



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

PO Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • www.wtc.org.nz

June 2023



River crossing training is fun photo by Allan Wickens

WAIKATO HUT

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Tongariro National Park



www.wtc.org.nz



Fungi on Waitawheta
track Allan Wickens

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WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB

P. O. Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • www.wtc.org.nz

Free to members

Member of: Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand Inc
Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association

BULLETIN No 850

June 2023

General Committee

(Contact details listed below)

President: Judith Bogle 027 3810283
Secretary: Dorothy Cawdron 027 7424222
Treasurer: Guy Domett 027 2483008
Members: John McArthur (VP Tramp) Stephen Prendergast (VP Ski)
Stephen Phillips Allan Wickens Lois Rowell Mike Barker
Selwyn June 0274 978151

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**Tramping Subcommittee**

**Tramping email:** [waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com](mailto:waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com)

**Chairperson:** John McArthur [mcArthur@outlook.co.nz](mailto:mcArthur@outlook.co.nz) 021 2889641  
**Club Captain:** Les Warren 027 8644937  
**Membership:** Jocelyn Widmer 027 8664795  
**Member:** Selwyn June 027 4978151  
Rupert Craggs 027 6811926  
**Web & Facebook:** Rizal Razak 021 2676566  
**Transport:** Allan Wickens 027 9509546  
**Social convenor:** Jacqui Dick 021 1375201

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Ski Subcommittee

Ski email: waikatoski@gmail.com

Chairperson: Stephen Prendergast 021 466247
Ski VP: Stephen Phillips 021 1031436
Bookings: Stephen Prendergast 021 466247
Finance officer: Michael Barker 021 2463500
Members: Ashley Hoskin 027 4909545

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**Bulletin:** Lesley Kuggeleijn 027 4942414  
**Editor & Club Librarian:** Dianne June [djune@xtra.co.nz](mailto:djune@xtra.co.nz) 07 8433066  
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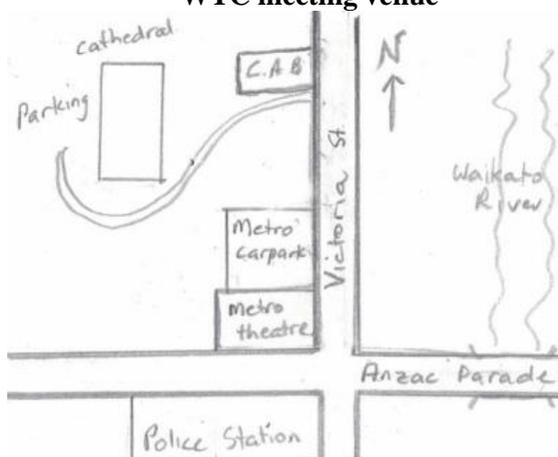
Waikato Tramping Club account: 03 1555 0091625 02 (include the trip no.)

Club night, Wednesday 5th July

The guest speaker for July 5 is Monica Peters who will showcase citizen science: What it is, why it's fascinating and why it's become an increasingly important way to design studies and collect data. In a nutshell, citizen science can help grow new knowledge about environmental trends, our ecosystems, and the species that inhabit them. Monica will cover some fascinating studies underway around Aotearoa and internationally that rely on public input (from clubs and societies too!) as well as some basic tools/apps that can be used to collect and share observations.

The meeting will be at the new venue in Victoria street- see sketch below, and starts at 7.30pm

WTC meeting venue



Last Social activity: Thank-you to Andrea & Graham for hosting us for the movie night and potluck dinner recently. Sadly, the number attending was low but it made for interesting conversations and yummy food. The movie about Waiuta- a former rich gold mine south of Reefton was based around the attendees at a reunion ball there in the 1960s so not only did we learn about the mining history but also the social history. It was a short documentary really but generated lots of discussion at halftime and afterwards.

Next Social activity: Our social guru Jacqui had the brilliant suggestion of doing something to combat any mid-winter blues you might have and we think the idea of a movie and a simple dinner somewhere in the city with lots of time for socialising might be the order of the day. So, we've got the date sorted: Saturday June 24th. We'll do a search of the movie programme available, find a good movie and start time for it, then make a booking at a restaurant for before or after it. If this sounds like a bit of you, please contact Dianne, 8433066, djune@xtra.co.nz and let her know as this can help when it comes to booking a dinner venue.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2023

3068	17/18 June	M & M/F	Crosbies Hut	Allan Wickens/ David Totman
	24 June	Social	Midwinter get-together	Dianne June/ Jacqui Dick
3069	25 June	E/M	Lindeman track	Lois Rowell
3070	2 July	E/M	Auckland Coast to coast	Club captain
	5 July		CLUB NIGHT	
3071	8/9 July	M/F	Ruapehu traverse	Mike Peck
3072	14-16 July	E/M	Exploring TNP	Les Warren
3073	22/23 July	M	Snowcraft I	Mike Peck
3074	30 July	M	Mt. Karioi	Lily Lye
	2 Aug		CLUB NIGHT	
3075	5/6 Aug	M	Leitches clearing	Judith Bogle
3076	12/13 Aug	M	Snowcraft II	Allan Wickens
3077	20 Aug	M	Karaka track	Selwyn June
3078	26/27 Aug	M/F	Mangatepopo to Oturere	John Wilson
3079	2 Sept	n/a	First Aid course	Club captain
	6 Sept		CLUB NIGHT	
3080	9/10 Sept	M	Pureora baiting	Dianne & Selwyn June
3081	19-30 Sept	F	Tasmania	Les Warren
3082	17 Sept	E/M	Waiorongomai	John McArthur

Don't let a lack of equipment deter you from coming on a trip. Talk to the trip leader - who may be able to assist with lending or sharing gear.

