

WINTER SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS TO PARK.

Ruapehu Ski Club.

The Ruapehu Ski Club, Incorporated, has supplied the following notes dealing with the visits made by members of the club to the park :—

“The club held its sixteenth annual winter sports excursion to the Tongariro National Park from the 21st September to the 1st October. The club, unfortunately, was not able to procure its usual period of about a month earlier, and as a result the party was somewhat smaller than that of the previous year. Nevertheless a holiday highly successful in every respect was spent in the energizing environs of Whakapapa. The weather, although somewhat boisterous for the first three days, turned to fine after a heavy snowfall, and most of the time during the balance of the period was spent in ski-ing practice. Taking advantage of the good snow conditions on the upper Scoria Flat, some of the party made several ski ascents to the club's Glacier Hut (6,000 ft.), experiencing little difficulty with the journeys. Good ski-ing was obtained in the vicinity of the hut, which for the first time on record was completely buried in snow excepting a small portion of one end of the roof, and for the purpose of gaining access to the building a sloping trench 9 ft. deep was cut.

“Although the conditions were excellent the usual sports tournament was not held, on account of the smallness of the party.

“A mixed party of about twenty made an ascent of Mount Ruapehu under ideal conditions and in company with a Government cinematographic photographer, whose heavy camera gear some of the members carried to the summit.

“The social side of the holiday was well provided for with impromptu entertainments and dancing, the time-honoured fancy-dress ball being held on the evening prior to breaking-up.

“The successful completion of the 1928 party marked an important event in the club's history. By the change from the old order to the new a long and interesting chapter closes; and, while a number of the pioneer members may by the change be reminded of many enjoyable parties of the past, the club are looking forward with keenness to their association with the Tongariro Park Tourist Co., Ltd., and the facilities the company have provided, and they are also jubilant that their ambitions of nearly twenty years have reached fruition in the erection of ample and up-to-date accommodation at Whakapapa.

“In November two members of the club guided and assisted a Government Publicity Officer in the making of a cinematographic record of Mounts Ngauruhoe and Tongariro. The camera was taken into the crater of Mount Ngauruhoe for the first time on record, and some excellent film of the activity obtained.”

Tararua Tramping Club.

The Tararua Tramping Club has supplied the following notes dealing with the visits made by members of the club to the park :—

“Unfortunately, cold wet weather was again the experience of the August party to Ruapehu, but under the capable leadership of Mr. L. Cross, who annexed the ski-ing shield for the third time, the party had quite an enjoyable time. Since that trip the regime at the park has been changed, all the accommodation now being under the control of the Tongariro Tourist Co., who are erecting a commodious chateau; and, whilst we realize that such a change was bound to come and that the park would eventually become the rendezvous of the tourist and motorist, it is with very deep feelings of regret that we now look back on the years that are past, when our parties had Whakapapa to themselves, with their nearest neighbour twelve miles away. However, as ordinary hut accommodation will not be available for this year, we have booked lodge accommodation for a party of thirty from the 23rd August to the 4th September, and although this will be slightly more expensive than in former years, no doubt the extra comfort and absence of work and worry will be added compensations.

“We hope that with the departure of the workmen the old hut accommodation will again be open to parties who are willing and able to look after themselves, so that those who are unable to afford the expense necessarily entailed in the provision of the added luxuries of the hostel will still be able to enjoy the beauties and wonders of this great national playground.”

FINANCES.

Under the powers conferred by the Tongariro National Park Act, 1922, and section 36 of the Finance Act, 1928, the Board arranged to borrow from the Public Trustee the sum of £40,000 at 6 per cent., to be repayable by equal half-yearly instalment of principal and interest over a period of 36½ years. The sum so borrowed is being advanced to the Tongariro Park Tourist Co., Ltd., on the like terms as to interest and repayment. The company has given a first mortgage to secure the moneys so advanced, and has agreed to give a bill of sale as collateral security over certain furnishings, fittings, and plant to be placed in the hostel building. The Board is also advancing to the company, on the security of a second mortgage, the sum of £3,750 out of the Board's own funds, which at the 31st March, 1929, stood at the sum of £5,037 0s. 11d. After allowing for this commitment the sum of £1,287 0s. 11d. will be available for expenditure on tracks and other necessary works.

Attached hereto are statements setting out the financial position of the Board, comprising Statement of Receipts and Payments, Revenue Account, and Balance-sheet.