



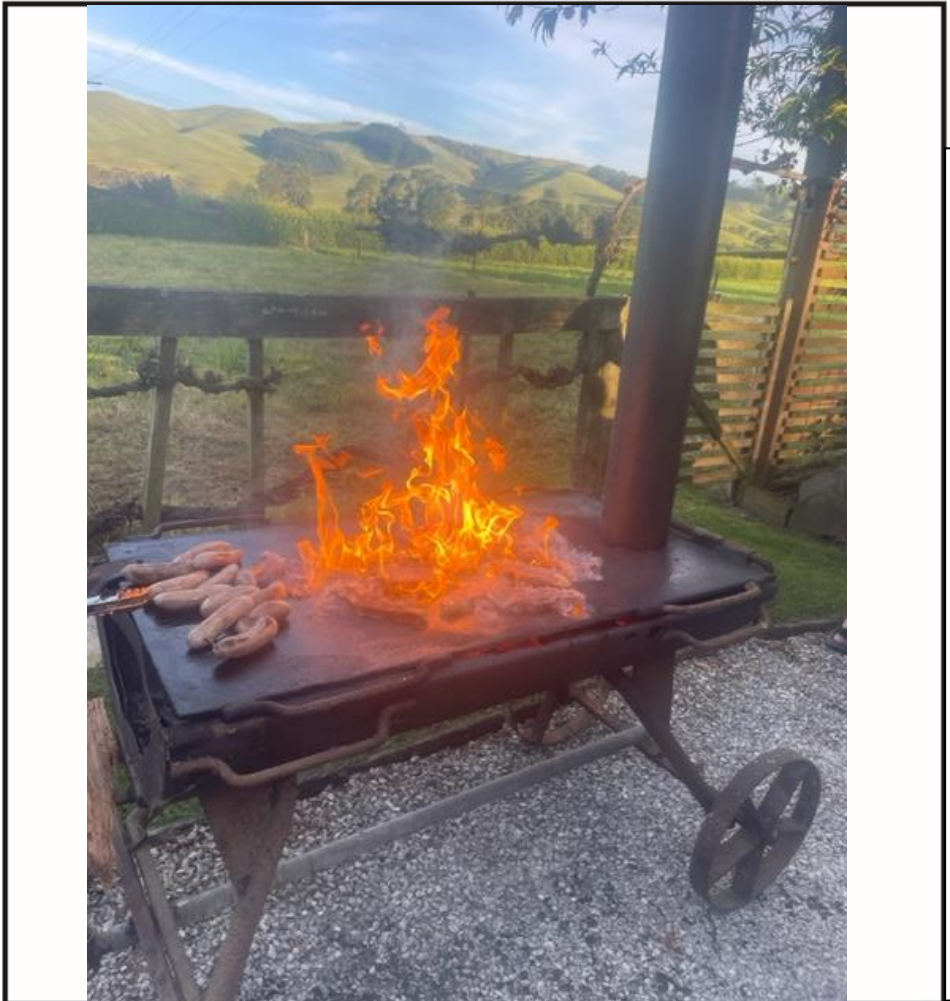
THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

February 2024



Instant BBQ at the 2023 Christmas party Photo by Peter Ayson

WAIKATO HUT

Your lodge on Mt Ruapehu
Tongariro National Park



www.wtc.org.nz



Weka looking for beetle.
Photo by David Totman

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Free to members

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

BULLETIN No 858

February 2024

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 Jacqui Dick	
	Mike Barker Selwyn June	

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### Tramping Subcommittee

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

|                         |                                                                                  |             |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Chairperson:</b>     | John McArthur <a href="mailto:mcarthur@outlook.co.nz">mcarthur@outlook.co.nz</a> | 021 2889641 |
| <b>Club Captain:</b>    | Les Warren                                                                       | 027 8644937 |
| <b>Membership:</b>      | Jocelyn Widmer                                                                   | 027 8664795 |
| <b>Member:</b>          | Selwyn June                                                                      | 027 4978151 |
|                         | Rupert Craggs                                                                    | 027 6811926 |
| <b>Transport:</b>       | Allan Wickens                                                                    | 027 9509546 |
| <b>Social convenor:</b> | 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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|                                     |                                                                    |             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Bulletin:</b>                    | Lesley Kuggeleijn                                                  | 027 4942414 |
| <b>Editor &amp; Club Librarian:</b> | Dianne June <a href="mailto:djune@xtra.co.nz">djune@xtra.co.nz</a> | 07 8433066  |

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Waikato Tramping Club account: 03 1555 0091625 02 (include the trip no.)

Club Night, Wednesday 6th March.