TIME and FITNESS GUIDELINES

E = **Easy**. Up to 4 hours per day, pace slower than E/M.

E/M = **Easy/Medium**. Up to 5-6 hours/day, pace slower than M.

M = **Medium**. Up to 6-7 hours/day, at standard walking pace.

M/F = **Medium/Fit**. Up to 7-8 hours/day, pace faster than M.

F = **Fit**. Over 8 hours/day, pace faster than M/F.

Note that factors such as party size, fitness, weather, terrain and leadership will influence actual times, so the above are estimates only.

Bookings and Cancellations: no later than the WEDNESDAY before the trip.

Any person withdrawing after this day without good reason will be charged the full cost of the trip.

Departure Point: Trips depart from the river end of London Street. Cars can be parked, facing the road, in the car park on the right at the end of the cul de sac. If in doubt contact your trip leader.

Weekend Trips: leave on Friday nights at 7pm sharp unless otherwise stated.

Day Trips: leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp.

If someone is concerned because a trip is late back, contact:

1) Club Captain; 2) President; 3) committee member.

Minimum equipment required:

Day Trips: A thermal layer (polypropylene, polyester etc or wool), an insulating layer of fleece (polartec etc) or wool and a water/wind-proof parka outer shell. Shorts or longjohns/over-trousers in cool or wet weather. Torch and sunscreen. Boots or strong shoes. Lunch, snacks and water bottle. First aid kit.

Weekend Trips: The above, plus pack with plastic liner bag, sleeping bag, tent, sleeping mat, cooker, billy, plate or bowl, spoon, food, spare dry clothes for evening, towel, toilet gear, light camp shoes. A water purifier can be useful. Plus, in extreme weather or country: additional warm top, over-trousers or woollen/fleece trousers, warm outdoor mittens or gloves, over-mitts, warm hat or balaclava, sunglasses. Ice axe and crampons for snow.

Trip Descriptions

Remember: Click '**SUBMIT**' to confirm your booking on the website

Trip 3068

Crosbies Hut

17/18 June

This modern hut (built 2010) has proven very popular and is often heavily booked out on weekends. This hut is the third in a trilogy of huts where WTC have booked 10 places (Trip 3058 Pahautea on Pirongia in April and Trip 3063 Waitawheta in the Kaimais mid-May are the other 2). Again, we will have two options in how to go about getting to and leaving the hut. Details on which routes we will take have yet to be determined. A medium group led by Allan will be leaving from one of several entry points north of Thames township and exiting via another track in the same area. Meanwhile, David will be leading the fitter group on a longer tramp utilising much the same area.

We will be the only occupants in the hut that night as we have fully booked it. Our departure will be at 8.00 am on Saturday from our usual departure point in London Street. We expect to arrive back in Hamilton late Sunday afternoon.

Leaders: Allan Wickens

Ph: 027 9509546

Grade: M

David Totman

Ph: 021 868720

Grade: M/F

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com

Transport: Senior member \$35-40

Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Hut fee: \$20 (only adult price available)

Trip 3069

Lindeman loop track

25 June

The Lindemann Loop Track is a 5 hour, 11 km return walk.

This track is at the end of Lindeman road off SH2, just north of Katikati. The loop track can be walked in either direction. The easiest route is via the Pack track which goes off to the right, looping around the Wairoa valley. This track has a

gentler gradient, with pleasant views, streams, fine vegetation, and the remains of old kauri dams. These remains are the last of New Zealand's kauri dam driving history which took place between 1935 and 1941. It takes 3-3.5 hours to reach this point. The loop continues back along the Bridge track which gives excellent views of the Tauranga area and offshore islands before descending steeply back down to the carpark. I would expect some small stream crossings and muddy spots at this time of the year.

Leader: Lois Rowell **Ph:** 027 2881148 **Grade:** E/M

Transport: Senior member \$20-35 Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Trip 3070 **Auckland Coast to coast** **2 July**

The Coast to Coast walk is a 16 km hike across Auckland, from the Waitemata Harbour to the Manukau. We will pass through landscapes shaped by 600 years of settlement and get panoramic views stretching across Auckland city. The route starts at Viaduct Basin and passes through Albert Park, the Auckland Domain, Mt Eden, One Tree Hill and on to the shore at Onehunga.

Leader: tba/club captain **Ph:** 027 8644937 **Grade:** E/M

Transport: Senior member \$20-35 Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Trip 3071 **Ruapehu Traverse** **8/9 July**

We'll go down to the club hut Friday night either in private cars or a van depending on how many are on the trip. Saturday morning we'll go up and over and down to Turoa, the trip route will depend on the ability and experience of the group as a whole. Previous snowcraft experience is essential. We need a driver to pick us up and transport us back to the club hut. If we don't have a driver for the weekend we'll go peak bagging instead, returning to the club hut on Saturday. Sunday gives us a few options which will be discussed Saturday night but with the aim of leaving the mountain around 3pm to return back to Hamilton.

Leader: Mike Peck **Ph:** 021 369 256 **Grade:** M/F

Transport: Senior member \$50-55 Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Hut fees: \$50

Trip 3072 **Exploring TNP** **14-16 July**

On Friday we'll travel to Whakapapa to our accommodation at Ruapehu Lodge in the morning. Settle in and have lunch at the Lodge then, then a short walk (or two) in the afternoon close to our accommodation. The aim is to celebrate Matariki Day with a special dinner with opportunities to play cards or chess before and after dinner. Saturday 15th – will look at either a trip to the Tupapakurua Falls near National Park township (4-5hrs return). Sunday 16th – Do a morning walk before heading home. More walk ideas with further trip information closer to the trip. At this stage I need to know numbers ASAP to secure a booking. Not sure how popular this Lodge is. It is a fully equipped 32-bed Lodge.

