



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

September 2019



Liz & Mike on the way to Cascade Hut in the Kaimanawas. Photo by Jacqui Dick

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

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

BULLETIN No 809

September 2019

General Committee

(Contact details listed below)

President: Selwyn June **Secretary:** Judith Bogle **Treasurer:** Guy Domett
Members: John McArthur (VP Tramp) Stephen Prendergast (VP Ski)
Stephen Phillips Allan Wickens Russell King Stacey Thompson
Peter Lye Doug Pagel
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Tramping Subcommittee

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Editor & Club Librarian: Dianne June djune@xtra.co.nz 8433066
Waikato Tramping Club account: 03 1555 0091625 02 (include the trip no.)

Wednesday 2nd October

This is photo competition night. There are some wonderful photographers amongst you so why not put your shots forward and show us what you have seen. Check out the categories listed later in the bulletin. Our judge will be someone independent – from the Hamilton Photographic Society. Apart from the kudos received for having the best picture in the category, what you learn from the judges' comments can be put into practice when you go on Jacqui & Isla's trip to Waiorongomai on October 13th.

Venue: St Stephens Church Hall (corner of Ohaupo Road and Mahoe Street).

Time: Doors open at 7.00pm, meeting starts at 7.30pm

Cost: \$2

September club night report: Megan Balks gave us a most informative talk on soil. Her pictures and examples covered everything from the north to the south poles. She explained why some soils are different to others depending on their source – geothermal, plant-based, volcanic, water affected ones, high and low rainfall ones and many others. The audience all seemed to be most impressed with the red soils of Russia and Thailand, and while Megan's favourite included these, she continues to be impressed with the stinky guano-filled soil in penguin colonies. She even explained why the small creek in Memorial Park has a brownish hue about it on occasions – it is due to iron content being carried in the water and not pollution! A most interesting evening. Not there? – you missed a treat.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2019

2845	21/22 Sept	E/M	Rotorua walks	Allan Wickens
2846	29 Sept	E/M	Cycling in Hamilton	David Cumming
2847	5/6 Oct	E/M	New Plymouth walks	Jacqui Dick
2848	13 Oct	E/M	Photography in Waiorongomai	Jacqui Dick & Isla Trapski
2849	20 Oct	M	Tawarau Forest	Mike Peck
2850	26-28 Oct	M/F	Ruatahuna to Ruatoki	Steve Cranefield
2851	3 Nov	M	Mt. Titiraupenga	Les Warren
2852	Midweek Nov	E	Gibbs Farm & Mt. Auckland	Ray Hoare
2853	9/10 Nov	M/F	Turoa to Whakapapa by moonlight	Allan Wickens
2854	16/17 Nov	M	Mt Tarawera-pine pulling	Selwyn June
	30 Nov		Christmas Party	Stephen Prendergast

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.

DONT FORGET: You can book online from our website too. Please give your landline when making a booking.

Departure Point: Trips depart from the river end of London Street. Cars can be parked, facing the road, in the business 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.

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*Please send contributions to the editor by Friday, October 4th*

### **Trip Descriptions**

**Trip 2845**

**Rotorua Walks**

**21/22 Sept**

Having had successful trips to the Coromandel region during our "Explore Coromandel" week-ends, we now concentrate on seeing what the Rotorua area has to offer. Notable peaks to ascend are Mounts Ngongotaha (757 metres) and Rainbow Mountain (743 metres). Along with the many shorter walks available

we are also looking at doing a more challenging walk - the Mangarewa Track. This is a circuit of 9 kms taking about 5-6 hours and described as being for "experienced trampers only". Those up to the task may do this trip while others concentrate on other less arduous walks in the meantime. We will depart London Street at a slightly earlier time than normal as the day-light hours will be less at this time of year. On Saturday night we will stay in budget accommodation in Rotorua.

**Leader:** Allan Wickens **Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com* **Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior member \$45-55 Senior Non-member \$50-60

**Accommodation:** please sign on early so we can book suitable accommodation.

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**Trip 2846** **Cycling in Hamilton** **29 Sept**

This is a cycle trip with an opportunity to explore some of Hamilton's cycle paths on the western side of the city. We will meet at 9:30am at the end of Wairere Drive, where it meets Naylor St and Cambridge Rd. We will take the underpass at Cobham Drive, cycle along the Waikato River to Alma St, onto the Western Rail Trail, Kahikatea Drive, Ohaupo Rd, Dixon Rd, Peacockes Rd and return to our starting point at Wairere Dr. There will also be a coffee stop at a café. Most of this trip is on off-road shared paths, the length is 20km and the cycling time is about 2.5 hrs. There is a limit to the number of participants on this trip, so please book early.

**Leader:** David Cumming **Ph:** 8397850 **Grade:** E

**Email:** *David.cumming@xtra.co.nz*

**Transport:** Private arrangements

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**Trip 2847** **New Plymouth walks** **5/6 Oct**

**Note departure time for this trip is 6.30pm.**

On Saturday we will warm up by doing the Lake Mangamahoe circuit which is a scenic lake with awesome views of Mt Taranaki as a backdrop. Then we will head on up the mountain to do a 3hour loop walk to Maketawa Hut which also has fantastic views of the mountain and passes through a series of interesting vegetation zones including montane forest found only in the Egmont National Park.

That afternoon we will do the Te Henui River Walkway. This is a national walkway and is one of the most beautiful in New Plymouth even though it originates from a sewage pipe route! It starts at the coast and winds its way up through native and exotic flora and passing several swimming holes and historic pa sites. You never know it might be even warm enough to swim!

Sunday starts with a short steep climb/scramble up Paritutu Rock which is right on the waterfront. There are amazing views at the top. The famous Coastal Walkway is next. This is New Plymouth's award-winning track that runs along the entire length of the city. There are many points of interest along the way, such as beaches, sculptures and parks and the Waipa Lagoon. We also cross the iconic Te Rewa Rewa Bridge which beautifully frames Mt Taranaki.