To be advised.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2024

3104	18 Feb	M/F	Blue Bull falls	Theresa O'Leary
3105	23 - 25 Feb	M/F	Cascade Hut	Jacqui Dick
	24 Feb – 2 Mar	M	Routeburn & Greenstone tracks	Madeleine Fiddes
3106	24 Feb – 8 Mar	E-F	Wilkin River & lakes	Lois Rowell/ Helen Mitchell
3107	25 Feb - ?	M	Paparoa Track	John Wilson
3108	3 Mar	M	Hauraki cycle trail	Mike Peck
3109	10 Mar	E/M	Waikato River trail	Les Warren
3110	10 - 15Mar	F	McArthur Craggs & onward	John McArthur
3111	17 Mar	E	Homunga bay -Waihi	Selwyn June
3112	18 - 21 Mar	M	Red Hills, Richmond range	Les Warren
3113	22 - 31 Mar	E/M	Exploring L. Tennyson & area	Les Warren
3114	23 - 24 Mar	E/M	Waikato Hut - Ruapehu	John Wilson
3115	29 Mar – 1 Apr	M	Ruahine Range, Peaks Hut & Tarns	Judith Bogle
3116	4 - 11 Apr		Northland/Te Araroa	tba
3120	25 - 28 Apr	M/F	Exploring Tongariro Nat. Park	Les Warren

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: Weekend trips depart from the Gate 1 at Waikato University. Park closer to other vehicles as this area is security monitored. Leave on Friday nights at 7pm sharp unless otherwise stated. Day trips depart from London St at the river end- park on the roadside. Leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp.

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

1) Club Captain; 2) President; 3) a 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 long-johns/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 3104

Blue Bull falls

18 Feb

In Jan 2022 a few WTC members joined John & Jean Wilson leading a venture to re-visit these falls – they had been there many years before. We loved the stream walk and having wet feet on a hot day but had to turn around before we found the falls. Let’s see if we can find them this time.

The highest waterfall in Pirongia Forest Park is in the headwaters of Blue Bull Stream. We will walk up from Kaniwhaniwha carpark. Perhaps this time we will go up the Bell Track, use compass bearings to drop down to the stream, explore & enjoy the falls, then walk out along the stream – 2 k’s approx.

Leader: Theresa O’Leary

Ph: 027 416 2633_

Grade: M/F

Email: *theresa.oleary.eme@gmail.com*

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3105

Cascade Hut

23-25 Feb

This is a classic Kaimanawa trip. We will **leave Hamilton early on Friday morning** and drive to the end of Clements Mill Road to start the tramp at the swing bridge crossing over the Hinemaiaia Stream along a gentle stroll through the forest. After approximately 50 minutes we will come to the confluence and the track takes a serious turn with a 460m climb to the highest point of the trip of 1240 meters.

Then after one more down and up we drop to the Tauranga-Taupo river cross the Cascade stream and the hut (6 bunk). Approximately 7/8 hours.

Next day we will go to the 12 bunk Oamaru Hut from the Cascade via the Kaipō Track which is approximately 18.7; km and will take 5-6 hours. Day 3 will see us

cross the Oamaru river twice and up through the forest and a gate into Poronui station. Hopefully 4 to 5 hours we will be out. I can promise you wet feet river swims and incredible scenery. Tents necessary.

Leader: Jacqui Dick

Ph: 021 1375201

Grade: M/F

Email: jacquimd@me.com

Transport: Senior member \$67

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Routeburn & Greenstone tracks

24 Feb-2 Mar

We are starting the Routeburn Track Saturday 24Feb - First night - Routeburn Falls Hut, 2nd night 25th Feb - Lake Mackenzie Hut. Walk out 26th Feb. We are planning to stay in Te Anau for 2 nights then start Greenstone Track over 3 nights and 4 days. McKellar hut to Deerstalker hut to Greenstone hut to car park.

Note: these huts require prior booking with DoC

Leader: Madeleine Fiddes

Ph: 021 2273560

Grade: M

Email: madeleine@actrix.co.nz

Transport: Private arrangements.

Trip 3106 Wilkin River-Lakes Diana, Lucidus & Castalia

24 Feb-8 Mar

Fly into Queenstown 27th and travel to Makarora for flight to Jumboland the following day. From Top Forks Hut we will explore Lakes Dianna, Lucidus and Castalia. The weather will dictate how many nights we stay at Top Forks. From there we walk back out to Kerin Forks Hut cross the river (preferably by boat) and walk to Siberia Hut. From there it is a day trip up to Lake Crucible. We expect to take the jet boat back to Makarora on the afternoon of 3rd or 4th March. All participants will need to bring a tent and sleeping mat. Possible day trips are planned for the remaining days or others can return to Queenstown.

Leaders: Lois Rowell & Helen Mitchell **Ph:** 027 288 1148 or 021 523494

Emails: loiserowell@gmail.com or hmitchie@hotmail.co.nz

Grades: E to F

Cost: Private arrangements

Trip 3107

Paparoa Track

25 Feb- ???

If you haven't already booked your accommodation, then you are too late.

Leaders: Jean & John Wilson

Ph: 021 266 8600

Ed comment: keep an ear out for SI kokako- they may have been heard in this area.

Trip 3108

Hauraki cycle trail

3 Mar

Meet in Te Aroha at the old railway station. Cycle towards Paeroa and then on towards Waihi for lunch at Falls Retreat or Waihi township. Return the same way. Distance is about 30-35km each way on mostly flat terrain. You will need a headlamp for the tunnel section in the Karangahake Gorge. It's a comfortable ride with about two hours biking each way to Falls retreat.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369256

Grade: M

Email: mikeypeck@yahoo.com

Transport: Private vehicles

Trip 3109 **Waikato River trail** **10 Mar**

We will meet at London St at 8.30am. From here we will drive to Little Waipa reserve and start our walk from here towards Arapuni. It should take us about 1.5-2 hours, where we get to enjoy the popular Rhubarb café, before returning the same way.

