



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

December 2019



On the way to pulling pine seedlings on Mt. Tarawera Photo by Amanda Collins

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

BULLETIN No 812

December 2019

General Committee

(Contact details listed below)

President: Selwyn June **Secretary:** Judith Bogle **Treasurer:** Guy Domett
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Stephen Phillips Allan Wickens Russell King Stacey Thompson
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Tramping Subcommittee

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

Wednesday 5th February

In 2018 Michael Nightingale and Debbie Hogan became a phoenix-like party from the ashes of a proposed club trip to Kyrgystan, and wider Central Asia countries. This region is steeped in history and seen a parade of civilisation and culture. It is arguably home to the most comprehensive set of restored Muslim cultural locations particularly in the Uzbek cities of Bukarah and Samarqand. Michael will lead us through some of these areas and provide an insight into his experience of the people the culture and the landscapes.

Venue: St. Stephens Church, Mahoe St, Hamilton

Cost: \$2

Christmas Party

This was a well-supported evening at the Smith and MacKenzie establishment in Chartwell. Quite some time was allowed for social chit-chat before we sat down at several tables (after the advice from social convenor Stephen that we ‘mix ourselves up at the tables’ does that mean shaken not stirred?) and began with bread and dips, followed by some nice main course choices and dessert choices. No complaints about the food were heard. Between courses 2 & 3 were the speeches. The one everyone always eagerly awaits is the awarding of the “Tramper of the year” trophy. Jacqui, as last years’ winner, had sought some advice from other members but her final, personal, choice was our President. Seems he has had his fingers in many pies during the year and supported many activities in the conservation arena in order that we can continue to tramp in our wonderful outdoors.

The evening finished when the establishment began closing up too. Many thanks to those who organised the evening, and those who attended, and thankyou to Jacqui for ensuring our household has the ‘doorstop/umbrella stand’ back for another year.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2019

Note: There is no club night in January.

2859	21 Dec	FF	Mountain Madness	John McArthur
2860			CANCELLED	
2861	2-10 Jan	F	Lewis Pass to L. Rotoroa	Merlyn Warren
2862	11-20 Jan	M	3 Pass and Arahura R	Allan Wickens
2863	12 Jan	E/M	Te Whare Okioki	Mike Peck
2864	19 Jan	E	Waihi beach coastal walk	Club captain
2865a	25-27 Jan	M	Urewera, Waiau river	Alan Wilson
2865b	25-27 Jan	F	Junction Tops, Kaimanawa Ranges	Mike Peck

2866	2 Feb	M	Mt. Te Aroha	Allan Wickens
	5 Feb		CLUB NIGHT	Stephen Prendergast
2867	6-9 Feb	M/F	Ruahines	Allan Wickens
2869	15/16 Feb	E/M	Ruapehu Workparty	Stephen Phillips
	15-16 Feb	E/M	Trip Leaders' training course	Allan Wickens
2868	23 Feb	E/M	River crossing training	Allan Wickens
2870	23 Feb	E	Te Awa river ride	David Cumming
2871	23 Feb-4 Mar	VF	Olivine Ice plateau	Mike Peck/ John Davies
2872	23-28 Feb	M/F	Richmond Range	Keith Robbins
2873	29 Feb/ 1 Mar	M	Wairere Falls-Thompsons' track	Alan Wilson
2874	1-6 Mar	F	Leathem circuit, Molesworth	Les Warren
2875	8 Mar	E/M	Dubbo track, Karangahake	Allan Wickens
2876	7-14 Mar	M/F	Cascade Saddle to Lochnagar loop	John Davies/ Jo Walker
2877	14/15 Mar	E/M	Ruapehu weekend	Club captain

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 Rabo Bank 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 6: Bivvy Camp site to Ella Hut, Morgan Hut and if going good D'Urville Hut or camp in a good spot by the river.

Day 7: D'Urville Hut, ring the ferry and have a boat ride out to meet shuttle back to Murchison.