There is a very nice outdoor french cafe that we pass on the way that is perfect for a coffee break! We might stop at the Three (two now) Sisters and Elephant Rock, Tongaporutu on the way home if it is low tide.

**Food:** BYO breakfasts and lunches with an optional pub meal Saturday night  
**Leader:** Jacqui Dick **Ph:** 0211375201 **Grade:** E/M  
**Email:** [jacquimd@me.com](mailto:jacquimd@me.com)

**Transport:** Senior member \$50-65 Senior Non-member \$55-70  
**Accommodation:** \$23 tent site or \$40 shared cabin per night (Belk Road Campground)

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**Trip 2848** **Photography in Waiorongomai** **13 Oct**

Let's go meandering through the Waiorongomai valley with our camera, intent on capturing images through the lens. No matter your camera, or photography experience. We can look at macro (close up) imaging; time exposures of water in motion; playing and experimenting with light when it comes to looking into dark tunnels; composition; angles and perspective (I have the May Queen incline in mind) - not necessary to climb it though! and just the delight of the flora and fauna on the track. Isla and Jacqui will be there to help or hinder! (*Ed comment: did you know that if the human eye were a digital camera it would have 576 megapixels?*).

**Leaders:** Jacqui Dick & Isla Trapski  
**Bookings to:** Jacqui **Ph:** 8252045 **Grade:** E/M  
**Email:** [jacquimd@me.com](mailto:jacquimd@me.com)  
**Transport:** Senior member \$25-30 Senior Non-member \$30-35

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**Trip 2849** **Tawarau Falls from Speedy Rd** **20 Oct**

This will be a day trip following the Mangaohae stream and Tawarau rivers, starting at Were road, and finishing on Speedies road. It does not involve too many ups and downs so would be a good option for those wanting to enjoy some wonderful geology of limestone cliffs, bird life, and plants, while breaking in new gear. This route is a former coach road, which gives you some idea of the terrain, and if you look carefully at the gateposts at the entrance to the bush you will see how the post for the gate sits in an upturned bottle to allow the gate to swing. The first part of the walk can be muddy in places so strong footwear is essential.

**Leader:** Mike Peck **Ph:** 021 369256 **Grade:** E/M  
**Email:** [Mikeypeck@yahoo.com](mailto:Mikeypeck@yahoo.com)  
**Transport:** Senior member \$50-65 Senior Non-member \$55-70

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**Trip 2850** **Whakatane river - Ruatahuna to Ruatoki** **26-28 Oct**

The plan is to leave Friday around 5.30 and stay the night at Murupara (cabins booked for 8-10 people- first in first served). We will leave early and drive to the track start at Mataatua road Ruatahuna. Day 1 is the bigger one-after a section through farmland we will reach the Whakatane river and follow the track on the true right travelling via Tawhiwhi hut (3-4 hours) and Ngahiramai huts

(1-2 hours) before crossing via a swing bridge to the true left bank then head to the Hanamahihi hut for the night (3-4 hours). On day 2 we will cross the river then go over a small saddle for a couple of hours before re-joining the river again and have lunch at Waikare Junction hut (3-4 hours) and on to Ohura hut (19 bunks) for the night (3-4 hours). Day 3 is an easier 3-4 hours out to the Ruatoki road end. We can expect to see moss laden trees that are a feature of Te Urewera and there is a very good chance of seeing whio and brown and rainbow trout in the pristine Whakatane river (bring a fly-fishing rod if you want) Tents will be a good idea in case huts are full. Please note there is at least one stream crossing so if there is heavy rain in the week before the trip an alternative route 3day trip will be decided on.

**Leader:** Steve Cranefield      **Ph:** 0274 368 216      **Grade:** F  
**Transport:** Senior member \$50-65      Senior Non-member \$55-70  
**Accommodation:** \$35/person/night

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**Trip 2851**      **Titiraupenga**      **03 Nov**

The track is well formed and marked with a lot of ascending and descending, hence a 'M' grading. There are several small streams to cross with one about 5m wide that can safely be crossed. A section of track is quite tree rooted near the top. Walking time: The DoC sign at the Carpark says it takes 4hrs to the top. When I visited the track earlier in the year, it took me 2 ¾ hours so, a round trip will be between 5-6hrs, depending on the group. The monument marking the Centre of the North Island is about half-way to Titiraupenga. Travel time to the start is a good 2hrs drive to our start point; so may need to leave earlier than 8am

**Leader:** Les Warren      **Email:** warrenlb2017@outlook.com      **Grade:** M  
**Transport:** Senior members, \$30-\$35.      Senior non-members, \$35-\$40

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**Trip 2853**      **Turoa to Whakapapa by moonlight**      **9/10 Nov**

For this week-end trip, we will travel to Ohakune Friday night and either stay at back-packer level accommodation or camp (if the weather looks good). On Saturday we head up the Turoa ski-field road to the car-park. What happens next will be very much weather dependent. If the conditions are good we plan to traverse from one ski-field to the other and may camp up high en-route. This allows for some climbing in the crater area. An (almost) full moon would make for a magic night. If we do not camp then a one-day traverse will be involved. As a back-up plan and in the event we cannot climb high, we will tramp via the round the mountain track and camp at the head of the Mangaturuturu Valley, walking out via Whakapapaiti hut to Whakapapa Village. Previous experience with ice axe and crampons is essential and participants will have to have done the basic snowcraft course as a minimum.