You are free to meet at Little Waipa Reserve if you wish.

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

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport: Carpooling in private vehicles.

Trip 3110 **McArthur Crags & onward** **10-15 Mar**

We will get to Hokitika to start us off and shuttle to the bridge across the Arahura river bright and early. From there, a 6-7 hour tramp up to the Lower Olderog Biv (2 sleeping benches, no mattresses). This is close to the bush-line, and we break up to open tops to gain the McArthur Crags, top of the McArthur Range at 1432m.

Here we have options:

a) the short traverse across Mt Kerr and down to either the West Coast Wilderness trail (cycle trail) or out north along the Wainihinihi river to the main road.

b) (preferred) so as not to waste the altitude, we would traverse the ridge to Top Olderog Biv (again just 2 berth) and on to Mt Olsen (1603m), the Tara Tama range, turn right over Dunn Saddle, Mt Edelweiss, Newton Saddle and down to Dunns Creek Hut. Then we can walk out the Taipo River to the main road, or

c) we could go up and over the Kelly Range staying at Carroll Hut (looks nice on the map). This gets us down into the Otira valley and the main road.

More planning and timing to be done, but small team and camping required.

Leader: John McArthur **Ph:** 021 2889641 **Grade:** F

Email: mcarthur@outlook.co.nz

Transport: Private arrangements

Trip 3111 **Homunga Bay to Waihi beach** **17 Mar**

From the end of Ngatitangata Road we will walk down to a beach at Homunga Bay, then along the top of coastal cliffs to Orokawa Bay where we'll have lunch under the shade of spreading pohutukawa. There are great views out to Mayor Island and White Island along the way. The last part of the walk is over the hill to Waihi Beach, with time for a swim and ice cream before heading back to Hamilton. A fairly easy 5 km walk on a good track with a few steep sections.

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

Email: selwynjune@xtra.co.nz

Transport: Senior member \$20-25 Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3112 **Red Hills, Richmond Ranges** **18 -21 Mar**

Departure and End: St Arnaud. I am treating this 4 or 5-day trip as a warm-up for my Exploring L. Tennyson Trip that will follow.

Day 1: Start walking from Six Creek Carpark to Red Hills Hut (2hrs).

Day 2: Walk to Hunters Hut via Porters Creek Hut (7hrs).

Day 3: Walk about 1km north on poled track then follow a stream up to the ridgeline near Pt 1374 OR, we can follow the poled track all the way to Pt 1374 via Mt Ellis. Then, continue along the ridgeline to Red Hill and descend to a tarn and camp for the night. If the availability of water is difficult, we may need to drop down to the upper valley of the Motueka River Right Branch to camp.

Day 4: From either camp site from last night, we make our way down the ridgeline to an area called The Plateau, and head for Red Hills Hut and possibly on to the Carpark. If the going is slow, we can use the option of staying at Red Hills Hut for the night and walking out the next morning (only 2hrs).

The attraction of the Red Hills is the “ultramafic” geology. This means there is an abundance of minerals, including iron, magnesium, copper and chrome, which give the rocks brilliant colours, particularly reds and oranges. Due to the toxic nature of the soils for tree growth, much of the area is covered in scrub and tussock.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: M

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Accommodation: Mixture of camping and huts

Transport: Private arrangements

Trip 3113

Exploring L. Tennyson & Area

22- 31 Mar

Fri 22 March: Drive from St Arnaud (I am already here for my Red Hills Trip) to Lake Tennyson via Lewis Pass and Hanmer Springs.

Sat 23 / Sun 24: Overnight trip to Princess Bath (a small alpine lake). Need to camp.

Mon 25: An easy day either relaxing or short walks.

Tue 26 / Wed 27: Overnight trip to Lake Guyon. There is a Hut here or can tent.

Thu 28: Easy day or short walks.

Fri 29 / Sat 30: Overnight trip to Severn Hut.

Sun 31 March: End of trip. I need to travel to Picton to catch the early evening ferry to Wellington.

BASE: Will look at using Lake Tennyson as a Base, which is camping only. There are toilets there. Hanmer Springs is close by and can use as buying food and visiting the hot pools when time permits and, as a back-up for accommodation if the weather is not suitable for staying at Lake Tennyson.

WEATHER: Obviously, like all trips, the weather will depend on what we end up doing. There are plenty of short walks around Hanmer Springs to do as a back-up. Those wishing to join trip at Lake Tennyson, can arrive and meet me at Hanmer Springs. Further details will be sent to those registering for this trip.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: M/F

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport: Private arrangements

Harrison Ford: Wood burns faster when you have to cut and chop it yourself.

Trip 3115**Ruahines****29 Mar-1 Apr**

First day we will travel to Hastings and stay the night, we may do a bit of a day trip on the way. Early next morning we will start at Sentry hut or depending on the size of the group stay there the night before. The first day is a 760m climb to Park Peaks hut through a beech forest. There is an outcrop halfway up with great views. Rocky knoll.