Leader: Les Warren **Ph:** 027 8644937 **Grade:** E/M

Transport: Senior member \$ tba Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Accommodation: between \$40 - \$50 per person/night

Trip 3073

Snowcraft I

22/23 July

This is one of the most popular trips we run each year and for good reason. The Basic Snowcraft Course is aimed at introducing you to the alpine environment in which you will learn valuable skills to safely enjoy it.

You must attend a gear assessment evening prior to the weekend (date tba). The basics of snowcraft will be taught on Saturday, including how to use crampons and ice axes, self-arrest, how to walk on icy slopes, navigation tips, basic avalanche awareness plus what to wear etc. This instruction will be done in areas close to the Club hut, but we will spend most of the day out, weather permitting. A full assessment will be done by the instructors on those learning the skills that are taught. If anyone is having difficulty, extra training will be given the next day if necessary. If the weather is too bad on Saturday, we will do instruction in our cosy lounge, as far as is practicable.

On Saturday evening there will be a sumptuous meal in our large dining area. Sunday's instruction depends on how much we managed to cover on Saturday. If all went well, then we have the chance to try out our new-found skills by walking up as far as the NZ Alpine Club Hut, the highest inhabited building on the mountain. We plan on being out for most of the day, returning to the Club hut by about 2.00 pm at the latest to clean up and get back to Hamilton at a reasonable time.

Given reasonable weather, by the end of the weekend you will understand the principles behind the rather complex concept of "snowcraft". It takes a lot of practice and a genuine understanding of what is real and perceived danger when entering the snow and ice heights of Ruapehu. Our leaders have been doing this sort of thing for years and yet they never fail to be fascinated by the world of ice and snow. On satisfying our instructors that you have completed this course with competence, you may attend our follow-up Snowcraft 2 which will be held over the weekend of 12-13 August.

The departure time will be early evening on Friday 21 July. Most will go in the vans from either London Street, or another designated departure point but we can pick up others enroute (main highways only via Te Awamutu and Te Kuiti please). We will be based in our large and comfortable hut Friday-Saturday nights. All meals will be provided. A full list of gear will be provided upon registration (get in early as you may miss out). Crampons and ice axes can be hired from the Club or Bivouac. Mike, who is Manager of Bivouac in Hamilton, is the principal instructor and he can answer any queries you may have pre-course.

Please note: To participate in this course you must be a member of the Waikato Tramping Club. Application details are on the Club website. Spaces for this course are limited and a deposit will be required to confirm your booking.

Leaders: Allan Wickens (Course Co-Ordinator) **Ph:** 027 9509546

Grade: M

Mike Peck (Principal Instructor) **Ph:** 021 369 256

Email allanwickens@hotmail.com

Cost: Approximately \$200 – includes transport, food, and hut fees

Trip 3074**Mt. Karioi****30 July**

We'll leave Hamilton around 7am driving an hour to the Mt Karioi carpark on the western side of Mt. Karioi and aim to start walking by 8.30am, Arrive at summit around 12pm have some lunch, a bit of a look around, back to carpark by 4.30pm. If anyone feels like it, we could go for a short walk through Te Toto gorge (40 min return) and have a look at the lookout, or head to the beach for a walk and some fish and chips, depending on weather and what everyone would like to do. Karioi will be an **easy** trip. 3 hours to lookout, 3.30 to summit.

Karioi isn't a harsh walk, more just a casual day tramp to stretch the legs, however does have amazing views if people were wanting to take pictures. Should be a nice relaxed tramp!

Once over the stile at the beginning of the track it's all uphill but there are many vantage points to stop and have a breather whilst admiring the view. After passing the grove of kanuka the track climbs up a grassy slope before reaching the ridge where chains and ladders have been installed to help navigate the way.

An hour (756m) down from the summit is a lookout, 10 mins down a side track with good views across the raglan harbour.

Leader: Lily Lye**Ph:** c/- 021 226 5072**Grade:** E**Transport:** Senior member \$20-35

Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Trip 3075**Leitches' clearing via Mangatoa saddle****5/6 Aug**

Mangatoa Saddle track into Leitches's clearing is 16Km return therefore an easy overnighter. The elevation is approximately 500m and should give us a view out to Te Mauku Point.

This track crosses the Herangi Range and is an alternative track to **Transport:**

Senior member \$20-35

Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Leitch's Hut. At the end yes there is a river to cross. This is in the Whareorino conservation area, which is in the western king country.

We will have a late leave on Saturday morning, only takes 2hrs to get to the start of the track. Leitch's hut has a wetback so if we fire up the fire we can have hot water and there is plenty of area to camp and possibility have a camp fire.

Leader: Judith Bogle**Ph:** 027 3810283**Grade:** M**Transport:** Senior member \$40-45

Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Trip 3076**Snowcraft II****12/13 Aug**

To be eligible for this course, participants must have completed Snowcraft Course Number One. With the newly gained skills from the basic course in mind, the next step is to further these skills, on the snowy heights of Tongariro National Park.

Again, we will be based at our Club hut at Whakapapa. After travelling to the hut on Friday night, what evolves over the weekend is very weather dependent. A final plan on what areas we will explore will be left until that night or early on Saturday.

We will spend Saturday night at the hut and again have a sumptuous meal. If the weather is good on Sunday, the plan is to stay on the heights doing further training, before heading back early afternoon to clean up and be away by mid-afternoon.

Again, only members of the Waikato Tramping Club can participate in this Course. Please note : the numbers able to go on this Course are less than on the basic course, so we advise early registration please.