**Leader:** Allan Wickens      **Email:** allanwickens@hotmail.com      **Grade:** M/F  
**Transport:** Senior member \$50-65      Senior Non-member \$55-70  
**Accommodation:** tba

## South Island trips in 2020

Here it is, the list of proposed trips the club will be doing this summer / autumn in the South Island. There is some really neat stuff here, scenery you will remember for a lifetime. Full descriptions of each trip will be in next month's bulletin and on our webpage, in the meantime contact Goggle, DOC and the trip leader[s] for more information.

Where feasible start dates have been staggered to allow sufficient time to come out of one tramp then continue to the next. Please don't book airfares, accommodation etc without contacting the leader to confirm start dates.

I am also available to take any enquiries, phone Keith on 021 120 7752.

| <b>Start date</b>          | <b>days</b> | <b>grade</b> | <b>location</b>                                               | <b>leader</b>                             | <b>phone</b> |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>2nd Jan</b>             | 8 days      | F            | Lewis Pass to Lake Rotoroa via D'Urville etc,<br>Nelson Lakes | Merlyn Warren                             | 021 524 9926 |
| <b>11<sup>th</sup> Jan</b> | 3 days      | M            | Nyda Track                                                    | Merlyn Warren                             | 021 524 9926 |
| <b>11<sup>th</sup> Jan</b> | 9 days      | E/M          | Selection of 1 and 2 day walks,<br>N Canterbury               | Allan Wickens                             | 027 950 9546 |
| <b>6<sup>th</sup> Feb</b>  | 4 days      | M/F          | Training trip to Lake Colenso, NE Ruahines                    | Mike Peck                                 | 021 369 256  |
| <b>23<sup>rd</sup> Feb</b> | 10 days     | V/F          | To Olivine Ice Plateau, Mt Aspiring N P                       | Mike Peck                                 | 021 369 256  |
| <b>23<sup>rd</sup> Feb</b> | 5 days      | M/F          | Hackett to Wairoa via Mt Rintoul,<br>Range, Nelson            | Keith Robbins                             | 021 120 7752 |
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> Mar</b>  | 6 days      | F            | Leatham circuit, Molesworth                                   | Les Warren                                | 027 864 4937 |
| <b>8<sup>th</sup> Mar</b>  | 7 days      | M/F          | Cascade saddle to Lake Lochnagar loop Mt<br>Aspiring N P      | Jo Walker 027 309 7750 & John Davies      | 07 823 7388  |
| <b>15<sup>th</sup> Mar</b> | 6 days      | E/M          | Selection of 1 and 2 day walks<br>area, NW Nelson             | Sharon Sholl 021 211 0621 & Keith Robbins | 0211207752   |
| <b>22<sup>nd</sup> Mar</b> | 7 days      | E            | Selection of 1 - 3 day walks<br>Park, Lewis Pass.             | Selwyn June                               | 07 843 3066  |
| <b>31<sup>st</sup> Mar</b> | 3 Days      | M            | Hump Ridge track, Fiordland NP                                | Jacqui Dick                               | 021 137 5201 |

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### Editorial

Sometimes you look at something so often that it becomes almost meaningless – like all those darned road cones everywhere. This time I was thinking about the phrase at the end of our activity list and wondered whether we do actually follow up with those who are booked on a trip and don't turn up to the departure point and don't notify the trip leader. Our diligent treasurer tells me that if there has been no payment by those whose names appear on the trip list, then they are

sent an invoice. This could include occasions when an internet transfer has been accidentally forgotten. It is good to know that a policy the club has is being upheld. Such attention to what is most likely a minor issue goes a long way to ensuring our club is well-run and sustainable.

Ah, that word sustainable again. Recently I was talking to someone in the conservation arena and a statement they made set me to thinking – again. When we discard our biodegradable apple-cores, banana skins, citrus peel, crusts and food we don't want to eat, it can easily become food for rats, cats, possums and other unwanted pests. At this time of the year when food for these vermin is scarce, our scraps just help them to survive until our spring burst of wildlife takes hold. Then the vermin can get going again. I'll certainly be thinking twice about discarding my scraps in future. Hope you will too.

Allan Wickens commented at the September club night about troubles he encountered one Saturday morning when attempting to go up the Bruce road on Mt. Ruapehu. RAL have taken it upon themselves to close the road once all the carparks are full. Drop-offs were not permitted and this would include those wanting to get passengers and equipment to club huts for any length of stay, or those wanting to go tramping from Scoria flat for example. Parking in Whakapapa village was full and when he went to National Park to check out the Shuttle service, it seemed that only 1 bus was running, and that at the rate of 1 per hour. This is absolutely not a good look for users of the mountain – have the concessionaires got the right to rule access to the skifield? Do we, or RMCA, need to make urgent contact with DoC on this matter? If you want to go to Waikato Hut, make sure you get there on Friday evenings. You should then get a parking place too.

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Presidents' Blog

A rare fine weekend brings out hordes of skiers and sightseers onto our beloved Ruapehu. Chaos ensues: hour long queues for the new gondola, the Bruce Road closed because car parks are full, shuttle buses overloaded and infrequent, not even a chance to play with the kids in the snow on the lower slopes. Another victim of tourist overload, attracted by the gondola? As club members, of course, we are lucky to have an option of avoiding the traffic by getting up to Waikato Hut the night before. On the tramping side we see more tracks becoming Great Walks, the Hump Ridge Track beside Fiordland being the latest to go this way, or promoted around the world, as with the Pouakai Crossing in Egmont National Park. On the one hand these investments mean upgraded tracks and extra huts, but with the downside of inevitable heavy visitor use and over-crowded huts. It's good to see the new levy on overseas tourist arrivals being directed towards conservation and, hopefully, outdoor recreation facilities. Never fear, there are plenty of other places to tramp and wander. As the recent South Island trip planning session, ably led by Keith Robbins, showed, there are

enough suggestions to fill almost every week of a 3 month schedule. I mean who would have thought of Reefton as the centre for a whole week of walks and hut stays among wonderful beech forests, montane valleys, ghostly gold mining settlements and undulating alpine tops.

