



# THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

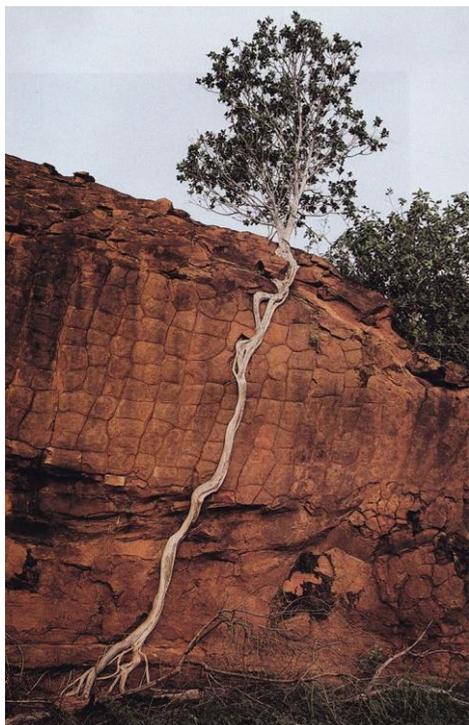
**WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)**

PO Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • [www.wtc.org.nz](http://www.wtc.org.nz)

February 2020



Tui mine track to Mt. Te Aroha photo by Dave White



# WAIKATO HUT

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Member of: Federated Mountain Clubs of New  
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BULLETIN No 814

February 2020

### 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  
Mike Nightingale                      minean@xtra.co.nz                      8562394

### Tramping Subcommittee

**Tramping email:** waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com  
**Chairperson:** John McArthur    mcarthur@outlook.co.nz                      0212889641  
**Treasurer:** Guy Domett    treasurer @wtc.org.nz                      0272483008  
**Secretary:** Judith Bogle    judith.bogle@outlook.com                      0273810283  
**Club Captain:** Allan Wickens    allanwickens@hotmail.com                      0279509546  
**Assistant captain:**  
**Membership:** Lois Rowell    loiserowell@gmail.com                      0272881148  
**Web & Facebook:** Dianne Ngapo    joe.ngapo@outlook.co.nz                      0211192611  
**Transport:** Ashley Hoskin    ashley.hoskin@icloud.com                      07 8704570  
**Social convenor:** Stephen Prendergast    stephen@sps.co.nz                      021466247  
**Sub-committee:** Dave White    info@sgohamilton.co.nz                      0274534550  
Selwyn June    selwynjune@xtra.co.nz                      8433066

### Ski Subcommittee

**Ski email:** waikatoski@gmail.com                      **Waikato Hut phone:** 07 8923821  
**Chairperson:** Stephen Prendergast    stephen@sps.co.nz                      021466247  
**Bookings:** Mary Reed    drmarydoll@hotmail.com                      0211185107  
**Finance officer:** Michael Barker    michael.barker@alto.co.nz                      021246 3500  
**Members:** Steve Phillips    innovative.p@hotmail.com                      0211031436  
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Stacey Thompson    stacey.thompson@opus.co.nz

**Bulletin:** Lesley Kuggeleijn    lesley.kugg@gmail.com                      027 4942414  
**Editor & Club Librarian:** Dianne June    djune@xtra.co.nz                      8433066

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

## Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March

There were some stunning photos submitted from around the country for the FMC competition. The judges indicated they had a difficult time picking the eventual winners and the runners up. 2019 had a special theme of Forgotten Lands, which emphasised areas that are less well known and those seldom visited due to terrain, or difficulty of access.

This night will serve as an inspiration for our own upcoming competition - and a reminder that your camera should always be present and your mind in search of the photo. I hope that in a further evening we'll cover the technical aspects of photo selection and improvement - to inspire many more of us to get our names back on the club trophies once more.

**Venue:** St. Stephens Church, Mahoe St, Hamilton

**Cost:** \$2

**Social Night:** It's time for another film at the Haines' so put **Friday, Feb 21<sup>st</sup>, 6.30pm** in your diary and check your recipe book for something interesting to bring along to share. Grab the carnivorous part of your diet to BBQ, your refreshment of choice, and \$20 too. Be at **11 Alison St** on the night for some good company and entertainment, Any questions? Phone Graham on 8395932.

**70<sup>th</sup> Reunion:** If you have a yarn or memories to tell, or you know of others who could also contribute, contact:

Allan Hughes, **Ph:** 027 7577109 **Email:** *54days@gmail.com*

The yarns and memories could each be a single sentence, or longer. Looking forward to your contribution.

### ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2020

			River crossing training	POSTPONED to Mar 22 <sup>nd</sup>
2868	23 Feb	E/M	Kakepuke/ Yarndley's bush	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
	4 Mar		CLUB NIGHT	Stephen Prendergast
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	Allan Wickens
2878	15-21 Mar	E/M	Golden Bay walks	Sharon Sholl & Keith Robbins
2879	22 Mar	E/M	River Crossings	Allan Wickens
2880	22-29 Mar	E	Victoria Forest park walks	Selwyn June
2881	28/29 Mar	E/M	Rangiwahia hut in the Ruahines	Merlyn Warren
2882	31 Mar-3 Apr	M	Hump ridge track	Jacqui Dick
	1 Apr		AGM	Committee
2883	5 Apr	E/M	Otawa trig/Papamoa	Les Warren
2884	10-13 Apr	M/F	Round the Mountain	Mike Peck
2885	19 Apr	E/M	Rats' tooth	Selwyn June
2886	25-27 Apr	E-F	Egmont	Allan Wickens
	6 May		CLUB NIGHT	
2887	9/10 May	M/F	Moerangi Track, Whirinaki	Les Warren
2888	16/17 May		70 <sup>TH</sup> REUNION	Committee
2889	17 May	E/M	Waiorongomai	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 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 6<sup>th</sup> March*

### **Trip Descriptions**

#### **River crossing training**

**23 Feb**

This trip has been postponed to 22 March and renumbered trip 2879.

#### **Trip 2869**

#### **Kakepuku & Yarndley's bush**

**23 Feb**

This is a great trip for those wanting something easy and local to do. Then a 30 minute walk through Yarndley's Bush, a dense kahikatea forest reserve off Ngaroto road. Next destination will see us do a brisk climb to the top of Mt Kakepuku on a well-graded track and enjoy the views from the platform. If there is time we may even slot in a short walk inside the predator proof fence at Lake Serpentine (Rotopika), home of the National Wetlands Trust.

**Leader:** Allan Wickens    **Email:** [allanwickens@hotmail.com](mailto:allanwickens@hotmail.com)

**Grade: E**

**Transport:** Senior member \$20-30

Senior Non-member \$25-35

#### **Trip 2870**

#### **Te Awa river ride**

**23 Feb**

This is a cycle trip alongside the Waikato River from Hamilton to Ngaruawahia Domain and return. A feature of the trip is the Perry Bridge. The trip is on off-road shared path, the cycling time is about two hours (return) and there will be a coffee stop at a café. We will meet at 9:30am at the end of Meadow View Lane (off Pukete Road).

**Leader:** David Cumming

**Ph:** 8397850

**Grade: E**

**Email:** [david.cumming@xtra.co.nz](mailto:david.cumming@xtra.co.nz)

**Transport:** Private cars

#### **Trip 2871**

#### **Olivine Ice Plateau, Mt Aspiring N P**

**23 Feb-4 Mar**

Meet up in Glenorchy on Sunday 23 Feb. We plan to arrange for a jet boat to drop us at the start of the Beans Burn track and head up this valley for our first

night stay at a marked Rock Biv. From there it is up onto the Olivine Ledge via Fohn Saddle and down to the confluence of the Olivine and Forgotten rivers. Day 3 is up the Forgotten to another marked Rock biv below the Plateau. Day 4-5 spent camping and exploring the Olivine Ice Plateau. Day 6-9 is to head out either directly the way we came in or detour on the last 2 days via the Five passes track. 9 nights/10 days in total with a minimum of 8-hour walking days in and out of the Olivine. Ice axe and crampons necessary on the Plateau although there is uncertainty about the amount of Ice retreat occurring. It is an ambitious trip for the Club but its reputation as one for holy grails of NZ tramping offers a unique and challenging experience. We are still researching the trip but get in contact with Mike or John if you're interested.

**Leader:** Mike Peck

**Ph:** 021 369 256

**Grade:** VF

: John Davies

**Ph:** 07 823 7388

**Email:** *mikeypeck@yahoo.com* or *cjdavies@xtra.co.nzVV*

**Transport:** Private arrangements and boat (tba)

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### **Trip 2872**

### **Richmond Range**

**23 -28 Feb**

The Richmond Range alpine route is very often rated by Te Araroa walkers as the highlight of their trip. And this 6day tramp will take you into the best part, 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 23<sup>rd</sup> {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 28<sup>th</sup> [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.robbins@gmail.com*

**Transport & accommodation:** as above:

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### **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

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**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 29<sup>th</sup>.**

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 1<sup>st</sup>) Molesworth Cob Cottage campsite to Saxton Hut via Saxton Pass (Approx. 5hrs)

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

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

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

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

Day 6 (Fri 6<sup>th</sup>) 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. 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.