Leaders: Allan Wickens **Ph:** 027 9509546 **Grade:** M
 Mike Peck **Ph:** 021 369 256

Transport: Senior member \$45-55 Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Accommodation and food: tba

Trip 3077 Karaka-Waiotahi Track 20 Aug

This trip begins in the township of Thames and follows the Waiotahi Stream before we start a climb up a ridge to gain height. At the junction with Karaka Track there are great views of the Pinnacles, Table Top Mountain and Mt Te Aroha - a good spot for lunch. We then head down the Karaka Track which leads back to Thames. About 4.5 hours walking time, in regenerating native forest and with a few stream crossings. These are old pack tracks so are well graded.

Leader: Selwyn June **Ph:** 0274 978151 **Grade:** M

Transport: Senior member \$20-35 Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Trip 3080 Pureora baiting 9/10 Sept

This is a time to give back to a place we love tramping in – namely the forest. The Pirongia Restoration Society manage a pest control operation in the Okahukura valley of the north Pureora forest west of Pureora village.

We will be based at the Pureora Lions lodge for the weekend (think hot showers, warm rooms) so pack your ‘luxuries’. At 7.45pm Friday night there will be a safety briefing and everyone will find out who their team mate will be, load up their supply of safety gear, and their allocation of rat bait (old pack is useful). Saturday morning we will leave the Lodge and drive for a further 45 minutes to the base site for the days’ activity and you will make your way to your allocated bait lines. Time to empty your pack as you go, putting a bag of bait into each bait station along the line. Each team of 2 people will have 2 lines to complete before returning to the base for the trip back to the Lodge. There is an easy loop track beside the Lodge that takes about 1 hour to walk and is worth doing if you wish.

This is a very social weekend where your pack gets significantly lighter as the day progresses – a rare occasion indeed.

If there are enough volunteers, there is a good chance we can visit all 954 bait stations in a single day. If not, a small group will return on Sunday morning to complete the last lines. And if there are enough volunteers to do this who are not tramping club members, then you can head off for a tramp such as up Mt. Pirongia, or follow the MTB track from Whangamata Rd to Kawakawa bay & Kinloch before returning home. There has been a bridge washout on this track near Kinloch and will involve a small river crossing so be prepared for wet feet.

Leader: Dianne & Selwyn June **Ph:** 0274 978151 **Grade:** M

Transport: Senior member \$40-50 Senior non-member: member rate + \$10

Accommodation: cost covered by Pirongia Restoration Society

Trip 3081 Overland Track & Walls of Jerusalem, Tasmania 14-27 Sept

Departure & Finish: Launceston, Tasmania (People can choose to travel earlier or stay longer)

Trip Grade: Fit (need to carry all our gear/food for days on the track)

Draft Itinerary (will need more fine-tuning):

Day 1 – Fly Auckland to Launceston via Melbourne. Nite in Launceston.

Day 2 – Shuttle to Cradle Mountain (near start of track) to stay the night before so we can get an early start the next day.

Day 3 - Day 8 – Overland Track. Day 8 includes shuttle to Hobart.

Day 9 – Hobart

Day 10 – Shuttle to start of Walls of Jerusalem leg. May include a short walk.

Day 11 - Day 13 – Exploring the Walls of Jerusalem area.

Day 14 – Shuttle to Launceston (end of trip).

Some important notes to help make your decision when registering:

- Huts cannot be pre-booked and no bunk is guaranteed;
- Mattresses are not provided;
- Must take a tent (as bunk may not be available or may choose to tent)
- Camping only on Walls of Jerusalem section (a more wilderness trip)

There is much more information to share with you which I will send out when you register / express interest. The itinerary will probably change a wee bit once we make key bookings flights, the Track, Shuttle etc. This further information will include some estimated, costs. Ideally, I will need confirmed numbers by 15 June 2023. When registering, if the dates are not quite suitable, I am happy to consider some slight changes. September has been chosen as it fits in with my work situation.

Organiser: Les Warren **Email:** warrenlb2017@outlook.com **Ph:** 027 8644937

Mid-week Walks & Tramps

We are continuing with the current format, having a walk or tramp on the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Wednesday of the month. The activities have proven to be as varied as the group is and the communication via the Mid-week W & T s Group page on WhatsApp is working well. If you would like to be part of this communication, please download WhatsApp on your phone & text your request to Isla on 021 209 6539.

Editorial

Our new venue is looking as though it will suit our needs just as well as the previous one did, so top marks to Ron *et al* who found it and organised it for us all to enjoy. Club nights are almost like your wedding day – the bells are ringing when we are arriving!

Looks mud is also the most commonly seen ground ‘cover’ on our tramps these days so don’t forget to take some clean footwear to wear in the vehicle for your trip home at the end. Perhaps leave a wet cloth to clean your legs in the vehicle too.

That said, there are some interesting adventures coming up on the programme for you over the next few months so don't let winter get in your way of enjoying them. And as a special treat try to organise yourself some time at Waikato Hut- during the week is a superb time to relax there - scenery, books, puzzles, and many short walks abound.

Next month we will be overseas so please send your bulletin contributions to John Wilson jnijnwilnz@gmail.com by the time of the next club night. Dianne June

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### *Presidential Blog*

For the first time I will be off to Wellington to the FMC meeting. Hopefully I can bring you back some interesting news. Another first was that I went to visit the Hamilton Tramping Club and was told I was the first President from the Waikato Tramping club to have gone to visit them. They are a friendly bunch and I fully recommend that you give them a visit. We have several members who belong both to the Waikato and Hamilton clubs and I fully support congenial intermixing. At the Hamilton meeting they had Megan from Backcountry Trust come and talk about their work. Last weekend I had first-hand experience of the work that they do through the Waitotara Trains track. They had gone through there and chain-sawed some really big logs, making a big difference hiking through the track. There have been windfalls since then due to a big storm going through since March but in comparison to what the Backcountry Trust had done it was no great major. We have helped with the Kaimai walk way in the past but I am going to make a suggestion that we make a different section of bush our own. Leitches clearing, there is one main track to the hut but another 3 tracks run into the hut that are in disrepair and are in danger of being closed down by DoC. This is our back yard as well. How about we make this our project? Anyone interested let me know.