Leader: Merlyn Warren

Ph: 027 524 9926

Grade: F

Transport: Private arrangements and shuttle (tba)

Trip 2862

3 Pass Trip and Arahura River

11-20 Jan

Starting at Bealey, the first part of this trip involves travelling up the Waimakariri River. En-route to Carrington Hut, there are opportunities to avoid the "Waimak slog" by hugging bush areas on the true right. The plan is to take extra time by doing side-trips if time and the weather allow (with an easy peak bag or two). From Carrington it's up the White River for a bit then Taipo-iti Stream on to the first pass - Harman followed by Whitehorn Pass. If fine we may camp here and explore the area. Then it's on for the 3rd and tougher Browning Pass where one can marvel at the intended plan in the 1800's to use Browning as a "possible" main route over the Alps to the gold-fields and Hokitika. From here it's on to the upper Arahura and we follow this river for the next two days to Milltown Road and on to Hokitika. This trip would normally take 5 days but we will take an extra three to allow for weather and river conditions as well as the side trips mentioned.

Please note: Meet at Christchurch independently and then on to Bealey where we will stay at the pub back-packers (day 1). After the trip travel elsewhere from Hokitika/Greymouth (day 10).

Leader: Allan Wickens **Email:** allanwickens@hotmail.com

Grade: M

Transport: Private arrangements. **Shuttle cost:** tba. **Accommodation:** tba

Trip 2863

Te Whare Okioki

12 Jan

Come along and enjoy a lovely walk up to the newest hut on the Kaimai ranges. The club has been involved over recent years with preparing the North-South track along the top of the Kaimais and this hut forms part of the upgrade. If you talk to the leader nicely, he may even incorporate a swim at the hot pools near Matamata on the way home. Check with the trip leader for more details.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369 256

Grade: E/M

Transport: Senior member \$25-35

Senior Non-member \$30-40

Trip 2864

Homunga Bay/Waihi Beach coastal Walk

19 Jan

We start at the northern end in Homunga bay and walk through beautiful Pohutukawa forest, approaching Orokawa bay from the northern end near the William Wright Falls. It is an easy walk for every age and ability with some great views up and down the coastline, and there is a lovely sandy beach at our destination which it is not safe for swimming. The scenic reserve has numerous nikau palms, pohutukawa and puriri trees. Ice cream and a swim will be your reward back at Waihi beach.

Leader: Club captain **Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com* **Grade:** E
Transport: Senior member \$25-30 Senior Non-member \$30-35

Trip 2865a Urewera Whites' Clearing & Waiau River 25-27 Jan

On Friday evening we will travel to and camp (tent) at a DoC campsite near the Mimiha Stream which is approximately 7 kilometres before the township of Ruatāhuna. This is a long drive so it will likely be a late night. A tent is a must. Saturday morning, we cross the road and climb by way of an old logging track slowly up and through White's Clearing, eventually dropping down into the bush and the Parahaki Stream. We are now into the heart of the real Te Kuru o Te Urewera. Lunch should be somewhere near here! The rest of the afternoon will be spent following down the Parahaki Stream – lots, lots and then more stream crossings (all easy) and then at the confluence with the Wairoa Stream we will walk, maybe wade, down the Waiau Stream to central Waiau Hut (8 bunks). The Waiau Stream is much larger than the Parahaki but is wider rather than deeper. If the hut is full there is plenty of room for camping. If the stream is too full there is an undulating dry weather alternative track to the hut on the true right.



Waiau Hut

This is the classic Te Urewera trip – great bush, beautiful stream.

Leader: Alan Wilson **Ph:** 07 828 8727 **Grade:** M
Transport: Senior member \$65-80 Senior Non-member \$70-85

Trip 2865b Junction Tops, Kaimanawa Ranges 25-27 Jan

This is an alternative trip to Alan Wilson's and is aimed at providing an option for those wanting a fitter trip. The plan is to Tramp from Kiko Road end on Ngapuketarua track, then turn to the right and head to Pt 1510 Ngapuketarua. Camp somewhere around here depending on weather and water supply

On Sunday we may go further downstream to visit the Te Waiotukapiti hut or perhaps climb to the top of the fabled Blue Slips before returning to base at Central Waiau. On Monday we will retrace our Saturday's route – if there is time we may call in to check out the historic Totara Hutt (15 minutes up a side stream).

Carry on along the tops, crossing Pts 1465, 1270, 1286, through Ignimbrite Saddle and onto Pt 1374 Junction Top then drop down to Waipakihi Hut for Sunday Night. Monday head out on Umukarikari track to road end for pickup Permit required from Helisika to cross private land.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021 369 256

Grade: F

Transport: Senior member \$70-85

Senior Non-member \$75-90

Trip 2866

Tui mine to Mt. Te Aroha

2 Feb

Longer option: from Tui Mine Road to the summit then down the Te Aroha Track to the Domain.