Check with the trip leader – you may be too late to book for this trip now!

**Leader:** Les Warren

**Ph:** 027 8644937

**Grade:** F

**Email:** warrenlb2017@outlook.com

**Transport:** tba

**Accommodation:** depending on your own choice.

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**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 tracked 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](mailto:allanwickens@hotmail.com)    **Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior member \$25-30    Senior Non-member \$30-35

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**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

John Davies                      **Ph:** 07 823 7388

**Email:** [walkercj@farmside.co.nz](mailto:walkercj@farmside.co.nz) or [cjdavies@xtra.co.nz](mailto:cjdavies@xtra.co.nz)

**Transport & Accommodation:** private arrangements.

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**Trip 2877                      Ruapehu Weekend                      14/15 Mar**

For this week-end we will be based at our Lodge at Whakapapa. From there we will do a variety of walks aimed at getting new members involved. There are numerous possibilities including a repeat of an excellent un-crowded walk we did across country from Mead's Wall (by Happy Valley), linking up with the track (and the hordes) leading to Tama Lakes. Other possible walks can be from the Turoa Road. We travel down Friday night and walk up to the Lodge. For those who prefer we can utilise the new gondola and gain access to the higher parts of the Whakapapa ski-field. One excellent vantage point is from the ridge above the Pinnacles. There will be no snow at this time of year so you will only need to bring walking poles.

**Leader:** Allan Wickens    **Email:** [allanwickens@hotmail.com](mailto:allanwickens@hotmail.com)    **Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior member \$50-60    Senior Non-member \$55-65

**Waikato Hut Fees: Seniors:** \$25 /night    **Juniors:** \$15 / night

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**Trip 2878                      Golden Bay walks                      15-21 Mar**

At the top western corner of the South Island is Golden Bay, home to Farewell Spit, Wharariki beach, Pupu Springs and lots more. Plus, beautiful weather and golden beaches of course so bring your togs and come and join us as we explore the delights. We will be staying in backpackers at Takaka and Collingwood and use a hired van to travel to 2 or 3 places each day for shortish walks and picnic/café lunches. Have a look at the DoC website 'Walks in Golden Bay'. Our itinerary will include most of these as well as travel into the Whanganui Inlet and a probable overnight stay at Fenella Hut in the Cobb River valley.

About \$400 per person should cover van hire and accommodation. We plan leaving Nelson around 10am Sunday 15th and returning there the following Saturday mid-afternoon.

**Leaders:** Sharon Sholl & Keith Robbins **Ph:** 021 2110621 or 021 120 7752  
**Email:** *shazzu@live.com* or *kandm.robbyns@gmail.com* **Grade:** E/M  
**Transport & accommodation:** as above:

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**Trip 2879** **River Crossing training** **22 Mar**

Unfortunately we have had to postpone the course due to the very low river level of the upper Waipa River, where we hold the Course. Drought conditions are starting to kick in and there is no foreseeable rain sufficient to raise the river to suit our purposes. There are no other suitable river sites within relatively easy reach of Hamilton to hold such a course.

If you are still able to participate please advise me. We had a full van load down for the original date as it is a popular course.

NOTE: Should the river level be too low by March, we will have to cancel the course in the meantime. For those who have already applied on-line there is no need to re-apply. A simple email to me is sufficient.

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 "pack floating", a handy way of recovering from a mishap while crossing a river. Finally, we walk back out to the van and head home.

**Leader:** Allan Wickens **Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com* **Grade:** E/M  
**Transport:** Senior member \$ 20-25 Senior Non-member \$25-30

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**Trip 2880** **Victoria Forest park walks** **22 -29 Mar**

A selection of one- and two-day tramps in Victoria Forest Park, centred on Reefton in north Westland. These include Waiuta - Big River - Reefton (old gold mining sites), Lake Stream/Mt Haast (up onto alpine tops) and a walk into Lake Christobel (set in beech forest along a glaciated valley close to the Main Divide). Huts are available on these tracks. There is a motor camp and motels in Reefton for before/after accommodation.

**Leader:** Selwyn June **Ph:** 8433066 **Grade:** E

**Transport:** private arrangements

**Accommodation:** Private arrangements – check with the leader

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**Trip 2881** **Rangiwahia hut in the Ruahines** **28/29 Mar**

Friday: leave at 5pm, travel to Mountain Rd, Ohakune, walk into Blyth Hut,  
Sat - return to cars, travel to Renfrew Road, Rangiwahia., walk uphill to Rangiwahia Hut.