Judith Bogle

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...from the Ski Club...

Early snow always stokes the fires and this month's dusting was no exception. A welcome piece of mountain news as we wait for the announcement regarding the new operator for the ski fields. The first touches of El Nino brought the early snow and we're in for a repeat as we head past King's Birthday weekend. It would be awesome to start the snow pack build super early, following the North American season which saw record snowfall and resorts running well past traditional closing dates. How good would that be?

During June the online booking system will be put back online and you'll be able to book beds for the season. The weekends 22/23 & 29/30 July, as well as 5/6 August have limited availability with the snowcraft courses in residence so you'll need to get in early for those dates. These courses are a nod to our origins and the long association we have with the local Alpine Club region. If you are interested in

extending your skills to off-piste and backcountry activities I recommend you sign up for the Tramping Club Snowcraft course which is also a good social occasion.

We will continue to provide priority weekend access to the Lodge for Ski club members over the winter time. This reflects the additional subscription charges which are paid by these members. For Tramping club members weekend bookings will be confirmed in the fortnight prior to your arrival. Charges for Tramping Club members are \$60/night, with a 2-night minimum on the weekends. Either Friday and Saturday or Saturday and Sunday. There's generally plenty of space during the week - notwithstanding when the Lodge is being used by Schools. Although we have very few weekends when the Lodge is bursting at the seams they do happen. Occasionally this will mean some juggling to get appropriate use of the single and double bunks. The only way we could avoid this would be to reduce the overall capacity and increase the cost accordingly.

If you haven't been to the Lodge previously then you are advised to do your first trip with someone who has, or on a tramping club weekend event. There is a 15-minute walk from the carpark area up to the Lodge - which sits amongst several others across Salt Ridge. This year we won't have a winter custodian with busy times being managed by an assigned Ski club member. Please assist them by helping out when asked and letting them know if there are things that need fixing or replacing or just noted for future maintenance.

The RAL Voluntary Administration continues to move slowly towards an outcome. It's been disappointing that MBIE have not been more engaging and worked towards a longer time frame to get this settled.

Unfortunately, we are seeing some fallout as ski field recruitment is described as challenging and there are now reports of resignations as a result of the uncertainty. However, good snow will offer some exciting opportunities even if some of them require a bit of uphill travel on foot. As RAL approaches the proposed Watershed meeting on the 20th June, it's become increasingly more important for all Life Pass Holders to be aware of the proxy voting options - in person venues will be in Auckland, Wellington and Whakapapa - and be ready to make use of them if you aren't going to attend in person. The RSSA (Ruapehu Skifields Stakeholder Assn) is establishing a group of proxy holders to lodge votes on behalf. It is likely the Voluntary Administrator will also offer this option. RSSA has done significant work on developing a proposal to keep the Skifields in stakeholder ownership. Although not favoured by MBIE this is the best outcome for the community and local region. As there's no info provided by MBIE or PWC for any of the other 3 bidding parties it's not possible to assess those bids. It's turned into a pretty unimpressive approach by MBIE and that seems to have extended to a lack of stakeholder consultation. More news on that at *Newsroom*. Plenty more to come in the next couple of weeks so keep an eye out. Get in touch on waiatoski@gmail.com and keep up to date via the Facebook page.

Stephen Prendergast, Ski Team Leader

Trip Reports

Trip 3063

Waitawheta Hut - the lost gaiter !

13 May

On a sparkling blue morning a mottly group of trampers left Hamilton on the way to Waitawheta Hut (with not so much as a coffee on the way.... !!!)
Set off from Franklin road car park, following the beautiful Waitawheta River. Several swing bridges on the way, when crossing, gave great views of the surrounding hills, bush and river. Traversing the river twice, everyone got wet feet.



Along th3e Waitawheta river

photo by Allan Wickens

Morning tea was enjoyed at a warm sunny ☀️ spot in the riverbed.

After arrival at the Hut and lunch, there was ample time to explore shorter tracks around the area and to check out the swimming hole, with no one brave or desperate enough to go for a swim in the chilling clear water. After dinner, lots of chatting and a restless night sleep (for some). The next morning, heading back along the river and Daly's clearing loop track, an individual lost one of their gaiters presumably in the river....or have they....???

A short stop for a well-deserved coffee and tasty food at Te Aroha, before heading home after an amazing weekend spent in the bush. Enjoyed by an awesome group of trampers (as always) and lead by Allan Wickens. Thanks Allan, a great time was had by Allan (leader), Kathy, Susanne, Kerstin, Ethen, Barbara, Sarah, Beatrix (Scribe)

Trip 3065

Kohatupiko

28 May

11 dedicated tampers showed up for the day walk on Mt. Pirongia. A meet-up began at London Street with a small incident: no drop-off for the van key at the petrol station; so two devoted drivers made this event happened.

With mist gently floating up the mountain, fresh air wrapping around the green nature, a small spring ran tinkling down the narrow stone crevices, we started from Hihikiwi track and headed up this old volcanic dome.



The 'clean' picture

photo by Allan Wickens

The unique bush captures a lot of moisture, forms a perfect rich vegetated ground for moss and fungi growth. The world tallest moss, *Dawsonia superba*, was easily identified in the bush.