Once at the turn off we will take a detour to the right to the trig on Pohatuhaha. The views are amazing on the top here. You can see right across the Ruahines. It is steep climb so expect to be slow climb. Then will head to the left to Park Peaks hut. This is a 6 bunk hut with plenty of camping area. If we get here early or every one wants to continue we will head to the next hut along a ridge. Upper Makaroro Hut, 4 bunks and water is from the stream. The next day we will take a day trip to Totara Spur and look for the tarns. This will be another climb of 400m and a day of exploration. On the Monday we will then head back home with a steep decline. This trip does not cover great distances but the terrain is steep and rough.

Leader: Judith Bogle**Ph:** 027 3810283**Grade:** M**Email:** judith.bogle@outlook.com**Transport:** Private vehicles**Trip 3120****Exploring Tongariro National Park****25-28 Apr**

Making this weekend as a long-weekend we will be a bit more adventurous by heading off-track a few times and include some exploring of the **Te Tatau Pounamu Wilderness Area** which is not visited very often. I have some trip notes from a 2022 trip and a 2023 trip (by Auckland Tramping Club).

The main plan is the following:

Wed 24th (late-afternoon) travel to National Park or Club Lodge for the night.

Thur 25th – From Whakapapa Village, walk the track to the Tama Lakes (a good warm up before the off-track stage). Follow the Tama Lakes track towards Upper Tama Lake, then turn right and follow ridgeline below Pt 1450, to Pt 1562. Option from here is to ascend Mt Tama (1623m) before descending to the Waihohonu Stream and to Waihohonu Springs to camp for the night.

Another option: From the end of the Tama Lakes track, continue ascending the spur to Pt 1650 then descend to valley and Waihohonu Stream to our campsite.

Fri 26th – Today we head east to ridgeline in front of us and ascend to the Waihohonu – Oturere Track and follow track to Oturere Hut. From the Hut we enter the **Te Tatau Pounamu Wilderness Area** for more off-track travel and aim for the Upper valley of the Mangahouhounui Stream for tonight's campsite. We will descend down to the Oturere Stream from the Hut, cross the Stream and follow the ridgeline to a saddle just west of Pt 1673. We then follow stream to a waterfall and then sidle west a bit before heading north to find a suitable area to camp.

Sat 27th – First, we ascend north before swinging to our left to ascend Te Maari (1739m) and Rotopaunga (1856m) and onto Blue Lake.

Options: From Blue Lake we can either descend to Ketetahi Car Park OR, follow the Crossing Track to Mangatepopo Carpark (these options require a Driver to pick us up) OR, if we wish to extend this trip to four days, we could either camp / stay at Mangatepopo Hut (but, will need to book) or find a suitable camp site near water and walk back out to Whakapapa Village, thus making this trip a circuit.

When registering, please indicate whether you wish to do a 3 or 4- day trip. This will help with the planning. NOTE: This trip is also a tent-based trip and not using Huts except, maybe Mangatepopo if we head this way.

Leader: Les Warren

Phone: 027 8644937.

Grade: M/F

Email: *warrenlb2017@outlook.com*

Transport: TBC but, probably a van.

Mid-week Walks & Tramps

We have 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 is via the Mid-week W & Ts Group page on WhatsApp. If you would like to be part of this communication, please download WhatsApp on your phone and text your request to Isla on 021 209 6539.

Kayakers unite

Who is interested in kayak trips? Perhaps a bit similar to the ‘Tramping on Bikes’ trips. Some for a single day trip, some with overnight camping. Some where you might hire a kayak when we get there, many where we will each need to have one and bring it.

I am putting my hand up to be the initiator of a WhatsApp group where we could all suggest impromptu trips – i.e. ‘Looks fine this weekend, anyone keen to meet at Raglan’. I would also be ok with getting a few WTC trips underway if we have members who will benefit. I own 3 tents, small, medium and large (would fit 8+ tramping mattresses) that could become a base camp at a lake for instance.

If you are interested and would like to join in, please email me your permission *theresa.oleary.eme@gmail.com* to add you and your mobile phone number into a WhatsApp ‘WTC on water’ group and that will get us off to a beginning. And do send suggestions for trips, and how you personally might help get this group off to a great start.

Theresa O’Leary

Editorial

One of the delights of being the bulletin editor is that you get to be a vicarious tramper and have you been to some wonderful places and done amazing tramps over the summer! I would dare to say that this summer has more than made up for the previous one! Perhaps we should have a club night where all those trips are pictorially represented by participants?