Sun - two options, walk down to cars via Mangahua Trig and Deadmans Loop track, or go to the trig for views, and back down the Rangiwahia track. Both options are great as on the way down you will see rolling farmlands, and out to the coast. Blyth hut is a backcountry and needs a blue ticket. Rangiwahia is a booked hut.

**Leader:** Merlyn Warren **Ph:** 027 5249926

**Grade:** E/M

**Email:** *mylwarren@gmail.com*

**Transport:** Senior member \$tba Senior Non-member \$tba

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**Trip 2882** **Hump Ridge Track** **31 Mar-3 Apr**

The bookings for this trip are full. Contact the leader to go on a waiting list..

**Leader:** Jacqui Dick

**Ph:** 021 1375201

**Grade:** M

**Email:** *jacquimd@me.com*

**Transport & Accommodation:** private arrangements

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**Trip 2883** **Otawa trig/Papamoa hills** **5 Apr**

Travel to Te Puke Quarry Road carpark and walk along the Trig Track to Ottawa Trig. From here continue to a track junction, then head to Manoeka Road. The trip is estimated to take 4/5 hrs. There is a mixture of farmland to walk thru first then the most of the day is walking thru lowland forest dominated by tawa and rewarewa. More details next month.

**Leader:** Les Warren

**Ph:** 027 8644937

**Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior member \$tba Senior Non-member \$tba

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**Trip 2884** **Round Ruapehu** **10-13 Apr**

A 3 day trip on 'Round the Mountain' track. There are approx 8 hour walking days. We'll go down Thu night and either camp or stay at the ski lodge. Friday: head to Mangaturuturu Hut. Saturday: Mangaturuturu Hut to Rangipo Hut. Sunday: Rangipo Hut to Whakapapa village.

**Leader:** Mike Peck

**Ph:** 021 300256

**Grade:** M/F

**Email:** *mikeypeck@yahoo.com*

**Transport:** Senior member \$80-105 Senior Non-member \$85-110

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**Trip 2885** **Rats' tooth, Onetai road** **19 Apr**

We leave from end of Onetai Rd between Paeroa and Thames, follow a stream up, viewing a cave and waterfall on the way, then climb steeply up a spur and along the ridge to the Rats' Tooth which is one of many rocky outcrops on top of the range. There are views out to the Firth of Thames one side and the Maratoto valley on the other. We come back via a slightly different route which takes us through regenerating Kauri forest.

**Leader:** Selwyn June

**Ph:** 8433066

**Grade:** E/M

**Transport:** Senior mem \$25-30 Senior non-mem \$30-35

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**Trip 2887** **Moerangi Track, Whirinaki** **9/10 May**

The Club last walked this track in 2016, and although I have walked most of the tracks in this area, the section between Okahu Road end to Rogers Hut, I have

not done. The track is a dual use track with mountain bikers. The track is well graded and can comfortably be done over a weekend. More research is yet to be done, but I am looking at travelling to Minginui on the Friday night, with several options on where to stay. I am yet to decide which end to start, but at this stage, probably start at the Okahu Road end and walk to Moerangi Hut via Skips and Rogers Huts (6-7hrs). On Sunday we walk out to the River Road carpark, over Moerangi Saddle – from the saddle it is mainly down-hill to the carpark (4-5hrs). Although graded M/F, it is a good track for those wanting to step up for a bit more of a challenge. Whirinaki Conservation Forest is a wonderful forest to visit with bird song to enjoy and a high chance of seeing who/blue ducks. There are plenty of kiwi around the Moerangi Hut to listen to or if lucky, spot one.

**Leader:** Les Warren

**Ph:** 027 8644937

**Grade:** M/F

**Email:** *warrenlb2017@outlook.com*

**Transport:** Senior member \$ tba

Senior Non-member \$ tba

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**Editorial**

You've all been so busy over the summer and it looks like it won't abate (along with the heat) for a wee while yet. There are some lovely trip reports to entertain you this month.

I must extend my grateful thanks to Ray Hoare for helping me sort out the formats on the bulletin cover. I think I can now change the advertisements as new ones come to hand. In the mean-time I'll fill the gaps with photos. Look at the pictures Jacqui pointed me to about trees that won't die. However, it would be preferable to have advertisers using the space and their payment for this goes towards the cost of getting the bulletin printed. Do you know of any business who would be interested in supporting the club?

On another note, I have just come back from another weekend in the Okahukura valley or should I say a 'successful, well-supported-by-tramping-club-members' weekend? Thankyou to the 15 keen and willing workers who helped all weekend. I love having your enthusiastic support around me.

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**Presidents' Blog**

Tramping is off to a strong start for the year. We've had several great day trips (Waihi Beach and into the new Kaimai hut), the more challenging, very enjoyable Anniversary Weekend three-dayers (into the Waiau valley in Te Urewera and the Kaimanawa tops), and the start of the South Island programme where the heavy rainfalls led to last minute changes of plan.