Easy option: keeping to a lower level on the mountain from Tui Mine Road along the Tui Link and Tui Domain tracks, ending up at the Domain.

Bring togs for a hot swim to end the day.

Leader: Allan Wickens **Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com*

Grade: M

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior Non-member \$25-30

Trip 2867

Ruahines

6-9 Feb

This trip will start and end at Kashmir Road (Moorcock Saddle) on the eastern side of the Ruahine Ranges. We will travel from Hamilton to Hastings on Wednesday night (5th) and stay in a back-packers or similar (4 hours travel). On Thursday we leave the van at Kashmir Road and tramp via Longview Hut-Pohangina Saddle-Otumore and Taumatatua Peaks to Howletts Hut (via Daphne Ridge). This will be a long day that may be made shorter by camping on the tops instead of aiming for Howletts. On Day Two (Friday) we travel via the Sawtooth Ridge to Ohuinga Peak (1686 metres) and via Black Ridge to Tarn Bivvy. Day Three will be out to the Kashmir Road via Daphne Hut. On the last day we will either travel home to Hamilton or use part of the day covering ground where delays have occurred (meaning an arrival back in Hamilton Late Sunday afternoon instead). All weather and river dependent of course.

Leader: Allan Wickens **Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com*

Grade: M/F

Transport: Senior member \$85-110

Senior Non-member \$90-115

Accommodation & hut fees: tba

Trip 2868

River crossing training

23 Feb

The annual river crossing course is a popular event within the Club training roster and for good reason. After leaving Hamilton we travel to Rangitoto Station at the foot of the Pureora Range. There is an hour's walk across farmland and down a 4WD track to the upper reaches of the Waipa River. Here we practice our river crossing techniques. This includes how and where to cross a river, the pitfalls and dangers of river crossings and techniques used. We end the day practicing

the middle section with lots of tops travel and huge views. Good huts and moderate days of about 6 hours are bonuses.

Around midday on 23rd {Sunday} we will take a van from Nelson to Hackett carpark then it is a long uphill slog of about 900m to Starveall hut for the night, sorry! Next, ridgeline travel to Old Man, Mt Rintol, Tarn and Mid Wairoa huts over the next 4 days, then a final walk out to Wairoa Gorge Rd where the van will return us to Nelson around lunchtime on the 28th [Friday]. The climb to Starveall and some exposed scree sections near Mt Rintol probably makes this a med/fit trip.

Allow about \$80 for the van hire, and another \$80 for 2 nights at backpackers in Nelson, the rest of the time will be in DoC huts or tenting if you wish.

Leader: Keith Robbins **Ph:** 021 120 7752 **Grade:** M/F

Email: *kandm.robbs@gmail.com*

Transport & accommodation: as above:

Trip 2873 Kaimai – Wairere Falls – Thompson’s Track 29 Feb/1 Mar

On Saturday morning we climb to the top of Wairere Falls where we will pause to take breath and view the scene down the valley from the lookout spot. We will then carry on to the junction with the north south track from where we will travel in a northerly direction eventually dropping down to cross the Aongatete River and over the Kaimai tunnel, deep below. I hope to camp where the track crosses the Poupou Stream. Last time the club did this trip there was a fabulous campsite there which I am keen to revisit. The stream is deep enough for a swim. Remember we will be hot and sweaty as this is in mid-summer. We then carry on to the Kauritahi Stream before climbing gradually at first and there more steeply up to Point 572 above the Thompson Track Saddle. From there it is down Thompson Track all the way to where hopefully our waiting transport will be. There is no hut so a tent is a must.

Leader: Alan Wilson **Ph:** 07 828 8727 **Grade:** M

Transport: Senior member \$40-50 Senior Non-member \$45-55

Trip 2874 Leathem Molesworth circuit 1-6 Mar

Arrival at Start Point: Group to meet up in Blenheim and we travel to Molesworth Cob Cottage Campsite (Approx. 3hrs driving time). We will camp at the campsite for the night so we can get an early start time in the morning.

You need to be in Blenheim no later than 1pm on Sat. Feb 29th.