Selwyn June

Waikato Ski Club

Winter rates

Members nightly rates: Adults \$35, Child (0-17yrs) \$20

Non-members nightly rates: Adult \$60, Child (0-17yrs) \$35.

Mates Rates is back!

You know what to do! Contact the Booking Officer to book Mates Rates.

If it's your first time to the Hut please make sure we are aware of this as on most nights we can get someone down to the carpark to make sure you get up safely - it's not difficult but we don't want you wandering around lost at night.

It's best to check on the Ski Club website - www.waikatoskiclub.co.nz - for directions and then have a look on Google for exact location. We've added the Hut label to the map and it's waiting for Google to approve it. We're just above Te Horonuku adjacent to Tennents Valley.

..... From the Ski Committee

The winter hasn't been great but there's plenty of snow for the adventurous amongst us. Spring has been the reliable season on Ruapehu so let's hope that stays true to form. Sunny weekends will be a busy time given the conditions and the best way to counter that is a Friday night arrival. We've recently added some route poles to help with navigation and can often get someone down to guide arrivals at a reasonable hour. Keep an eye on the Ski Club Facebook for current events.

Stephen Prendergast, Ski Team Leader

Trip reports

Trip 2834

Waiotahi to Karaka track

7 July

Ed comment: not often do I get 2 trip reports for the same trip and print them but I enjoyed the humour attached to this one so I'm sharing it.

I offered to do the trip report. Then I forgot. Then I remembered. Then I forgot again. When I remembered again, I started to feel guilty. Am I getting older? Or were there just too many things happening? I know it was Selwyn leading it.

Ah now I remember!

Up the back of Thames. Up into bush - we stopped and looked over the Hauraki Gulf and the Hunuas, and later on we looked out towards the Pinnacles. Then at lunch we looked over Kaueranga Valley. A few new people - Beatrix, Dennis, and Steve (although I think Steve was returning to the club?) - they were interesting to talk to. One of our group, Steve (a vet from memory), offered to help if anyone needed first aid - however he suggested that could lead to being

euthanised! At the end of our trip we ended up at the wharf in Thames for coffee, slices, and ice-creams - yummy!

An excellent trip - a beautiful day - a short trip report due to my memory!

Trip members: Selwyn J (Trip leader); Allan W; Allan H (scribe); Pamela H; Kathy T; Les W; Dennis P; Fiona G; Steve C; Beatrix M; Marianne L; and the driver Sheryl T(?) - there's my memory again! (*Ed comment: where?*).

Trip 2842

Winter tramp

31 Aug/1 Sept

Seven of us got away at 7:30am on Saturday morning and arrived at the Clements Mill Rd carpark at about 11am, keen to see what the Hinemaiaia track in the Kaimanawa Ranges had to show. (Of course, there was a stop in Tirau at "The Baker" Cafe for a cuppa/treat.) The 12km track to Cascade Hut climbs from 750m to 1250m. It followed (and crossed) the Hinemaiaia River and climbed relatively gradually to the summit before descending steeply to the Tauranga-Taupo River. The forest was glorious - huge beach trees with gnarled trunks, lush moss and fern growth, the occasional lone purple mushroom still hanging on to impress us and at the summit, snow clad mountains such as Mt Ngauruhoe were visible.



The team of winter enthusiasts

Photo by Jacqui Dick

Once down at the T-T river, it was a short walk to the hut, unfortunately punctuated by crossing the Cascade Stream only a few hundred metres before the hut. Yes, this did mean we had to suffer in the morning putting on cold, wet socks and boots only to get them colder and wetter early in the walk out. In hindsight we agreed that simply removing our socks/boots before the river would be the way to go in winter... next time. Including stops, it took about 5 and a half hours to get to the hut.

Situated at 780m in a sheltered area, Cascade Hut has 6 bunks. There were four already staying, two of them with four legs and perhaps more excited to see us than the Sika deer they were brought in to sniff out. The hunter's dogs were very friendly, full of energy and slept on the mattresses with their owners. Mike, John and Les had brought their tents so there was no problem finding a place to sleep. climb to the summit and sun occasionally peeking through the canopy.



Cascade Hut

Photo by Jacqui Dick

At this stage most discovered they had forgotten to bring something... sticks improvised successfully as tent pegs, John wore his delightful soft slipper imitations of clogs in place of hut shoes, etc.

. Dinner was a wonderful advertisement for Radix Nutrition freeze-dried meals - a wide variety were pulled from packs and enjoyed. At a mere 8:30pm, darkness, cold night air and tired muscles pulled us to our sleeping bags for a chilly night (close to freezing) dozing off to the sound of the river, moreporks and John snoring 😊. On Sunday we hiked out via the same route in, feeling the frosty landscapes early on by the river, but warming up quickly thanks to the steep climb to the summit and sun occasionally peeking through the canopy. Thank-you Mike, it was a wonderful trip enjoyed by all: Mike P (leader), Jacqui D, Callum Mc, Les W, Merlyn W, John Mc and Liz H (scribe)

P. S. from Jacqui: Things we (collectively) forgot to take on the tramp were Hut shoes. Spare socks (I had wet ones on all weekend!), tent, Merlyn forgot: her earrings and even tent pegs (Mike improvised and used sticks).



Look how freezing this really is

Photo by Jacqui Dick



Private trip

Europe & Bali

July/August

Sometimes even the best made plans don't quite work out. This 24-day sojourn proved to be a problem at times. The trip, mostly done alone, started essentially in London, where I stocked up on guide books and maps for the European section. If you are ever in London, check out Stanfords (established 1853), an amazing bookshop in Covent Garden with branches throughout Britain. They have every possible aid to travel with a huge number of maps covering every imaginable mountain area of the world. Talk about travel heaven!