The “dirtiest muddy boots” prize was launched. Judith, the club president, with two well mud-painted legs, won the best crown for the first half of the trip, followed by a group of other muddy puddlers. Zig-zag was nicely drawn by powerful jumping legs. And some swing technique was well practiced along the way. Thank God, the clear sky gave us a good opportunity to get the harbour view from the look-out.

Anyone for a mudpack?- the 'dirty' picture -
photo by Selwyn June

And after about 3 hours the whole group reached the Te Akeohikopiro peak at 869m, with a decent half an hour break, we turned back to follow the same route- having not reached our goal of the Kohatupiko peak.

Suddenly with a sound of “oopsie” Allan fell, to land on the firm ground, thereby competitively joining the “dirtiest muddy boots” candidates. With heaps of giggling and joy, this delightful tramp was completed with 6.5 hour walk, around 10km. We were blessed with a bit of drizzling raining on the way down through the bush, but the weather turned into azure blue sky to protect us on our drive safely back to Hamilton before the sunset. Those on the trip were: Judith, Sharon, Allan, Les, Ying, Kathy, Christine, Barb, Jim, Selwyn (leader), and Angie (scribe).

From the committee table:

New members: Welcome to Ross Bogle, Michael Webb, Gary McNeill, Sally Tan, Christine Curtis. Welcome back to Angie An. (*Ed comment: Has Ross decided that if he wants to see more of his wife, he'll need to join her on her jaunts with us??*)

Resignations:

Membership: The club has 185 tramping members. Those who have not responded to their membership notification will also be struck off. Your FMC cards should be available this month.

From the committee: It is a real pleasure to see our Judith Bogle elected to the FMC Executive this week. Congratulations Judith! (More work). Judith joins twelve others in the 13 person Exec which guides the development of the FMC and its advocacy efforts for those of us who love the great outdoors of New Zealand and its unique ecology. Interesting to see that Judith's vote of 85 is sixth of the fifteen nominees when Judith is a comparative newcomer to the organisation. Good to see that the new President, Megan Dimozantos (from Taupo) and Tony Walton of Auckland, along with Judith will give good voice to northern interests

From Waikato Hut: The telephone and wifi connections have been removed.

Snippets from here and there...

➤ **Pest control in the Hakarimatas.** Stevenson Aggregates Ltd (Waingaro Quarry) are going to undertake animal pest control of rats and possums into the Hakarimata reserve, covering 106.7ha. The bait types being used will be Cholecalciferol (Feracol) and Diphacinone (Ratabate & Pestoff 50D) in bait bags. The operation will run from 1st July 2023 to 30th June 2024 and warning signs will be at the southern entrance of the main Hakarimata walkway at Firewood Creek, the Christian Youth Camp track entrance at CYC camp, the entrance to rail trail on Waingaro road, and the junction of main ridge track and Waterworks track.

- **Increase to DoC hut fees.** Standard hut fees will increase from \$5 to \$10 and serviced hut fees from \$15 to \$25. This is the first adjustment to hut fees for 15 years and will take effect on 1 July. Paparoa Track Hut prices will increase to a

level similar to other popular Great Walks. Different fees for international visitors will also be applied during the summer period, which will be at a rate of 1.5 x the domestic hut fees. DoC say they are operating under increased budget pressures from rising construction and maintenance costs, reduced revenue due to the impacts of COVID-19, and extreme weather events such as Cyclone Gabrielle.

- **Te Araroa Trail: Biggest season** yet creates logistical problems for New Zealand's longest walk. Outdoor Access Commission /Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa trail manager Daniel Radford said the hospitality shown by locals was an incredible part of the trail experience, but it shouldn't be depended on. "People should be able to legally and safely camp or have accommodation offered and it needs to be there without relying on people or asking for it online." Doughty said the spaces in backcountry huts had become a "huge problem. If 12 people are in a six-bunk hut and it's snowing or pouring with rain and they get caught outside, it's not good." The options for trampers arriving at packed huts were to walk on, sleep on the hut floor, or camp outside. Radford estimated there were 3000 walkers in the present season, the biggest year yet, although this number could be even higher because not every person who walked the trail completed an online registration form. When the trail started there were only 600-700 through-walkers a year. "It wasn't sold to farmers that there was going to be 3000 walkers going through and it's having an impact on how some of them think." Radford said several access agreements had expired and the Te Araroa Trust was actively working on renewing them.

Source: NZ Herald 13 May 2023

- **Waikaremoana Great Walk closes for winter season.** *On May 16*, Te Urewera Board agreed to close the Great Walk Waikaremoana for the winter, up to September 30th, 2023. Cyclone Gabrielle impacts to whenua, structures, and systems has been extensive. The whenua suffered from Genesis Energy holding water causing extremely high lake level (130% capacity) for prolonged periods. Impacting surrounding tracks, bridges, huts, campsites, and carparks which have compromised surrounding tracks, bridges, huts, campsites and carparks. Waiopaoa Bridge damage will require engineer replacement advice. Korokoro campsite has been flooded with 700mm of water, causing sewage contamination. At Maraunui hut the lake level got to over 800mm causing vegetation to rot and exposing lake edges to complete erosion. Significant flooding at Te Karetu carpark and boatramp has moved pontoons off piles and damage to the lagarosiphon mat. The Panekire to Waiopaoa track has erosion to the steps. A number of sections of the track are impassable. Closing the Great Walk enables a full focus on repairs and recovery works currently being planned. Closure also means we can afford to complement the works with training, learning, and exposure to a wider range of works that do not arise with general maintenance.