A training course for trip leaders is coming up. This will be very useful for current leaders and for those who may be asked to lead a trip. The club has opened the course to other clubs in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty under the FMC aegis; a number of clubs will be sending members.

For Waikato Hut and the ski committee, a busy time is coming up. The lodge needs to be tidied up, odd maintenance jobs done and firewood and supplies packed in for the coming winter. Any help with the work parties is appreciated - Stephen Phillips is the man.

Looking ahead to the AGM on the 1st April, we need replacements on both committees. It's good to be able to have a turn-over of committee members to share the work around and bring in new ideas for making the club and its' activities better. You can start with a small rôle until you get into the swing of the club's organisation.

Robin Russell is living in Awatere Care (Trevellyn) at the moment to aid his recovery from a stroke. He likes to receive visitors for short stays to catch up on club activities. We wish him well.

~~~~~  
... from the ski club.....

Our second Hut Working Party is 7/8 March. We have a range of maintenance covering painting, some cosmetic internal work and a couple of windows to fix. We're also looking to get the water filter system installed - along with a new water pump before the next winter season. We do appreciate the contribution you make to keeping the Hut spick and span and ready for all of our recreational visitors and guests. All working parties are catered and accommodated at the Hut, you just need to bring your favourite drink for our Saturday evening meal.

Over Summer we love to see people coming and going from the Hut. It was built for both Summer and Winter adventures. We've got world class alpine landscape right on our doorstep - and a relatively short drive from our own front doors. Heading South has it's attractions but you can maximise your free time by taking advantage of the mountains closer to home over summer.

It's been a hot dry January and February and that makes for some good outings & evenings at the Hut. Some of the spring melt will be well and truly melted, but the flows from higher up are still around exposing the many waterfalls which disappear during the winter freeze. Clear pristine and chilly dips can be found in some enticing locations as you wander around Ruapehu.

If you have friends and family who have never experienced the Tongariro National Park then a weekend at the Hut is a great introduction. Head across to walk or cycle some of the T42, the Marton Sash and Door, or the more challenging Fishers Track starting at National Park Village. Despite the crowds the Tongariro Crossing is still a fantastic 1 day walk, best enjoyed early in the day. If you have a Birthday, a catchup with your friends or an upcoming work outing the Hut is a great place to spend a weekend. Join it up with a meal at the Mt Ruapehu Knoll Ridge Cafe, open during summer for sight-seeing and Gondola rides. For a simpler weekend take advantage of the self-catering option and come and go as suits.

Looking forward to seeing you there this year.

## Trip reports

### Trip 2854

### A day in the Pinnacles

17 Nov

John and I arrived 20 years ago in this beautiful country, and the Pinnacles was our first tramp we endeavoured. We were inexperienced and totally unprepared. Alongside friends we started that day. We were dressed in jeans and 'trainers' Our packs heavy with food and not much else....

Sunday the 17th November we once again attempted this track – better prepared but 20 years older! We were fortunate to walk with a crowd of wonderfully supportive people. We all jammed into a van and Judy entertained us all the way to the start of the walk. Dave tried to bring order and give the newbies more information about what to expect on the track. John got woozy and nervous looking at the map and details of elevation. Les decided to 'take time out' and rested his eyes.

We started at a good pace – but John left his 'stomach' in the van – thank goodness for Sheryl dragging him up and over the rocks and stones and down the valleys! Pete and his kids were real troopers – carrying a pack and walking the distance without complaining!