The trip will start from Molesworth Cob Cottage Campsite on Sunday 01 March and finish after walking out on the morning of Fri 06 March. We will return to Blenheim around late-afternoon. Itinerary is as follows:

Day 1 (Sun 1st) Molesworth Cob Cottage campsite to Saxton Hut via Saxton Pass (Approx. 5hrs)

Day 2 (Mon 2nd) Saxton Hut to Top Gordon Hut via Saxton Saddle (7-9hrs).

Day 3 (Tue 3rd) Top Gordon Hut to Top Leatham Hut via Bottom Gordon Hut (7-8hrs).

Day 4 (Wed 4th) Top Leatham Hut to Severn Hut via Severn Saddle (6-7hrs).

Day 5 (Thu 5th) Severn Hut to Saxton Hut via Pt 1764 (8-9hrs).

Day 6 (Fri 6th) Saxton Hut to Molesworth Cob Cottage Campsite via Saxton Pass (5hrs).

Times are based on DoC and other Blogs found on the Internet; we may take less time. Until I know how many are in the group, our mode of transport is not yet known. We will either hire a van or cars.

The grade is a 'Fit' level. However; although I am reasonably fit, the pace will not be too fast. I would like to enjoy the scenery and not bust myself. Most of this trip is exposed to the weather, so this will have a bearing on our daily progress. The leader is in the South Island between 31/12/19 and 20/01/20 on Club Trips so may not be able to respond quickly to any enquiries until back in Hamilton on the 20th. Once the group numbers come thru, I will send out more relevant details, such as costs. The only major costs for the group will be transport to and from Blenheim and Molesworth start point, and hut / campsite costs. Pre and Post- Trip costs are up to each individual.

Please register for this trip ASAP and not later than Feb 1st.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: F

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport: tba

Accommodation: depending on your own choice.

Trip 2875

Dubbo track, Karangahake gorge

8 Mar

This tramp of about 5-6 hours will encompass the best parts of the Dubbo 96 Track - an old benched track giving access to mine shafts - and a climb to the summit of Mount Karangahake. A decision will be made closer to the date on the exact route as there are variations on how to go about this walk. En-route there are lovely views from the Dubbo 96 track into the Waitawheta River and, if the weather is good, we will get a great view from the summit of Karangahake Mountain (544 metres).

Leader: Allan Wickens

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com

Grade: E/M

Transport: Senior member \$25-30

Senior Non-member \$30-35

Trip 2876

Lochnagar – Cascade Saddle Hut

7-14 Mar

Come and explore the Lochnagar/ Cascade Saddle alpine area for 7 and half days in the Mount Aspiring National Park and the Richardson Mountains. Visit the Cascade Saddle, the Dart, Whitbourn and Tyrell Glaciers, the Dart River, as well as the pristine Lochnagar (lake of goats), Shotover Saddle and the beautiful West Matukituki valley.

We will travel on a mix of marked and unmarked routes, go over 5 saddles/ passes, swim in an alpine lake, camp out on high altitude saddles (weather permitting), drop our pack and climb peaks, test our fitness and navigational skills and create memories to retell around the camp fire. Oh, and as JD is involved, the possibility of a helicopter ride always exists.

Leaders: Jo Walker

Ph: 027 309 7750

Grade: M/F

Trip 2882

Hump Ridge Track

31 Mar-3 Apr

This is a 3-day trip, walking 20km per day. We pass through diverse and stunning scenery from sub alpine wilderness to sea level tracks.

Day one involves a climb of 1000m up to Okaka Lodge. Day two traverses the tops then drops down to Port Craig Lodge by the coast. Day three follows the coastline back to our starting point.

Highlights of the walk will hopefully include being in the Fiordland National Park, spectacular views, walking through beech/podocarp forest, the Edwin Burn Viaduct, Hector Dolphin sightings, amazing bird life, having an invigorating swim in the Southern Ocean, evening entertainment at the lodges supplied by the Keas, hot showers in the evening and a glass of wine at the end of the day with great company! This walk is going to be NZ's next Great Walk so it will be good to do it before it gets too popular.

Check out the Hump ridge track website for more information.