- **Numbers in the outdoors.** Fewer New Zealanders undertook a Great Walk, went camping or stayed at a bookable hut in the summer of 2022/23 than the

previous summer, which DoC said may be the result of the extreme weather events that damaged sites and tracks, particularly across the North Island. “Many DoC tracks, facilities and sites are still closed by storm damage and flooding. In some places the damage has been significant, including some of our most popular sites like Cathedral Cove.” However, rangers reported that front-country areas such as short walks, day hikes and easily accessible huts were busier last summer than in the summer of 2021/22.

While there were fewer Kiwis on New Zealand’s 10 Great Walks last summer, numbers were up overall thanks to the return of international visitors. In total, 47,380 people went on a Great Walk last summer, an 18% increase on the previous summer. Of those, 31,880 were Kiwis and 15,500 international visitors. All South Island Great Walks bar the Heaphy Track were either at or close to capacity over the summer months. The Abel Tasman Coast Track was the busiest, with more than twice as many visitors as the other Great Walks.

Half of international visitors last summer visited one or more national parks, with Fiordland and Aoraki/Mount Cook reporting the highest levels of visitor activity, followed by Westland Tai Poutini, Arthur’s Pass and Mount Aspiring. Of the three North Island national parks, Tongariro attracted the most international visitors (11% of the total number).

Tramp like a pro this winter

This is from an open letter to our tramping Chairperson from the NZ Mountain Safety Council:

Winter tramping can offer a fresh perspective on our stunning back country. However, the season brings new challenges, so it’s important to take a cautious approach, especially during busy periods like the long weekend. King’s birthday weekend typically sees a 300 % increase in injuries and SAR for trampers. But with quality planning and preparation, we’re confident you can enjoy some epic winter experiences and make it home safe.

We’ve pulled together some hot tips and seasonal content to help you plan a safe and successful winter adventure. Have a fantastic long weekend! (*Ed comment: although this refers to Kings birthday weekend, it could easily apply to the upcoming Matariki weekend*).

7 hot tips for cool adventures

1. Factor in fewer daylight hours while planning your walking times.
2. Layer clothing to keep you from getting too sweaty or cold.
3. Charge your head torch before you leave home or pack spare batteries (they can drain quickly in the cold).
4. A double-walled drink bottle can double as a hot water bottle. Fill it with hot water, wrap it in a t-shirt, and hop in your sleeping bag.
5. Pack a closed-cell foam pad to sit on during breaks and prevent heat loss.
6. Carry extra fuel - hot liquids go a long way towards happiness.

7. Always restock hut firewood for the next party.

Common winter tramping injuries and how to avoid them

Common injuries result from slips, trips, and falls, and getting lost in the dark. The risk of hypothermia is also higher with cooler temperatures and shorter days, But quality planning can make all the difference.

How to choose the best hiking socks

Ever been overwhelmed by a mammoth sock selection in an outdoor store? You're not alone.

Materials have become very sophisticated. Sock fibres that absorb moisture are called hydrophilic (absorbent), whilst fibres repelling moisture are hydrophobic (non-absorbent). For example, cotton socks absorb moisture exceptionally well, yet sweat remains within the sock which can then become sodden, wrinkled and cause blistering. On the other hand, polypropylene is extremely hydrophobic, and repels moisture so well that moisture wicking cannot occur.

A damp or wet foot is far more prone to blistering – twice as likely in fact! Each foot can produce over 500mls of sweat during a day's tramp, so to minimise moisture accumulation on the surface of the skin, the sock needs to move this moisture away.

Breathability - the sock should also enable ventilation to keep your feet cooler and assisting evaporation. Some models have vented areas usually placed in non-weightbearing zones.

A fine balance between these two properties makes for the perfect sock material. Some sock materials like Drymax® incorporate two layers that contains a hydrophilic inner layer and hydrophobic outer layer. Very clever!

CoolMax® have four channels built into their sock fibre geometry increasing the surface area for higher sweat transfer in a capillary like action. Double layer material systems in sock design can therefore reduce blistering compared to single layer systems.

Handy tip: Socks will always require some synthetic material to give it shape and compression for a better fit. You will always see nylon, lycra, elastine, spandex, or polyester as lower percentage components of hiking socks. Without these materials, the sock won't stay in position on the foot.

The most comfortable and recommended hiking socks are however made of merino wool.

Deriving from sheep that live at altitude (i.e. a lot of moisture), merino is pretty amazing. The fine crimped fibres of merino with greater air space between each, helps to wick moisture and create a soft comfortable feel.

Wool is also anti-microbial (won't smell for a while) which is important for multi-day hikes. It is also frequently blended with hydrophilic synthetic fibres in double layer sock construction to improve its moisture wicking ability.

Don't rely on a sock for cushioning as both boot and insole should do this for you. The issue with some cushioned socks is that they can add too much bulk to your boot which can create increased foot pressure.

For some trampers lacing pressure can cause pain on the top of the foot. A sock padded in this area can be very useful. As a rule: thicker socks are probably best considered for winter use.

Tip: There is no need to wear two pairs of socks nowadays given the variety on the market. Some old timers swear by the double-sock method but this will impact boot fit.

Socks like tramping boots come down to personal preference so do experiment with different options. Some well-reviewed sock brands include: Darn Tough, Icebreaker, Smartwool, Macpac, Bridgedale.

Pack a spare pair of socks to put on when you reach your destination, and try to dry socks overnight before the next day.

Tip: Waterproof boots and gaiters can help keep your feet dryer for longer.

Take home messages

- Choose your sock before your shoe as your shoe size may be affected.
- Experiment with sock choice well in advance.
- Thicker is not necessarily better.
- Sorry folks but cheap socks are usually unreliable.
- Always take a spare pair of identical socks on your hike
- A double-layered sock is best
- If in doubt always purchase merino

Preventing and treating hypothermia

Hypothermia is when the core body temperature drops to a level where normal brain and muscle function is impaired. When the body cannot cope, it goes into survival mode, shutting down non-essential functions.