Eventually we arrived at the hut enjoying the sun and a well-deserved lunch!

Dave took his followers for another steep climb up the Pinnacles to admire the view! While the others caught a nap before going down again.

Going down seemed to take just as long... skidding over the rocks or stopping to watch the view! Eventually we arrived at the van – some changed into clean clothes, dirty boots stuck into a bag while others were just glad to sit down! We stopped at the local dairy – jumped out like 'kids' to grab an ice-cream and something to nibble again! The day draws to a close and the sun slowly disappears over the Hauraki Plains. Another gorgeous day in the Waikato.

Beatrix M, Marianne L, Dave and Debbie W (Leader), John and Madeleine (scribe) F, Kathy T, Judith B, Sheryl T (Driver), Kerstin K, Les W, Peter & Lily & Jade L.

### Trip 2855

### Mt Tarawera Pine Pulling

23/24 Nov

There have been some articles lately in FMC and Wilderness magazines about tramping with a purpose. Well, this fitted the bill exactly. WTC again assisted the local iwi and DoC to pull wilding pines from the slopes of Mt Tarawera. Saturday night we camped at Lake Rerewhakaaitu and what a lovely spot. Trees to give shade, a shelter with benches and tables and a lovely view over the lake. Being a very shallow lake it was warm enough for a swim before dinner. Early Sunday morning the bus arrived and the DoC staff gave us a run down on the day's activities and then we set off up the mountain. This is an adventure in itself as the track is very rough with plenty of potholes. This time we got all the way to the edge of the crater without incident.



2 years ago the bus got stuck and we had a much longer walk than expected!! In a recent Wilderness magazine there was a letter about where are the red landscapes in NZ and the crater at Tarawera is one of them. It's an impressive sight and we walked up and around the eastern shoulder to access the work area. The satisfaction from finding and pulling out the wilding pines kept us going as it got hotter and hotter. To have a break was to enjoy the wonderful view across Lake Tarawera towards Rotorua.

En route to pulling pines Photo by Amanda Collins  
All too quickly it was time to head back and pack up to go home.

Thanks to everyone who went 'tramping with a purpose'. We were well recompensed with an enjoyable weekend. Trip Leader: Selwyn – thanks to you and Dianne for organising this opportunity

Trip Participants: Jan F, Alan W, Lesley K, Amanda C, Les W, Merlyn W, Paul Q, Leanne S, Callum M, Michael C, Wendy H, Jordan M, Rizal R, Lois R, Judith B, Jaber A, David H, Margaret R (scribe), Dianne J (driver), Selwyn J (Leader).

**Trip 2861**

**Lewis Pass to L. Rotoroa**

**2-8 Jan**

The Group – Merlyn (Leader), Les, Dale, Peter, Ray, Malcolm and Andrew.  
Average age of group – 67yrs.

The group met at the Riverside Holiday Park at Murchison on the New Years' Day 2020. Les, Peter and Ray all arrived the day before. Merlyn, who came down earlier and did some short walks with Dale, picked up Malcolm and Andrew from Nelson airport at 5pm. However; Andrew's pack did not arrive with him, so they had to wait for the last flight from Wellington at 8pm in the hope that the pack was on this flight. Phew! Thank goodness it was on this flight.

Thursday morning arrived and day one of our trip. Ray had a set of scales, so it was a check of our pack weights; most, were around 17kgs for our 6/7 day trip. The leaders' pack was more than 20kg, so she needed to off-load some items. We were collected by Murchison Shuttles to transport us to the start of the St James Walkway at Lewis Pass.

Once the bathroom visits were done and a group photo taken, we were off, heading to Ada Pass Hut for our first night.



The walk up the Maruia River was a pleasant one. We all managed to have a bed in the Hut. The late-afternoon / early-evening saw showers arrive and some concerns with tomorrow's plans to climb up to the Three Tarns