Leader: Jacqui Dick

Ph: 021 1375201

Grade: M

Email: jacquimd@me.com

Transport & Accommodation: private arrangements

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### Editorial

This was going to be a very brief editorial but then I came across the following: "You learn that without your family and friends, it's harder to reach the summits you are eyeing. They are your guides, your ice pick, your rope. And if you do clamber up, they plant the flag and celebrate with you ..... Evidence shows that helping others is actually beneficial for your own mental health. It can help reduce stress, improve your emotional wellbeing, and even benefit your physical health". (quote from Kevin Norquay).

For the first part of this quote I can only see the looks of those faces at the top of Paratutu on the recent New Plymouth trip as my face appeared over the brim – priceless – and they helped me celebrate the achievement too. Thanks for sticking around team and making the appropriate 'documentation' as proof.

The second part of the quote is what this club is all about – helping each other to get somewhere and getting pleasure from doing it together. This was reflected at the Christmas party when our President was awarded the 'Tramper of the Year' trophy. Now that much of what we get ourselves into in the environment starts to ease back a bit for the summer, I hope you get enough opportunities to focus less on the commitment aspect of being with others, and more on the joy of getting together, or even doing something for yourself at your leisure.

All the best for a happy time with family and friends. Please travel safely, sober and enjoy the ride 'cos we want you back with us next year.

### Presidents' Blog

As the year winds down, let's take a look at the club's activities over the past 12 months. In both the skiing and tramping camps it has been business as usual,