....*from the FMC website*....

- *Safety in the Mountains*.. FMC has announced that the 12th edition of this book is now available. This edition is updated to reflect tramping today and includes the latest in communications, an introduction to snow and alpine techniques, and an updated medical section informed by experts in wilderness medicine. The illustrations have also been carefully updated. Thank you to editor Robin McNeill and your team. *Safety in the Mountains* is FMC's flagship publication and was first published in 1937. It is designed to be carried in a pack, being no heavier than a block of Whittakers chocolate. The 12th edition is available from the FMC online shop or clubs can email administrator@fmc.org.nz to place an order.

- Teams of Backcountry Trust volunteers have begun to work alongside DoC to clear tracks in cyclone affected zones. (*Ed comment: some of this information may already be out of date but if you are planning to walk in these areas, this provides a handy list for checking websites for more information*). An update for affected areas:

- Kaimanawa: The Kaimanawa Forest park is open, but please take the precautions. There are large sections of windfall in the area. Backcountry Trust volunteers teams have cleared the Te Iringa track, Poronui Access track, and the first 6km of the track from Oamaru Hut to Boyd Hut.

- Kaweka: Facilities in the Kaweka Forest park are open. The Rissington Bridge is still out, and Makahu road has sustained significant damage.

- Ruahine: The Ruahine Forest park is open, but please take the precautions. There are sections of impassable windfall in the area and not all tracks have been checked yet. Backcountry Trust have scoped and flagged a new route, which starts at the helipad and is marked with a combination of red and pink flagging tape. A crew will cut and mark the track fully in the next month or two. The flagged route can be used, but be aware that for the most part, it is not a formed track. There is bush bashing involved and you do need to have the means to navigate off-track in case you lose the markings. Keep an eye on the DoC website for details.

- Northland: There have been significant landslides and erosion on coastal walks. The popular Mangawhai Cliff Walkway is closed until further notice and DoC are asking people not to attempt to do this walk.

- Auckland: The well-known Te Henga Walkway is completely inaccessible and fully closed for the foreseeable future

- Coromandel: The Cathedral Cove Walk is unsafe for visitors and has been closed, due to landslips and the ongoing risk of rockfall and erosion. DoC are asking people not to use the track to walk down to the beach and don't use a vessel to land on the beach either.

- Whirinaki, Urutawa and Waioeka: DoC have completed both front country and backcountry checks and are currently consolidating the information. Please check the DoC website for updates. Expect areas of windfall and slips.

- Raukumara: No updates currently. The area remains closed.

- Te Urewera: The Lake Waikaremoana Great Walk has been closed for the season. Sandy Bay Hut, Lou's Lookout, Hinau Track, Aniwaniwa Track and Black Beech Track are also closed. Tūhoe are asking that people delay their plans to go to Te Urewera. For updates, visit the Ngaī Tūhoe website.

➤ Did you know... the Mokai Access in Ruahine Forest Park reopened

Saturday 24th December 2022? FMC was excited to announce that the previously obstructed public access through Mokai Station to the Ruahine Forest Park has been reinstated and is available for the public to use. Access across Mokai easement and the connecting Unformed Legal Road has been impeded by the adjoining landowner for over half a decade now. It provides important access to the Western Ruahine for recreationists, hunters, and people doing conservation work.

When I was young, I was poor. But after many years hard work, I'm no longer young.

....from the DoC website....

Green mistletoe returns to Pirongia Forest Park. 2 species of tāpia/mistletoe semi-parasitic native plants are being returned to Pirongia Forest Park in Waikato. The 10-year plan to re-establish tāpia/mistletoe (*Ileostylus micranthus* and *Tupeia antarctica*) in Pirongia Forest Park has been launched with the support of local iwi, hapū, and the community.

On Saturday 13 May, members of the Pirongia Te Aroaro ō Kahu Restoration Society, Te Pahu Landcare, Waipa District Council, Pirongia Forest Park Lodge, Ngāti Hikairo and Ngāti Apakura gathered alongside DoC to mark the latest piece of work in a 22-year effort to bring native taonga species, including mistletoe, back to the maunga. Long-term pest control efforts on the maunga have made it possible. “Mistletoe is a highly desirable food for possums, and when combined with vegetation clearance, have caused the dramatic decline of these plants,” says Biodiversity Ranger Cara Hansen. “Successful pest control has made it a safe environment to bring this plant, and other species, back to the maunga.”

The intensive management of rats and possums on Pirongia has seen kōkako and the North Island robin/toutouwai reintroduced by the restoration society. Other rare plant species, such as pua ō te reinga/wood rose (*Dactylanthus taylorii*) are clawing their way back from the brink.

Opening with karakia, while a fantail/pīwakawaka weaved its way between speakers, Saturday’s event involved a ceremonial placement of mistletoe seeds on a kōhūhū (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*) host tree, followed by a hands-on workshop led by DoC staff for community groups, mana whenua and landowners to learn the translocation technique and how to help mistletoe thrive.



These tiny sticky yellow seeds are future Mistletoe plant

Mistletoe seeds used in the translocation have been sourced from populations at Maungatautari and Lake Okareka



Photos by Selwyn June

The project is part of a long-term vision for Pirongia Forest Park, one held by community groups, Waikato Regional Council and DoC for decades. (*Ed comment: Selwyn and I were participants in this event at the Pirongia forest Park Lodge.*)



It hasn't been wet every day this year!

Photo by Allan Wickens

Mistletoe flowers to watch for at the Pirongia Forest Park Lodge

Ileostylus micranthus



Tupeia antarctica



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