Could I request that when you are sending me material, that it comes to me in word format not pdf as I have occasional problems converting it back to word for

inclusion in the bulletin, and that you send the photos as attachments, not inside your email? This would be very helpful. Thank you.
And thanks must go to the 11 of you who joined the Pirongai Restoration Societys' bait removal Feb 10-11. What a blast! With 51 people present all but 2 of the lines were emptied and we could have done them on Saturday too had I been at base at the right time to make an executive decision on amending the finish time. Have a peek in the 'Snippets section' for more info. Dianne

Presidential Blog

Hoping you all had a happy and safe Christmas. Many of you were off in the Hills and some of you are heading there now.
This year the weather has been better so let's hope it keeps going that way. There are a few projects happening this year and I hope support for the existing ones such as the Pureora baiting is kept up. Ongoing and new ones as below:

1. Track clearing again this year (Leitch's clearing), so anyone who wants to help, let me know.
2. Teresa O'Leary is looking at supporting new hikers and setting up a stock of gear, so let her know if you wish to help or contribute.
3. We are needing some IT help with webpage, facebook etc and/or someone with media communication skills.
4. We are also looking for volunteers to give a hand with some handyman work at the lodge. So if you know which is the right end of screw driver and would like to help, please let me know.

Yes, it looks like it maybe a busy year again. For those heading to hills, have fun, keep safe and hope to hear about your adventures when you get back. Judith

Trip Reports

Trip 3088 **Great Barrier Island** **20-24 Oct**

Aotea/Great Barrier Island has long been a 'must visit' destination ever since our club was formed and many a wonderful day has been spent by our members tramping, fishing and relaxing in what used to be a quite remote location. Nowadays, it is a short flight from Auckland domestic airport or a 4hour ferry ride from downtown Auckland, with variations on both forms of travel. Described as 'off the grid' due to a lack of mains electricity supply, the island residents are primarily dependent on solar and wind energy. Often however, they must resort to using diesel-powered generators. Although convenient, using such 'dirty energy' goes against the ethos of most islanders.

Some of our eventual group of 13 people made it to Aotea a day or 2 before the main group arrived on Friday, Oct 20th. This 'stretched' long weekend meant most of us had up to 5 days on the island, the minimum time needed to appreciate what it has

to offer. By late morning we had all mustered at Tryphena, where we were to stay 4 nights at the 'Stray Possum Lodge'. From there it was a short drive along Cape Barrier road to where we did our first walk. At Johnson's Bay we did a steep, 2hour walk up through regenerating bush, to a prominent lookout which had a lovely view towards the top end of the Coromandel peninsula. Kaka are prominent in this area, having recovered greatly in numbers over the last decade or so. At 'Whaler lookout' we sat on a large seat and admired the view from the southernmost tip of Aotea. Sometimes there are Bryde's whales cruising past on their way to and from the Antarctic, but not today. It rained heavily overnight but promised to clear during our next walk. Several members of the group braved the cool waters when they swam in the clear sea.

The second walk, done by 11 in the group, was along the scenic Haraotonga Coastal Walkway. This walk was delayed until mid-morning as we enjoyed watching the All Blacks win a terrific semifinal match in the Rugby World Cup against Ireland. Fortuitously, it meant the group avoided the earlier heavy rain that our companion trampers from Manukau walked in. Starting at the Haraotaonga Campsite from where the vehicle drivers Allan and Graeme left to explore the Port Fitzroy-Karaka Bay area, the main group enjoyed an easy 4hr stroll in and out of the bays that make up this walk. At Komahunga Bay some had a pleasant swim at this lovely beach and a lunch stop. Allan walked up to the lookout at the Aotea road (northern end of the walkway late afternoon when the weather was at its' best, meeting up with the others who had almost finished their walk.



2 x 4? or 4 x 2 ?

Photo by Allan Wickens

Sunday had promised to be the best day weather-wise, and it turned out to be an accurate forecast, for the longest walking day the group was planning on doing. After (again) negotiating the circuitous road from Tryphena, north to Claris and beyond, everyone started walking from Aotea road, on Palmers track towards the highest point on Aotea – Mt Hobson (627m). The large group of 10 set out first as they had a 6-8hr day ahead of them. This group went via Mt. Hobson to Mt. Heale hut, down the South Fork-Peach Tree-Tramline tracks to Kaitoke Hot springs. Allan and Nicky went to the high point and back while Graeme carried on with his driving rôle, which included fishing. The walk to Mt Hobson is wonderful, going firstly through the narrow notch at Windy Canyon, then along a 1hr ridge that undulates and is at times a bit rough (meaning no steps for a change). Regenerating bush dominates with some large trees at times near the summit. A feature is the large “*Wooden Horse*” used for kauri extraction in the 1800"s. The walk to Mount Hobson is very popular and it was quite crowded on the summit platform. This is where you get spectacular views in a 360° panorama. Later that day, both groups met up at the Kaitoke Hot Pools where most enjoyed a soak after the mildly strenuous walking they had done. Unfortunately, at this point one member was suffering from a stomach infection that slowed her and the group down considerably (the first of 2 such cases during the trip).



On the Glenfern sanctuary walk photo by Allan Wickens
Monday dawned fine again, and both vehicles made the windy trip (once more) north through Claris and on to the Karaka Bay. After a short walk, looking at the *Hillary Centre* and surroundings, we drove on the adjacent road to Port Fitzroy. The highlight of this day was walking in the enclosed *Glenfern Sanctuary*, with excellent views from

Sunset Rock, prolific birdlife, ancient puriri trees and, for most, the unexpected treetop walk into the boughs of a large kauri. Following this, we travelled to Okiwi township, where we enjoyed a pleasant walk through the Okiwi Park Path, highlighted by the work children from the adjacent school had done over the years. This place had many kingfishers (kotare) often in small flocks. The day's walking ended at Whangapoua Campsite where we did a short walk along the estuary, among sand dunes. Another member endured the last two days with similar medical problems and unfortunately was unable to participate in walking over that time.

