tamed the smoke; but an annex along the back wall of the hut has given valued space for firewood and packs and made the

floor of the hut considerably drier. The Forest Service has also put up its own storehouse after a move to put up its own cupboards inside the hut had fortunately been checked.

With the recent improvements in standards of hut accommodation some attempts had to be made to bring the Waikamaka into line, with a sheet of perspex in the roof and the inside whitewashed.

Mention should be made of the club's obligation to the Forest Service for their readiness to fly in materials for renovations and extensions in the course of servicing their own huts in the Ruahines.

N.L.E.

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VISITORS TO THE WAIKAMAKA HUT
(Compiled from the Log Books)

- 1940: Twelve parties visited the hut in the course of the year. nine of these were from H.T.C. mostly working parties, one K.T.C. ditto, one A.T.C. and at the end of the year a pair of Government cullers, a total of 84.
- 1941: Eleven parties, only four from H.T.C., one M.T.C., besides some combined with one of the H.T.C. parties, and one K.T.C. Private shooters began to use the hut. Total 48.
- 1942: Four parties, two of them H.T.C. It is now noticeable that the club parties are mostly girls - but what girls! Total 16.
- 1943: Fourteen parties this year, two of them Guides Platoons, one a shooting party containing U.S. marines (a note adds that "3 out of 7 made the grade"). Two of the parties were H.T.C., one K.T.C. Total 61.
- 1944: Seven parties, two of them H.T.C., one K.T.C., one Heretaunga Rovers, also a botanical party (H.T.C.-T.T.C). Total 23.
- 1945: Nine parties, four H.T.C., one Rovers. Through parties now conspicuous, one from Oroua one from Mangaohane. Cullers reappear. Total 52.
- 1946: Eighteen parties with a varied representation of tramping clubs. Three H.T.C. parties, one combined with the Waipukurau Social Club, a Waipuk S.C. party, two T.T.C. parties, also a V.U.C.T.C. party showing Wellington interest, and a Massey College T.C. entry. Total 126.
- 1947: Seventeen parties, two H.T.C., one T.T.C., one Wednesday Social Club (Waipuk.), and a Tamaki T.C. party. Total 97.
- 1948: Eighteen parties, one a combined H.T.C., M.T.C., R.T.C. party crossing for the Colenso memorial dedication at Mokai, also six H.T.C. parties and one C.U.C.T.C. party. One of these was a reconnaissance party in connection with the Howletts Search, and the last party had a strenuous time helping to carry out a collapsed deerstalker who had been lost two days on Rangi-o-te-Atua. Total 78.

- 1949: Only six parties were in this year, one of them H.T.C., another Tongue and Meat from Wellington. Total 30.
- 1950: Twelve parties, H.T.C., T.T.C., Tamaki T.C. and Rangiwahia S.C. one each. Total 60.
- 1951: Fifteen parties, two H.T.C., one Tamaki T.C. Total 57.
- 1952: No less than twenty parties, eight of them H.T.C., one Tamaki T.C. and one Waipuk. Senior Scouts. Total 87.
- 1953: Seventeen parties, mostly Government cullers. One H.T.C. party and one Tamaki T.C., one Auckland party and a H.V.T.C. party. Total 53.
- 1954: Seventeen parties, six of them H.T.C. and one M.T.C. Total 75.
- 1955: Up to the end of the book (13th May) twelve parties had been in, two of them H.T.C. Interim Total 52.

The grand total of names in the log book was then 997 and with the Queen's Birthday working party now exceeds 1,000.

N.L.E.

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F.M.C. BASIC MOUNTAIN CRAFT COURSE
(RUAPEHU)

November, 1964.

Late of a Friday night four fortunate boys stood at the top of Bruce Road wondering which was the way to the Hutt Valley hut. This was soon located although it was hard to believe it was a hut and not a hotel. It had an electric stove, heaters, and even hot and cold water.

At 6.30 on Saturday morning we were awakened and given a cup of tea by four H.V.T.C. girls who did all of the excellent cooking during the course. Name tags and gear were then issued before we went up to the Tararua hut where L.D. "Bill" Bridge explained the aim of the course. An F.M.C. instructor was to give an explanation, followed by a demonstration of a certain point. After that the course members were to split up into pairs and go with an instructor and practise the point until it had been learned correctly. In this manner it was hoped to give inexperienced climbers like ourselves the basic knowledge in snowcraft, icecraft, and rock climbing.

We went up the mountain, on the second chair lift, for the first of our snowcraft instruction, which included balance, rhythm, step kicking, position of axe, step cutting, arresting falls and glissading. After a very cold lunch in mist and rain we headed down to Broken Leg Valley where conditions were more pleasant for the instruction of rope belays. Later in the day, at the hut, further demonstrations were given in glacier travel, crevasse extraction, survival techniques and rock climbing holds. After the evening meal a discussion on gear was held in the Tararua hut.

Early next morning we were fortunate to find very hard snow for the icecraft section of the course. In the afternoon we found out just how hard it was to climb rock under severe cold and windy conditions.