with lots of interesting and well attended trips and club nights, popular training courses and another 'plenty of snow / but not so good weather' - ski season. Waikato Hut continues to cater for members, newcomers and school groups who can enjoy time out at a peaceful location in a well-maintained building. I would like to thank all who contribute to the club, particularly the committee members who work hard on the day to day running of our activities, but also to everyone for keeping the friendly and supportive culture of the club alive. Merry Christmas, have a great holiday and keep in shape for those more strenuous summer tramps. As one of the oldest clubs in NZ we look forward to a reunion and celebration of 70 years in May. Selwyn June  
*(Ed comment: aka Trumper of the Year)*

~~~~~  
..... from the ski Club.....

It's Summer and there's still upper mountain snow. The Gondola will be running up to The Knoll Ridge Cafe during the summer season for those who haven't had a chance to jump on board. We also have plenty of good mountain days in the summer for walking and sightseeing -including a wander up to the Crater Lake for the adventurous. We're on summer rates through to 1 June so it's a great time to get to Waikato Hut. Longer daylight and fine weather provides plenty of great days around the region.

We have our first working party 15/16 February next year. We'll be getting our first load of firewood up to the Lodge. It's a great fun experience with a fantastic social evening on Saturday night. We'll supply the beds and food for the weekend so you'll just need to bring your favourite drink and be prepared to help carry up the wood loads. A task best suited to a sturdy pack and strong boots with the scoria well and truly exposed. Our second working party is 7/8 March here we'll be doing as much of the maintenance for the winter ahead. Both these weekends are a good opportunity for trampers and skiers to work alongside each other to keep our mountain accommodation in good condition and ready for use for the foreseeable future. To register or for any questions send an email to waikatoski@gmail.com

Finally, from all of us we wish you a Merry Xmas and relaxing New Year. Look forward to seeing you at the working party weekends.

Stephen Prendergast, Ski Team Leader

Trip reports

The following is not strictly a trip report and was meant to be in last month's bulletin to coincide with the a trip our club captain made there recently. My apologies to Allan for running out of space to include it last month.

"Powell - a tale of four huts and their interesting background".

Situated at 1200 metres, on the bush-line of Mount Holdsworth in the Tararua Ranges, is the site where four huts have stood for 80 years. As each hut reached

old age, or became unsuited for the task, they have been quickly re-built. On average they have 3000 bed-nights throughout the year. Because the site is readily accessible from the Holdsworth Road end the huts have proven to be the most popular in the Tararuas.

Hut number one

Prior to the first Powell Hut, there was a simple shelter half-way up Mount Holdsworth called Mountain House. The first was built in 1907 by the Holdsworth Track Committee and was rather primitive until a more solid structure was built in 1952. Meanwhile, those in the Hutt Valley Tramping Club who wanted to ski, chose to build the first Powell Hut in 1939. It was named after a prominent member of the HVTC and cost 260 Pounds to build. I first visited this hut in about 1965 when I was 15. As I recall the weather was too severe to attempt going to the top. I made subsequent visits during 1968-69 with the Wairarapa College Tramping Club. Rumours of a "ghost" called Cedric were rife at the time - based on a hunter called Cedric Wilson who went missing nearby in 1945. During the 50's a wag in the HVTC called Don Millward dressed up in a sleeping bag liner and spooked a group of scouts in the fog, hence the legend that grew.

In July of 1969 I went with the school Search and Rescue group on a reconnaissance of tracks leading up to Powell, looking for a lost tramp. Lester Tweeddale, a young policeman had gone to the summit for the day in an endeavour to increase his fitness and suitability to get into the Police SAR squad. Unfortunately for Lester, he chose an absolutely atrocious day to do the tramp and he subsequently died in the blizzard we had to search in. Our group was led by John Welch, a well-known Tararua identity at the time. John had his small fox terrier with him and it was alerted to sounds blowing with the snow into our faces on High Ridge at about mid-night. Later we surmised it may have been Lester calling for help. We went to sleep that night, just the four of us in the hut, absolutely exhausted. Next day we awoke to a hut filled with searchers, maps, provisions and food. We then carried on down a heavily snow-laden High Ridge to Totara Flats before heading back to school on Monday. The search carried on in extremely bad weather for another week with no luck. Alpine cliff rescue groups checked most of the steeper areas. Finally, during the second search over the following Labour Day long week-end, we managed to find Lester's body in the final hours of the search time that was allocated. I assisted in carrying the body from below Isabelle Falls, up onto High Ridge and the waiting helicopter. The original Powell Hut wasn't really all that comfortable and had no mattresses or heating in it's early years. I likened it to sleeping in a fridge on a rock-hard ground. So it was with no great concern that I heard it would be replaced by a new hut. Early in 1981 while at home in Masterton I witnessed a large fire at the hut site. The hut had been demolished and the remains were burnt on the spot.

Hut number two

The second hut was a Lockwood affair and was built as a combined HVTC and NZFS venture, costing \$34,000. I first visited this hut in the winter of 1981 when I did a solo attempt at the summit of Holdsworth in extremely strong winds and white-out conditions. I turned around at a point where Lester Tweeddale would have gone wrong on his descent in 1969. Luckily the track was better marked with a prominent sign-post pointing the way to the hut. In September of 1983 I had a very eventful visit to the hut, this time by helicopter while searching for a missing priest and solo trumper, Father Fitzgibbon of Carterton. It took several goes for the chopper to land by the hut in an extreme nor-wester and even the pilot's assistant was air-sick in the process. Hut Two lasted until 1999 when it mysteriously burnt down. This was at the time a 31 year old drug dealer was found murdered by Powell Hut. His body had lain near the long drop for two months before being found. The suspect, an accomplice, was charged with his murder but managed to get off the charge. The defence involved their dealings with both South African and Russian drug mafia and the implication that the offender had been "set-up".

Hut number three

The third hut was built by DoC at a cost of \$150,000 and involved 85 helicopter trips with materials. From the outset, the hut was beset by weather tightness, causing the structure to be weakened by the often-heavy snow and up to 180 kph nor-westers. In November 2018 this hut was closed and later demolished.



Photos by Allan Wickens

Hut number four

The latest hut, holding 28 people, was completed and opened in July 2019, at a cost of almost \$1,000,000. It has an expansive deck, taking in the wonderful panorama of the Wairarapa valley, plus heating and has solar-powered lighting.

I visited this hut in the last school holidays and had the whole place to myself. Not only that but about 15 centimetres of snow fell while I was there, making for a lovely visit. On arrival at the hut I went to the summit in very still conditions but with limited visibility. Normally on a clear day you can see Ruapehu, Taranaki and the Kaikouras.



For those of you who are down Wairarapa way, I recommend the walk to Powell and a climb to the summit if the weather is suitable. It takes about 3 hours to get to Powell and a further 45 minutes to the top. Mountain House is simply a day shelter although you could easily sleep in it if you prefer.

~~~~~  
**Fitness walks in Flagstaff are starting up again in FEBRUARY**

Every Tuesday morning we meet at Flagstaff Shopping Centre ready for a 7.30 start. We head north into the new subdivisions using the extensive pathways along the gully systems. Pace is fast but not so fast that you can't discuss the week's events. One hour later we're back near the start and toilets. If you need to get away, now's your chance. Usually we walk for another hour and return to the carpark by 9.30am. No need to book, just turn up, but if it's your first time please phone Colin on 849 4420 the night before so we know you are coming.