On the final day, by which time some of the group had already returned to "the mainland", the remaining 8 people did a very pleasant walk up and over Te Ahumata Peak (398 m). After first visiting lovely Whangapapara Harbour, the easy, old mining road was taken to a junction that went a bit steeper towards the large open plateau and summit. Again, there were extensive views, this time of the central and southern parts of Aotea, towards Little Barrier Island and Coromandel. Graeme picked the group up and we all made our way to Okupu/Blind Bay, where again, some had a pleasant swim (along with an eagle ray in the shallows).

Throughout this trip, we enjoyed the cafes and well-stocked shops at Tryphena, Mulberry Beach and Claris. A particular choice for most was the Irish Bar and the large shop-restaurant at Mulberry.



The Great Barrier troupe

Photo by Allan Wickens

Fortunately, the weather-gods shone on us throughout. Locals said we arrived just after a bad weather period and after we left, *ex-tropical cyclone Lola* hit the area. Talk about lucky!

Those who enjoyed this trip were :- Allan W (leader and scribe), Julia and Graeme L (thanks again Graeme for the driving), Jim S (also a driver), Lynette M, Sarah McL, Christine C, Jeanette D, Sally T, Petrina B, David and Nicky T, and Barb C.

Funnily enough, we had a hard time spotting “hippies” (lots of abandoned vehicles though). Hopefully Aotea isn’t going the way of other over-developed islands but there are signs this may be starting. Go now before that happens!

Trip 3091

Maungatautari monitoring

12 Nov

This trip was originally meant to be to Karakariki Road. However, after John surveyed it, we concluded that it would be not much more than a 40 minute walk to a couple of nice waterfalls. We replaced it with a trip to Mount Maungatautari. As most you know, this is a sanctuary mountain that has been fenced off to keep predators and pests out and let the bird life flourish. John volunteers on a regular basis to monitor some of the lines on this mountain. To avoid his having to go back on Monday for his duties, the rest of us cheerfully submitted to being conscripted into monitoring duties for a day. Of course, John did all the work in laying out the little cardboard tubes, while the rest of us would stop and watch him approvingly. The advantage of monitoring the lines was that we got to go off the beaten track. Normally, I sedulously avoid the pink triangle signs and stay on the straight and narrow. This time, we all galumphed behind John as he led us into the bush. In terms of difficulty, this is a moderate hike and not terribly technical. If one stays along the designated paths, it would be even easier than what we did. There is just



Kiwi tracks Photo by Ramesh Subramonian

one section of about 15 minutes which might be classified as “boring” because it parallels the fence line. A herd of cows galloped up to see us. To somebody who is new to New Zealand, it was a terrifying sight. The fence, which had seemed impregnable until then, suddenly looked as flimsy as paper. We didn’t see any kiwis but we saw evidence of them. We almost stepped on a little bird who was just on the side of the trail. We picked it up and put it in the sun close by, hoping it would reunite with its’ parents.



The total distance was 12.0 km with an elevation gain of 783m. For those of you interested in getting some exercise and earning good karma, there are monitoring opportunities. John writes: If any of you are interested in doing Northern Enclosure monitoring, there is a map of the lines that are available

A life rescued Ramesh Subramonian

Lines A, B and C would be comparatively easy, Lines L and M in the East are accessed by some more difficult boundary fence walk."

Trip 3096

Mountain Madness

16 Dec

The annual Mountain Madness trip has been in the Club's calendar since 2012 and is scheduled around the longest day of the year for good reason; climbing Pirongia, Maungatautari and Te Aroha in a day takes time! It also makes sense to do Pirongia first due to the technical nature of the track, and to do Te Aroha last to make the most of the evening sunlight. We (John, Angie and Anita) set off on Pirongia's Tirohanga track shortly before 7am and caught up with Sharon and David along the way, who had started walking before us. Due to low clouds, we were not able to enjoy any views, but it made for a comfortable walking temperature. We made it to the summit together and were back at the carpark by 11:30am. Time to refuel as we made our way to Hicks Road and the Maungatautari Marae. By the time we started on our second summit for the day, at about 12:45pm, the clouds had lifted and the long walk to the bush line was hot and sweaty. Following the quad bike track to the summit, we enjoyed the bird song and the sight of many tīeke/saddlebacks. We met Sharon and David once more shortly after summiting and it would be our last encounter, as they decided the drive to Te Aroha would make it impossible to complete in daylight. They finished the madness with a climb of Te Aroha the next day. The three of us were back at the carpark shortly before 4pm, replenished calories and electrolytes and drove over to Te Aroha where we attempted the last peak for the day, setting out in the late afternoon light. On the way up, Angie decided that her madness level had been reached and let us move on to explore ours. We marched on until John declared about halfway up that he wasn't quite mad enough to continue after all. While I soldiered on to the top, just me and my head, doubts and wariness gave conviction and optimism a run for their money. It was with great elation and satisfaction that I reached the cool and windy top of the Te Aroha at

about 7:30pm. I enjoyed the views at dusk just long enough to take the all-important photo evidence. Even though the legs were tired, the fading sunlight necessitated a quick descent, and I was happy to meet up with John at the top of Bald Spur for the last section of the track. John had continued on for a bit and then made a slow retreat, kindly waiting for me to catch him up on my way down. We were back in the Te Aroha Domain at about 9:10pm, where Angie was waiting with cold cans of (alcohol free) beer. What a great way to end a very mad day! A big thanks to John for organising and for providing safe transport between the mountains.