This mountaintop course was extremely well run and I feel we were very fortunate indeed to have been sent by the club.

R.B.

Party: John Feigler, Graham Griffiths, Noel Evans, Russell Berry.

-oOo-

SOCIAL NEWS

Births: To Jackie and Roy Peacock - a daughter.
To Owen and Janet Brown - a daughter.

Engagement: Heather McKay to "Chick" Hill.

Marriage: Graeme Hare to Helen Williams.

Bereavement: Our sympathy to Jim Price on the death of his father;
and to Tony Daly on the death of his mother.

Departures: Rona Budgett to Wellington.
Norrie Johnson to Christchurch.

Moves: Tony Corbin to Greymouth.
Christine Prebble to Christchurch.

Return: Madge and Bertie McConnell.

Appearance: Hal Christian turned up in the holidays. Alan and Kath put on an evening for him which we all enjoyed very much.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following to the club:-

Tui Maxwell, Brenda Butcher, David Butcher (Jr.), Fred Prebble,
Tony Daly (Jr.).

-oOo-

REPORT ON GIBSON ALERT 4-5 APRIL 1965.

p.m. Sunday 4th April

8.30 Phone call from Mr. N.W. Eade, first assistant at the Hastings Boys' High School advising that Donald Gibson, a student at the school, had not returned with a day party which had been into the Big Hill Stream area. Requested advice as to steps that should be taken.

After discussing the matter with returning members of the party it was suggested to Mr. Eade that he advise Police. Preliminary consideration was then given to the action required. From discussions with other members of the party,

including the person who had last spoken to the missing boy, the following picture emerged:

A party of approximately 42 (High School staff 3, parent 1, boys approx. 33, Heretaunga Tramping Club adult members 5) had made a day trip into the Dead Dog Hut by way of Herricks Hut and sidling track which drops into Big Hill Stream some way above Herricks and then up the stream to the hut. After lunching at Dead Dog Hut the party had returned downstream, the first group, all school boys, continuing down the stream instead of coming out by way of the overland route. There appears to have been some conflict of instructions as to the route to be adopted. The party of boys eventually came to a short gorge through which the stream passed but Gibson, the last member of the party, refused to tackle this stretch. The stream was up a little and discoloured, flowing swiftly. He indicated he would make contact with the remainder of the party which he presumed to be following and was accordingly left at the head of the gorge.

Some further members of the party had followed the boys downstream a little way from the track take-off but had subsequently climbed out when the going became rough. Most of the party came out by way of the track.

Upon arrival at the roadhead it was noted that Gibson was missing and 14 persons stayed behind, several remaining at roadhead and the others moving back to Herricks Hut in an endeavour to make such reconnaissance as was possible before nightfall.

p.m.

- 9.00 Hastings Police rang and indicated that they would be sending a party out in the morning and had also alerted dog teams.
- 9.10 Contacted Jack Carrell (R.E.C.) who made arrangements with Wellington for 6 TRP1's to be despatched by first available transport.
- 10.15 Contacted Hastings Police again and was advised that the matter was in the hands of Inspector Bell. Thereupon spoke to Mr. Bell and it was arranged that Constable Coote and self should proceed to roadhead by dawn to appraise the situation.

a.m.

Monday 5th April

- 5.00 Hastings Police Station.
- 5.45 Big Hill Station, where met farmer and given lift by Land-rover to roadhead, the road by now being impassable to normal vehicles and 30 minutes walk from the farm house.
- 6.15 Arrived roadhead at Broom Stream confluence. No word received from parties remaining overnight in Herricks area.
- 6.35 Message from Constable Coote to police advising arrival.
- 7.45 Runner from Herricks with advice that available personnel,

a.m.

A party met him the next morning as he was making his way down stream from the hut in an endeavour to pick up the point where the overland track took off.

Personnel

A.V. Berry

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FIXTURE LIST

<u>1965</u>	<u>Trip</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Fare</u>
Apr.25	Golden Crown - 3 Fingers - Bobs Spur. N.Ruahines	R. Berry	9/-
May 8-9	Waikamaka	N. Evans	10/-
May 15-16	Ruapehu National Park	A. Berry	30/-
		J.	25/-
May 23	Wakararas via Wakarara Station	H. Stewart	9/-
June 5-7			
Queens	Waikamaka		10/-
B'day			
June 20th	Te Waka via Potters Road	P. Lewis	10/-
July 3-4	Waikamaka		10/-
July 18th	Pohangina Saddle	G. Thorp	10/-
July 31-	Waikamaka		10/-
Aug.1			
Aug. 15th	Black Birch Range Trig G	J. Feigler	10/-
Aug.28-29	Howletts - Saw Tooth	J. Glass	10/-
Sept. 12th	Blowhard Trig - The Lizard - Pene	G. Griffiths	9/-

N.B. Weekend trips have been put down for rebuilding Waikamaka Hut. Depending on progress made, other trips may be substituted as required.

Fares: Reducible (except Ruapehu) by 2/- for seniors, half-fares for juniors by 1/-, if paid at the meeting before or on the trip.

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" 19	- Forestry Trip - Opawe		New Members
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