**Waikato Tramping Club  
and  
Waikato Ski Club**

Have a look at the club facebook site for more pictures and comments.  
Have a look for our 70<sup>th</sup> reunion information here too!

~~~~~


Obituary

Tim Foster

It is with sorrow that we note Tim's passing on the 22nd November, aged 70 years. Tim joined the club in 1990 and was active through the nineties. By 1991 he was on the committee and by 1992 he was convenor of the Waitengaue Hut Maintenance Sub-committee. He enjoyed looking after Waitengaue, sometimes visiting on his own to attend to some small job. For two years he edited the bulletin, which was a bit of a mission because he didn't have some of the modern computer assistance which was becoming available. Later he was social convenor.

Tim went on lots of tramps and lead several. This was recognised in 1993 with him receiving the Trampler of the Year trophy. Tim was quietly spoken but thoughtful and was very devoted to his family. He looked like a 60s hippy and retained this look to the end. Our sympathy to his family.

John Wilson

From the committee table:

New members: Welcome back to Susanne Henley-smith

Resignations: David Ray.

Membership: We have 182 tramping members.

From the Tramping chairman and Club captain: Over the weekend of 15/16 February we will be organising a trip leaders training course. Many aspects of leading trips will be covered which will hopefully help you with your inspiration and desire to become a trip leader. It may even assist you when you are out on privately organised trips! Watch for more details in the January newsletter.

~~~~~ *Snippets from here 'n there*

➤ **70th reunion.** The venues have been booked and the date set May 16/17th, 2020 at Zenders Café, so it's time to put the date in your diary. On the Sunday there will be an option to have morning tea at the Hardy Centre in Hamilton Gardens and walk around the Gardens at your leisure, or participate in a tramp somewhere – where exactly is yet to be decided. Allan Hughes is busy interviewing people and shoulder-tapping others for articles for the reunion booklet. If you can remember a significant incident or tramp and put it on paper, please send it to Allan, email 54days@gmail.com, phone 027 757 7109, or provide me with the names of others and their contact details if you think they might have some interesting facts.. Happy hunting for our club's past, present, and future!

Allan Hughes

We are just about ready to begin searching the electoral rolls to confirm past members' addresses and phone numbers. If you are available to help with this

searching on any day of the week please get back to Dianne (contact details on the front page). The electoral rolls are available only at the Central Hamilton library during their usual business hours and there is space for us to work as a group as opposed to going to the electoral office. It will also be a good time for a social get together so come along and enjoy some good companionship while we work.



Amanda lost her walking poles. Soon after Selwyn gave her some bean seeds to plant and look what has happened. As Dave W has cleverly deduced – she has grown some bean poles!
Well done Amanda,

➤ Watch out for Project Tongariro's Summer programme in the National Park. There is nothing on the website yet but hopefully there will be something to tell you about in the next bulletin. One activity for sure will be the kite flying day on Jan 1st (contingency day Jan 2nd). Weather permitting or course.

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

• **DoC launches new warnings on Tongariro Alpine Crossing**
"STOP: Hiking the Tongariro Alpine Crossing is NOT RECOMMENDED TODAY". That's the sign that will greet anyone trying to tramp the Tongariro Crossing in bad weather this summer. DoC will display the warnings on the roads leading to the crossing, at the start and end of the track, and before the Devil's Staircase. There will also be rangers telling trampers in person to turn back.

How the advisories will work The bad weather advisories will be triggered when wind chill reaches minus 10 degrees or colder on a fine day; 0 degrees or less when there's any rain or snow; if a severe weather warning has been issued for the national park; when wind speeds reach above 65 kilometres an hour or

above 50 kilometres an hour when more than 10 millimetres of rain is predicted during a six-hour period.

Each year, about 140,000 people walk the challenging 19.4 km day hike.