Day Two – With the weather not looking good towards the Three Tarns and, with no prior weather reports for the area, it was decided to change our plans and go via Waiau Pass (if weather OK) instead of Three Tarns and David Saddle to Lake Rotoroa. We left Ada Pass Hut at 0750 and arrived at our campsite for the night, around 3pm (7hr day). We followed the St James Walkway to Christopher Hut. From the Hut we followed a “route” in a direct line towards Waiau River. Most of this section was poled, but some sections were hard to see where to go. Once we reached the Waiau River, we walked north up the valley for about 2hrs and find a sheltered campsite. We aimed for some trees, but they ended up not close to water, so we carried on a bit to find a suitable place close to water.

Day Three – The aim today was a fork with the Waiau River close to the route over the Waiau Pass. We heard that there was a nice campsite in some trees and open area with a fireplace. Another pleasant day walking up the upper Waiau valley passing the Caroline Creek Bivvy and the new Waiau Pass Hut. Arrived at our campsite after about another 6/7hr day



Day Four – The BIG day; the climb over Waiau Pass. We all set-off in small groups as we got ready. Merlyn headed off first with Peter, Dale followed shortly after, then Ray and myself set-off around 0810, and Malcolm and Andrew followed up at the rear. The night before, Peter offered to help Andrew with his pack today, as he was carrying a fairly heavy pack. Later, he would regret making this offer.

The first hour and a half was a stiff climb to the base of the steep tough section up thru rock faces and boulders. The route up over the Pass was poled, but some

were hard to find at times. One had to take one's time clambering up and taking care with one's footing. At one stage I made a short route decision which backfired and had to back track. When Ray and I neared a high point, Peter was coming back down to help Andrew with carrying his pack. Ray and I continued onto the actual Pass, by which time the weather was closing in – strong winds and mist with rain starting. We found a sheltered place at the top of the Pass and rested and had something to eat. After a while, Pete arrived and he was very tired from helping Andrew.

From the top of the Pass all the way down, and up, to Blue Lake Hut, the weather closed in and was wet, windy and misty most of the way, so it was slow going while making sure we found the poles showing us the way to go. I was very pleased with my wet weather gear, except my gloves, as my body was warm all the time. I had mittens and wet weather over-gloves, but water seeped in and my gloves ended up wet and hands got quite cool when I stopped.

From the Pass, you descend quite steeply down scree to the valley floor where streams feed Lake Constance. You follow the east shoreline of the Lake for a short distance, before making several sharp climbs up and over to avoid bluffs. When we finally reached the beech trees above Blue Lake Hut, I knew, from an earlier visit to the Hut, that we were not far away from the Hut. We arrived at the Hut after a long 8hr day. It was great to find a bed and dry roof over our head for the night. We weren't sure what we would do tomorrow – have a rest day or carry on to West Sabine Hut; so would make a decision in the morning.

Day Five – We awoke to some wet weather and decided to wait till late-morning to see if the weather abated. The weather improved, so we headed off at 1250 for West Sabine Hut. It took us 3.5hrs, which was quite good considering this section was badly weather damaged from a storm back in November / December 2019. There were quite a few sections of the track washed away and we had to do quite a bit of bush bashing around these sections.

Day Six – West Sabine Hut to Sabine Hut. We left at 0820 and arrived at Sabine Hut around 2.30pm. Sabine Hut is on the edge of Lake Rotoroa and has a radio to contact the Ferry. We arranged for a pick-up for 0830. While resting up at Sabine Hut, who would turn up but Judith and Amanda. It was good to catch-up with some fellow club members and share some stories.

Day Seven – Our final day and return to civilization. The ferry trip took about 30min to Lake Rotoroa township, from where our Shuttle company picked us up and returned us to Murchison - the end of the Trip. Scribe/photos – Les Warren