After a couple of days recovering from the long haul to London, it was off to Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia where my first mountain adventure awaited. Unfortunately, this is where the first baggage mishap occurred. With Paris and London sweltering under record summer temperatures, I had a stop-over in Paris and this is where my main bag first went missing. Actually, I have some sympathy for the poor suffering baggage handlers at Charles De Gaulle Airport - to a point. It must have been almost 50 degrees on the tarmac. On reaching Ljubljana however, I waited in forlorn hope for my bag to arrive at the carousel. No such luck, so it was off to the "Lost Property Office" and file a report.

With no boots or other outdoor gear. I had a huge and unexpected problem. I had to travel to a small town near the mountains that afternoon and start my planned two day climb of Triglav Peak early the next day. The climb was with a guide and had been pre-paid long before I left New Zealand. What to do next? Luckily, the young shuttle guy drove me around various outdoor shops

and within an hour (and added expense) I had shiny new boots, shorts and socks. The rest I could borrow off my guide. Triglav is the highest Peak in the Julian Alps, which are part of the European Alpine system. At 2864 metres, it stands above the surrounding peaks and is predominantly rock with one miniscule glacier left. To the north there is a tremendous cliff face 1000 metres high. Many Slovenians aspire to climb this peak, which is also the country's highest. Triglav means "Three Heads" and being the pre-eminent symbol of Slovenia also appears on their national flag. It was first climbed in 1778 and is situated in what is the only National Park of Slovenia.



After about 5 hours of walking up the Krma Valley in hot, fine weather, our group of 9 reached Triglavski Dom, a large hut at 2515m. Originally, we were to continue to the summit and return back to the hut the same day, but our guide changed this plan due to a possible thunderstorm. The night was then spent with about 300 other climbers, many of whom had just returned from completing the climb. After dinner we were all entertained by resident accordion and tuba players.

Via ferrata

Photo by Allan Wickens

We were awoken early and away by 4.00 am. The climb itself is mostly on a "via ferrata" of about 400 metres and starts initially up a steep rock-face. "Via ferrata" involves continuous clipping and unclipping on cables and chains using a specialised harness and shock absorbing strops and karabiners. By early dawn we were on top of the first of the two "heads" that were on this route.

We weren't alone as this was the safest and most popular route on Triglav. A narrow ridge followed and then a steep climb up to the main peak - reached after about 3 hours. On the summit there is the cylindrical small "Aljaz shelter" put there in 1895. This is another major symbol for the young nation of Slovenia. While on the summit, I was subjected to the guide's ritualistic lashing of my bottom by his climbing rope. Slightly kinky these Slovenian's! We then retraced our steps, carefully down the slopes and had a welcome beer at the hut before carrying on down to the trail-head.

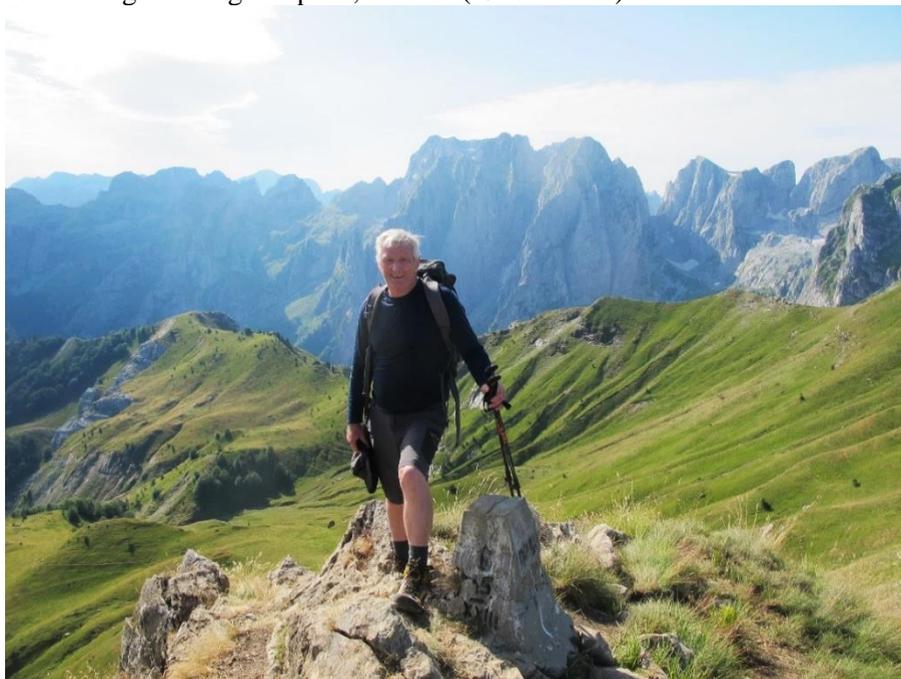
Having knocked off Slovenia's finest, it was on to Podgorica in Montenegro for their best mountains. By now I had been re-united with my bag but had the additional problem of carrying duplicate gear including boots. This time, I based myself in the small town of Gusinje for three nights, and did day walks into the nearby Prokletije Mountains. Prokletije means "Accursed Mountains" in English. This small National Park straddles the borders of Kosovo and Albania. When I arrived in Gusinje, I did not have a guide and as this area is considered the "Wild East" of Montenegro, there was a lack of information on how to obtain one. As luck would have it, the first person I enquired with at a cafe - a young woman (in desperation I have to say) just happened to have a brother who was a guide. Not bad considering there are only about 4 guides in the whole area.

The next day, Dino, my 20year old guide/Kosovo University student and I did a lovely 5 hour walk from the Grbaja Valley onto the grassy heights of Volusnica (1879 metres) and Opadija (2057 metres). Part of the walk was briefly in Albania. The scant information I had on the area recommended staying on the tracks as some land-mines from the recent civil wars still litter the area. On a glorious day we had a great view of the much larger and formidable Karanfil Peaks. That night I got very little sleep as the hotel I chose also hosted weddings - Albanians mostly with the letting loose of AK-47's during breaks from the music!