- Have a look at Project Tongariro's website for their summer programme in the Tongariro National Park. Kite flying on the golf Course in front of the Chateau on New Years' day is always a colourful event to be part of.

~~~~~

... *And from our FMC representative...*

*Ed. Comment: Sincere apologies to Alan for forgetting to include his missive last month.*

Hi all,

The FMC national Executive met in Wellington last month, one of our three face to face meetings held each year, with 16 Exec members and 3 staff attending. It was full day and concluded with a casual BBQ dinner where we presented Shaun Barnett with a gift for his 10 years spent as Editor of FMC's quarterly publication, Backcountry. I have read about Shaun's tramping exploits, seen his photos, and enjoyed his books for about 15 years so it was great to meet him. The President of NZ Deerstalkers Association Trevor Chappell from Te Awamutu joined us as did Peter Laurensen, the new editor of Backcountry. Of the Exec, there are 8 from the South Island including President Jan Finlayson from Geraldine and VP Tania Seward from Christchurch, 7 from Wellington and Palmerston area and only me from north of Palmy. So, it's great that at least someone is living 'local' and representing 60% of the population living in the north.

**Updates** were provided at the meeting on:

- The review of hut and campsite fees on popular Great Walk and second tier walks (like Young Wilken) has progressed with DOC proposing new fees effective from 2020/21 season onwards, i.e. next spring. The review was driven by inconsistencies, a need for some CPI related increases and heavy demand in some areas. Changes proposed range from +54% on Rakiura Stewart Island huts through to a 24% decrease on Heaphy's winter hut fees. I have more info if you are interested and no doubt the DOC website will be updated soon
- Our internal review of the FMC Travel Club is nearly completed with recommendations to be shared shortly.

**More recent news** has included

- Opportunities to access the northern Kaimanawas have been helped by the Heliseka business securing a lease on the Needle Block in 2018. They are now able to provide access permission.
- Bunk nights in the Moonlight Tops hut on the new Paparoa Great Walk are getting scarce even before it opens on 1<sup>st</sup> December. It is a combined tramping and biking track and many of the bikers are making only one stop at Moonlight,

using bunk space there, but leaving spaces in the other two huts. So book early to secure a bed in Moonlight.

- I've recently been to Auckland and met with Auckland Council officers to get an update on their action to counter the impact of Kauri Dieback in their Regional parks, hoping to hear that they can avoid a big number of longterm track closures

- There's a new walk to be enjoyed around Pukekohe township. Called the Five Summits walk and cycle trail, it takes in the local high spots in 21km of track and road walking. It opened on Sunday 11 November as part of the Pukekohe TC's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

**Recreation Transition**, is a new campaign being planned by FMC trying to help our trampers members lower their carbon footprint, in positive ways while we enjoy the hills. Some interesting info that came to light says that the carbon footprint of a hard copy issue of Backcountry magazine is 2g of CO<sub>2</sub>. While apparently a soft copy, with all the energy used to power that the internet uses, is 50g! Quite contrary to my expectation.

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). There will be more to share next month. Alan

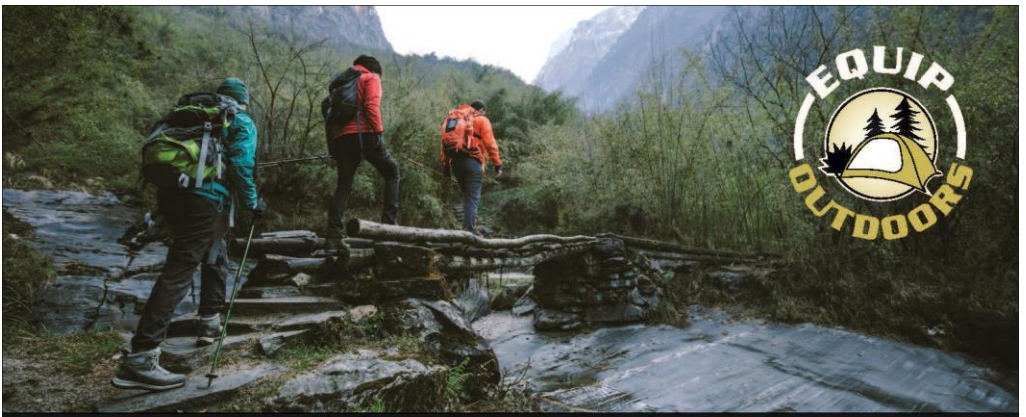
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There are 2 kinds of shortcuts- 1 that gets you home and 1 that gets you in to trouble!

~~~~~



*Have a safe and happy festive season*



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