Participants: John, Angie, Sharon, David, Anita (scribe)



The 'mad' mountaineers John, Anita, Angie, David, & Sharon

Photo by John McArthur

Trip 3099

Kaniwhaniwha & Nikau walk

14 Jan

Jacqui had this wonderful idea to combine a walk with a picnic and swim and what a better place than Kaniwhaniwha. I can describe this walk with many adjectives but not the least as thoroughly enjoyable, and I came away with a buzz. A small group met at 2pm at the carpark and a leisurely walk with lots of talk to the campground followed by the Nikau walk. Once back at the carpark Jacqui and I went for a refreshing swim while Dianne and Selwyn set up their picnic table which they had brought complete with tablecloth, and all the shared contributions were brought out. And what a banquet it was. It was a lovely day and sitting around the table partaking of the communal food with stimulating conversation in the

lovely warm sunny evening was just perfect. What a wonderful start to the tramping year.

Jacqui, John and Jean, Nette, David Silva, Dianne and Selwyn, Ron (scribe).



Picnic in the park but somewhere different this year

photo by Dianne June

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**Trip 3100: Kawhia Kayak Family Camp**

We filled 4 camping sites on the weekend of Jan 20/21/23, most arriving Friday late afternoon and some early enough for a kayak/paddleboard along the estuary shoreline. Motorhomes and tents were home for 10 adults and 4 children. Our inaugural WTC Kayak camp was definitely a success!

Participants' feedback:

Tim P: We had a lovely very early morning kayak heading north from the campsite (that was when the tide was in)

Kim P: This was the photo at Motutarakuao that could be added for the report. Also from me riding on the back of Tim's effort, would like to say how beautiful the estuary was with the hills in the background and the temptation of much more to kayak beyond the point got future trips. Fantastic company, lucking out with weather despite the forecast. Kawhia heads in the glow of gorgeous sunshine was absolutely amazing. Can we also say that gear including gazebo and fully functional cooking facilities provided a great hub for wining and dining including whiskey and licorice tasting. Thanks must go to trip organiser extraordinaire Theresa. Awesome trip!!!



Whyte family:

Eliana (4): it was so so so great. Especially the beach and the water.

Sofia (6): I did not like the bugs crawling around the tent while I was sleeping, or that I was scared of jellyfish. I liked going in the boat and watching tv and that I went in the water and the beach and it was fun.

Luke (8): It was great and I had fun, I wished the TV remote was working, I really like playing on the beach and going on the boat, and I loved playing with the toys Theresa brought with her. And I liked having sprite, chips and burgers (from the



bake house in Kawhia)

Levi (9): I didn't like the bugs and I wanted to go on the kayak more, I did like most of the weekend, the water and going on the kayak.

Matthew: Weather was better than expected, everyone liked cooking toast on the camp toaster.



Rachael: I really appreciated the resources supplied by Theresa, my highlight was probably going to ocean beach and digging for hot water.

(Please note only 1 already dead/ beached jellyfish was spotted during the weekend)

David H: It's been a place in which I have always wanted to go, but never been since it's in the middle of nowhere. Was surprised with how busy the camp ground was along with one mother that should never have been a mother with how she spoke to her children. It's a place you would go to once and never go back again. There is limited time you can use the shallow estuary for water activities due to the pull of the water and also not having water the other half of the time. Enjoyed the town to hot water beach walk on the near deserted sands, but ideally should have done it early morning. Thanks Theresa for arranging this or it would still be on me to-do list for another 20 years 🍷



Sharon S: I have never been to Kawhia before so it was lovely seeing a very quiet little township and yes I didn't realise either as to how busy the camping ground was as well.

The mother next door, who was talking to her kids in a horrible manner was not nice, having to listen to her most of the time and that she never said anything positive to any of her kids the whole weekend we were there. Felt sorry for the kids. Otherwise just a shame having to wait for the tide to come right in to actually venture out onto the estuary and have a little nosy around. But it was fun all the same, seeing the jellyfish when the tide did come in, you could also see movements near the shore line where the stingrays were getting their food, which was cool. It was a good idea having a gazebo for the meeting place for everyone to meet during the day and evenings. Lovely beach walk, just needed to be earlier in the day to avoid some of that hot heat around with that sun out. Thankyou Theresa, for a lovely weekend away, and look forward to another trip away.