On my second day trip, Dino and I climbed the highest Peak in Montenegro called Maja Kolata (2528 metres). This included a further incursion into Albania and was done on a wet and cloudy day. The main geological feature is the karst landscape, similar to that at Takaka. This walk proved to be the most arduous of some 8 hours and involved several tricky rock sections. After doing the climb we relaxed at a high alpine "farm" and tucked into local cheese, yoghurt and beer. That night, there was another wedding with the accompanying AK-47 encores.

From Podgorica I flew to Sofia in Bulgaria, with a brief stopover in a very hot Athens airport. It was such a brief stop Aegean Airlines had to delay the next flight so 6 of us from Sofia could make the connection. I made it BUT my bag didn't. Strewth - what's the odds of that happening. Once again - off to the "Lost

Property Office". This time it initially upset my plans for the Bulgarian Mountains. I couldn't do the 2-day climb of Vihren Peak (second highest in Bulgaria) as a result. Not to worry as Sofia is a really nice place to visit and being close to the cafe scene there was plenty to see and do. Ultimately, I did climb Bulgaria's highest peak, Musala (2925 metres)- also the



Atop the Balkan slopes

Photo of Allan Wickens

highest peak in the Balkans. Again, I had nice weather, doing this touristy climb as a day hike from Sofia. Purists would say using a gondola for much of the height gain is cheating but what the heck. On such a hot day I'd have been the only one doing it this way. The gondola itself takes 25 minutes to reach the heights at the Borovets skifield.

Satisfied with my European efforts, I then flew to Dubai (that place really is on steroids!) and on to Bali. After staying at Canggu Beach for a couple of days (first Bali beach I'd seen in 6 visits!) I went with my partner Chris to Sideman, a small village surrounded by rice paddies. I'd stayed at the "Great Mountain View Lodge" when I climbed Ganung Agung in 2012 and this time we were celebrating Chris's 70th birthday. While there, I made an excursion to climb Ganung Batur -1717m. Because Agung is off limits due to volcanic activity, huge numbers are concentrated on this (now) most popular climb.

In spite of the crowds I enjoyed the climb to and around the grassy crater for the lovely sun-rise. Again - not quite as planned but satisfying nonetheless.

Bali heights

Photo by Allan Wickens

Next time I'd like to d



o the newly formed "Peaks of the Balkans" walk - 170 kilometres covering Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania. This would involve some pre-planning and a guide is a necessity. As is finding a hotel that doesn't do weddings!
Scribe & Trampler: Allan Wickens.



**Waikato Tramping Club
and
Waikato Ski Club**

Have a look at the club facebook site for more pictures and comments.

FITNESS WALK / FUN / FLAGSTAFF

These have been cancelled for the interim due to lack of participants, and travel plans of some of the stalwarts. Watch this space for news if the walk is re-commenced.

From the committee table:

New members: Nil

Resignations: Nil

Membership: We have 182 tramping members.

Have you given up your landline over the past few years or perhaps changed your email address? If so, please notify the membership officer.

From the club captain: Good news for all members and especially trip leaders! Mike at Bivouac has set up a box from which you can now pick up a tent fly, first aid kit and PLB that every trip leader should carry (if you haven't got your own). You will have to sign for whatever you take, and get it back in time for the next person to be able to use it. There are 2 sets of this gear so prompt return is expected. You do not have to be going on an organised club trip to use the equipment but the same conditions apply. Check the outside back cover of your bulletin for the Bivouac outlet address.

From the bulletin editor: It is now possible to access your FMC Backcountry bulletin from the internet. It will be made available about a month after the paper copy is issued. So, if you receive you WTC bulletin by email and would like the same for your FMC one go to:

<https://www.fmc.org.nz/backcountry/>

Snippets from here 'n there....

➤ Oliver McLeod is giving a public lecture about Mt Pirongia on Wednesday 18th September at the Te Awamutu Public Library, starting at 6.30pm. The lecture is entitled "A geological exploration of Mt Pirongia, the North Island's largest basaltic volcano." Rising far above the Hamilton lowlands, the remarkable volcanic landscape of Mount Pirongia encapsulates the cultural, ecological and geological heart of the Waikato region. Formed by a succession of eruptions beginning over 2.5 million years ago, Pirongia is a basaltic stratovolcano with a complex and long-lived history – one that is only just being discovered. In this presentation, the author will present the first geological map of Pirongia Volcano, and unravel details of the volcano's birth, growth and eventual collapse over its one-million-year active lifespan.

➤ **70th reunion.** A small team has met and discussed the plans for our reunion over the weekend of May 9th/10th next year. Our plans include a function at Waikato Hut either the following weekend or the one after. In general, it was decided that the format of previous years works well in that it allows plenty of time for chatting (the most important bit) as well as some more formal parts. Next step is securing a venue and beginning to contact past members as well as advertising. Can any of you spare some time to help search out contact details for members? This may involve a group of us spending some time at the library on a few occasions and reading the electoral rolls. And is there anyone who is very good with graphic stuff? We will need to begin advertising soon in various other club magazines, making posters, and developing registration forms etc.

➤ **Photo competition.** Our Annual competition closes this year on Sept 15th. **Entries must be supplied by the closing date in digital form.** We aligned to the FMC rules last year. This year there are some extra options on trial:

- Above bushline (with no human element)
- Above bushline (with a human element)
- Below bushline (with no human element)
- Below bushline (with a human element)
- Historic
- Native flora and fauna
- Long exposure – *Trial category for 2019.* Photography of scenes that the naked eye cannot normally comprehend. The category is intended for highly technical images of shots taken at night, (including star trails), or in extremely low light situations such as caves or canyons.
- We also have the 2 WTC categories of: **Club Character** and **International.**

FMC is introducing an annual theme to the competition, which encourages photography that documents topical places which we are fighting for, current campaigns we're battling and values under immediate threat. The theme in no way restricts entries, it merely offers a little reward for entries consistent with the theme! And this year's theme is Forgotten Lands.

➤ The Pirongia Restoration Society begin their 2019 spring pest control operation in Pureora (Okahukura valley) in September and it is heart-warming to see how many have already keenly signed up for our club trip no. 2844. The Society will be doing another follow-up trip (with smaller bags of bait) a month later on the weekend of October 12/13th. This is not an official club trip but if there are enough keen people, we can organise an informal one. Names to Dianne and Selwyn please, Ph 8433066.

..... *from the DoC website*

➤ The popular **Four Sisters Walk** in Waipoua Forest has **temporarily closed** due to the discovery of kauri dieback in the near vicinity. It's vital everyone leads by example by sticking to the track and using the available cleaning stations correctly when visiting our kauri forests. Ten tracks in the Bay of Islands have been permanently closed to prevent the spread of kauri dieback – see DoC press release for more details.

➤ **Conservation week is 14-22 September.** Luckily, we have the Pureora bait station filling weekend at the start of this. DoC Maniapoto (Te Kuiti) and Waikato have lots of events on offer.

In Te Kuiti area:

- Tuesday 17th Mangaokewa. Clean-up, weeding and night-time stream spotlighting with Te Kuiti Scouts/Maniapoto Trust Board. Good for kids.

- Saturday 21st Rat Trap building day with Mitre 10 Te Kuiti 11-1 free sausage sizzle

In the Waikato:

- Bike Ride and Weeding Event, Campground on Mt Pirongia 573/615 Limeworks Loop Rd, Pirongia, Sunday 15 September 2019 9-12:00pm. Stay for a bbq afterwards as you have earned the satisfaction of a job well done.

- Mangaonua Esplanade Silverdale, Morrinsville Road end of Silverdale Road, Hamilton. 1.30-3pm. Walk and talk in the Manga Ō branch of the Mangaonua Gully system in Silverdale, Hamilton. Park near Silverdale School or on the grass reserve near the corner of Silverdale and Morrinsville Roads. Wear walking shoes or boots.

- Bat fun day 10-1pm Sunday 22nd, Lake Domain Dr. Hamilton. Join the team from Project Echo for a fun day out to learn about our rare New Zealand long tailed bats, right here in Hamilton with NZ Batman! Take guided walks, hear bat stories, see how to build a bat house, create bat art and be inspired to help spread the message about bats in our city and rural habitats.

Nationally, go to:

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/tour/2019/conservation-week-2019> or

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/events/conservation-week/events/>

➤ \$3.9 million to maximise glacier country visitor attractions. An International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL) investment of \$3.9 million will enable the development of a suite of alternative attractions **to draw visitors to Fox Glacier/Weheka township** and surrounding area. The package of activities includes:

- Redesigning the Fox Glacier/Te Moeka o Tuawe experience and valley walks and creating a carpark and cycle/walkway for access to the south side of the valley and glacier views, and building trails to connect existing facilities
- Collaborating with Ngāi Tahu and Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio to develop a day walk to Lake Gault, with reflection views of Kā Tiritiri o te Moana and incorporating rowi kiwi and lowland forest stories. This walk extends the walking options at world-famous Lake Matheson.
- Developing and promoting Peak Viewpoint which offers stunning views of the Southern Alps/ Kā Tiritiri o te Moana
- Re-opening the coastal walkway to Galway Beach which provides a mix of alpine views, wildlife and coastal forests and wetlands
- Extending the cycle/walking trail on Cook Flat Rd from Fox Glacier/ Weheka township to Lake Matheson.

➤ **Report from Operation Tidy Fox.** Here are some snippets from Lou Sansons report on the Fox River cleanup:

On 11 August the South Westland team brought one of DoC's biggest ever volunteer responses to a close. He was able to participate in Day 46 of

Operation Tidy Fox on Friday 2 August in what was one of the most remarkable days as my time as Director-General. The CIMS structure managed 140 volunteers and 68 New Zealand Defence staff deployed to clean up the Fox River after the March major flood event. With rubbish entangled in logs and under rocks, the only way to get it out is people power! With volunteers from all over New Zealand and the world contributing over 3,000 days of clean-up work the real highlights were:

- 1000 volunteers
- More than 64km of remote South Westland beach and 21km of Fox and Cook Rivers cleaned
- The incredible relationship with New Zealand Defence
- Several Fox community restaurants all putting on \$15 volunteer meals
- 5 kms of roads constructed down the Fox River to get the volunteers on site
- Only one full day lost to bad weather over winter
- The sponsorship by Lyn River for safety vests and Mitre 10 for waste tools, and many more significant contributions
- Approximately 13,000 rubbish bags taken out to Hokitika dump
- The Ministry of Social Development committed 20 Task Force Green workers for 8 weeks.
- MFE, LINZ and DOC agreed to a co-funding model of the total \$1million cost.

➤ **Tauranga tracks open** after final upgrades for kauri dieback. DoC is re-opening the last of 10 tracks in Tauranga after successful upgrade work to help prevent the spread of kauri dieback disease. Since 2014, DoC has upgraded 76 tracks and permanently closed over 30 to protect kauri from this deadly disease. Ten tracks in Tauranga were closed between November 2018 to May this year by DoC while the work was underway to ensure the safety of the public, the kauri and the contractors. Two tracks remained closed until August for additional safety checks and the installation of brand-new cleaning stations. DoC's Tauranga Operations Manager Jeff Milham says that this is an important step in protecting the Kaimai kauri for future generations. Over 12km of track has been upgraded, including the installation of new steps, fencing, platforms, gravel and 132m of boardwalk. The work has significantly reduced wet and muddy sections of track to minimise the conditions where kauri dieback spores thrive and improved the visitor experience. The following tracks have been reopened:

- Dickey Flat – Daly Clearing Track
- Lindemann to Cashmore Clearing
- Lindemann Loop Track
- Mangakino Pack Track
- Upper Waitawheta Track

- Waipapa Track
- Waiorongomai – Low Level Track
- Wharawhara Tramway Track
- Waitengaue Stream Track
- Waitengaue to Upper Waitawheta Track.