Dorothy C: I came down with a cold just before the trip so was happy I booked to stay in a cabin, as the weather forecast did not look great and the trip on Friday night with the rain and clouds did not look bright. However, was surprised to get a clearing in the weather. I was really impressed with Theresa's base set up, and her light tents that accommodated a lot of the party. I loved the relaxed vibe everyone had. I enjoyed the walk from the camp to the heads and onto Ocean Beach, even enjoyed it more to see Sharon there (she had decided to drive to Ocean beach walkway entrance and check it out) but as it was so nice went swimming in her

shorts in top. I ended up joining her as the water was so inviting and there were a lot of people in the water. The rest of the walkers carried on. That excursion was enough for me and not up to kayaking round 5pm, when the tide came in. Looking at the photos taken, would love to go back and definitely give the kayaking a go, (health permitting). Loved the weekend s-cape experience, the setup was great along with the company. Everyone was so happy and friendly. Definitely will go again! Thank you Theresa for organizing this.

David S: Thank you, Theresa, for organizing this trip. It was great to meet everyone there, and definitely having a hub made a difference. This is a place I have been wanting to go to for a long time. Unfortunately I had to leave early otherwise I could have accompanied you to the hot water beach (though I went there before going home). I look forward to other adventures together.

Christina: Only able to arrive Sat arvo after baiting on Pirongia but tide was good for a 5pm paddle on the harbour. Very fortunate to get to go with Theresa and very experienced paddlers Tim and Kim, much appreciated, enjoyed it very much. The views from Kawhia Golf club up high at the back of the village are very cool, such a big effort from Theresa to ensure everyone had everything they could possibly need, thanks for a nice weekend.

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### *From the committee table:*

**New members:** We welcome Mike & Wendy Harris.

**Resignations from the tramping section:** Stephen Prendergast, Fiona Green, Leo Juby, Jodi Belbin, Rhys Jones, Kim Pickering, Brent Goodhall, Brian Kennerley, Margaret Cameron.

**Membership:** The club has 184 tramping members.

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### *Snippets*

✓ After a most enjoyable time at Judith & Ross' place for our annual Christmas function, someone took home the **wrong deck chair**. Your editor has a slightly faded navy blue one with a netting slot in one armrest for a glass. If this is yours please arrange a swap so we can give Lois back her one – which has her name on it.

✓ **Bookings for Waikato Hut.** Looking for a neat place to spend some time relaxing or doing something energetic like get fit for those South Island trips? How about considering staying at Waikato Hut? The new booking officer is Ashley Hoskin, and the Hut will be open at various times over the summer holidays.

✓ Time for the fitness programme to be stepped up a bit? The Pirongia Restoration Society will shortly be looking for volunteers to help **carry 100 stoat traps** to various points on Mt Pirongia within their pest-controlled area. If you would like to assist with this work, please contact the team leader Richard Still, [richard@stillaitken.co.nz](mailto:richard@stillaitken.co.nz) and put your name forward.

✓ If ever you have a need for some cake you should join the Pirongia Restoration Society team on their baiting weekends! The quantity of cake, sweets, fruit juice, apples and passionfruit was incredible. Bait was removed from the stations over the weekend Feb 10 & 11 by 52 volunteers! It was almost completed in a single day with just 2 lines and a few stations along the roadside left to do for Sunday morning. What started out as an overcast day with a patch of light drizzle soon became a fine and sunny day. Dave and I were waiting in beautiful cloudless sunshine for Amanda & Theresa to finish their lines at the very top of the block while those at the base had to make some quick efforts to get everything undercover from a sudden heavy deluge. By the time we 4 got back to base all was clear and sunny again so it is hard to believe that any rain fell at all 😊

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

➤ The Awarua-Waituna Wetlands near Invercargill have incredible ecological and cultural value, World Wetlands Day is celebrated each year on February 2. This year's theme – Wetlands and Human Wellbeing – highlighted the enormous benefits of wetlands, which provide water and food, support biodiversity, protect against extreme weather events, and store carbon. DoC Principal Scientist and Chair of the global science panel for the Ramsar Convention Hugh Robertson says the Awarua-Waituna Wetlands' Waituna Lagoon, which was manually opened recently to flush out the algal bloom, is a prime example of the complex challenges facing New Zealand's globally significant wetlands. "For 15 years, Waituna Lagoon and its surrounding catchment have benefitted from large-scale restoration efforts thanks to collaboration between Te Rūnanga o Awarua, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, DoC, Environment Southland, Southland District Council and Fonterra as part of Whakamana Te Waituna Trust. "Through partnership efforts, a more natural water management regime has supported the lagoon's recovery by reducing artificial drainage of freshwater. Monitoring in 2023 showed a dramatic recovery of *Ruppia* – a plant that signals a healthy lagoon," Hugh says. "However, warmer temperatures and high nutrient levels are a dangerous combination, and the lagoon remains in a vulnerable state."

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

➤ Heat detectors in huts. DoC has announced that plans to roll out heat detectors to all backcountry huts with six or more bunks have been paused pending further work on legislative requirements, practicalities, costs and user safety. FMC has been working closely with the Department on the matter and believes that under the Building Act 2004, the exemption for fire alarms in backcountry huts is still legally valid. FMC sees the proposed rollout as unnecessary and costly. It would have a negligible impact on safety and a negative impact on the "basic and wild" experience of those using the huts.



A treetop climb at the Glenfern Sanctuary on Great Barrier island

Photo by Allan Wickens

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