We all now need to do the right thing and stay on track, use the cleaning stations and clean our footwear and gear before and after visiting kauri areas.

➤ Minister Sage (Minister of Conservation) and Minister Mahuta (Associate Minister for the Environment), have launched the Discussion Document for the **New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy**, Te Koiora o te Koiora. This initiated an eight-week consultation period that will run till 29 September. The strategy will set out how Aotearoa New Zealand will protect and restore nature, from our mountain tops to the ocean depths, as part of an international commitment to protect biodiversity. To find out more about how you can be involved and learn about the series of consultation events happening around the country, check out the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy page on our DoC website.

➤ A **critically endangered mohua/yellowhead population** at the head of Lake Wakatipu could face local extinction due to an expected plague of predators. A DoC operations manager says a network of more than 1,000 traps in the Caples, Dart and Routeburn valleys has been holding the line for the small but nationally-important mohua population, but with predator numbers exploding due to the huge amount of seed fall this year, more intensive protection is needed. This year our beech forests have produced extremely heavy seeding, known as a mega mast, and produced vast amounts of seed - up to 15,000 seeds per square metre. This provides a bounty of food for native insects and birds but also for rodents, whose populations can expand rapidly. When the seed runs out, they turn to our vulnerable species. In response to the mega mast DoC is planning an aerial 1080 operation this winter to control rat numbers in the valleys as part of DoC's national Tiakina ngā Manu (formerly Battle for our Birds) programme. A second operation in the summer months may also be required if rodent numbers rebound quickly due to the massive amount of food available to them.

~~~~~  
*..... from our FMC rep .....*

Hi all,

It's been another busy month for the FMC Executive, highlighted by several 'wins':

- Waitaia Bay Rd, near Whitianga was a planned forestry access road through going through DoC estate. This month it has had its 'application to construct' overturned due to the impact it will have on the area it passes

through and the views, as it follows a ridge line. The owner of this private pine forest will now have to consider other options to remove his harvest

- There's a similar appeal underway by FMC a little further north at Whangapoua, where another access road was approved in 2016, but the process may have been flawed. So now that a request has been made for an updated approval, DoC is revisiting it, with FMC leaning over their shoulder. We hope that it will be similarly rejected.

- These are just two local and quite minor examples but they show the way development can overtake our natural areas, small chunks at a time

- And on the West Coast, a 'run of river power' scheme on the Waitaha River near Hokitika has been declined by the Environment Minister, David Parker, after a hearing process that included FMC submissions. The locals are upset due to the loss of economic upsides but the outdoor recreationists, particularly kayakers, are delighted that the river will remain pure and natural

It's interesting to see the info flowing from numerous special interest groups this month including:

- The Wilding Conifer organization, part of the Ministry of Primary Industry, running a 2day Conference to build awareness and focus on Conifer reduction activity.

- Last month it was the Environment Defense society (EDS) with a 2day event in Auckland themed 'Landscapes'. They are now focusing on fresh water policy

- And if you're interested, there is a Kea Summit coming up to plan action to further measures to protect these wonderful birds. In the recent past they were shot as pests by farmers

DoC remains busy on many (every) front including:

- Reopening the last 10 tracks in the Kaimai ranges after completing improvement work intended to mitigate the spread of Kauri Dieback. They say that they have upgraded 12km of tracks up there, being part of 76 upgraded nationally although permanently closing 30.

- Planning an upgrade to some of the Mt Taranaki tracks, to create a 'Taranaki Crossing' from Dawson Falls to Mangorei Rd, as a multiday walk. This will be funded by Shane Jones' Provincial Growth Fund. FMC supports the intent but doesn't want every track up there turned into a footpath with handrails as upgrading towards Great Walk standards can do.

- Planning a review of Hut Standards and pricing nationally, which FMC will be represented on.

And FMC has special action underway in a number of areas including:

- The recent Island Hills high country station's tenure review seemed to ignore many access and conservation requirements, so a legal review of that decision has been agreed to. This will be to assess its' legality and better

understand the grounds and process by which it could be challenged and overturned

- Planning an upcoming campaign with and for all FMC members on Recreation Transition. This will cover how we can all become more sustainability aware in our tramping and travel decisions and in our everyday life, in a fun, positive, local way. More to come on that.....

So, lots to do and share. More in November. If you have any queries on any of this or would like more info, please contact me on 0274 501 530 or at [alan.grant@fmc.org.nz](mailto:alan.grant@fmc.org.nz). Have a good month out there. Alan

.....and from the FMC website.....

➤ Hump Ridge Track to be newest Great Walk. Minister of Conservation Eugenie Sage has announced the newest addition to the Great Walk network. DoC will now work with the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Trust to bring the walk up to Great Walk standard and change it from its' current 2night walk to a 3night experience. Approximately \$5m of funding is dedicated to the upgrade. The new Great Walk will be set to open in late 2022 after track upgrades are complete. FMC will keep a watchful eye to ensure the use of Port Craig Schoolhouse to the South Coast Track and beyond are not compromised, and commercial development associated with the tracks' new Great Walk status is kept in check.



Trametes versicolor fungus in Okahukura valley

Photo by Dianne June



Winter tramp (2017)

Photo by John McArthur

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