## **Trip 2862**

## **3 Passes & Arahura River**

**11-20 Jan**

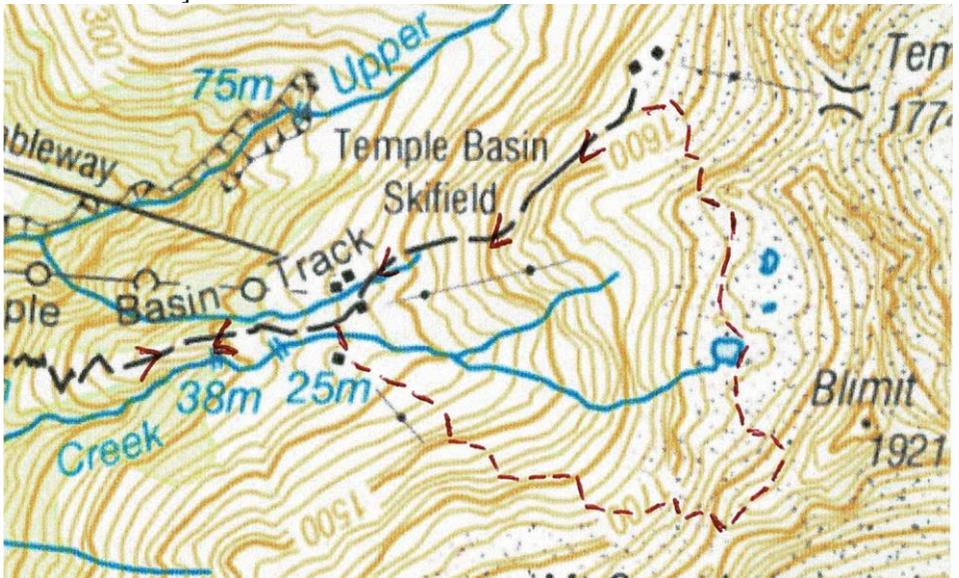
The Group – Allan (Leader), Les, John, and Suzanne.

The plan was for the group to meet up at Arthurs Pass Youth Hostel on Sat 11<sup>th</sup>. Allan was keeping a close eye on the weather for our trip and keeping the group up to date; so, we were expecting rain on our departure day, Sun 12<sup>th</sup>. When Allan arrived at Arthurs Pass, he checked in with DoC at the Information Office

and the news was not good. The area was expecting rain from late Saturday thru to Sunday evening. DoC was expecting over 200mm of rain to fall, and once the rain stopped, we would need to wait another 2-3 days for the rivers and streams to drop to be safe for crossing them. Plus, DoC said that some sections of the track around Carrington Hut have been quite difficult, as well as the Waimakariri River changing course. After some group discussion, it was decided to flag the 3 Passes Trip as all our spare weather days were lost.

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> – Hung around town waiting for the weather to improve and look at what we would do for the rest of the week.

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> – The weather cleared up and we did a day trip above Treble Cone Ski field. We followed the track from the Carpark up to the Ski buildings, then went off track. We ascended to a ridgeline just below Mt Cassidy. Allan, John and Suzanne climbed up to Mt Cassidy while I opted to rest below. We then descended towards some tarns below Blimit. From here, Allan, John and Suzanne did a side trip up to Blimit; I was not interested in 'bagging' high points, so rested and had lunch. When the others returned, we descended towards the upper ski field buildings to meet the track to these buildings. We followed the track back to the main ski field buildings and back down to the carpark. On the way down, I banged my right elbow against a rock. After a 7.5hr day, we managed to talk some tourists into taking us back to Arthurs Pass and saving us another good 1hr walk back to Town. [See *map* showing roughly where we went]



Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> – I decided to have a rest day, mainly to give my elbow a rest and not aggravate it. The others did another day up to Avalanche Peak. I did a short walk to see how my elbow was, and all was OK. Fortunately, it did not get worse, so was happy and ready for our 4-day trip.

Wednesday 15th – Start of our 4-day Trip; up the Minga River to Goat Pass, up



to Lake Mavis and over and down to Taruahuna Pass, then down Edwards River and back to the Main Road. The weather by now was very good with sunny hot days. While in Arthurs Pass, we learnt there was a local guy who had a shuttle bus, so we arranged for a ride down to our start point and walk up the Minga River. We also arranged to stay at his place, The Sanctuary, on our last two nights, plus we could leave our excess gear there. For Saturday thru to Tuesday night, we stayed at the Mountain House / YHA.



Today's aim was to get to Goat Pass Hut, then descend up to Lake Mavis to camp the night. We got away from our start point around 8am and arrived at Goat Pass Hut around 1235 (4hrs 30). It was mainly a poled route, crossing the Minga River several times 'til we reached the beech forest, where there was a track to follow. We passed a number of people training for the Coast to Coast on

this section. After lunch at Goat Pass Hut, we backtracked about 300m to a couple of cairns to indicate the route up the hill to Lake Mavis.



It took us about 1hr 40 to reach Lake Mavis. What a wonderful setting to camp, but there were not many flat places around. Lovely clear skies around us to enjoy the grandeur around us.

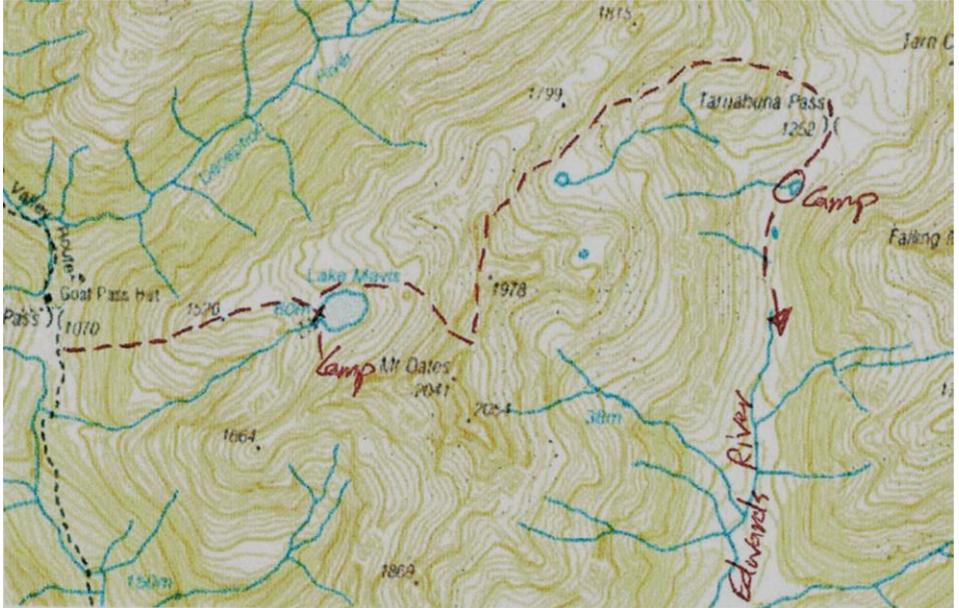


Soon after setting up our tents, the unmistakable sound of the kea was heard. Three Kea were flying around our tents checking us out and soon tried to creep up to the tents. Fortunately, they did not bother us too much during the night.



Three Kea were flying around our tents checking us out and soon tried to creep up to the tents. Fortunately, they did not bother us too much during the night.

Map showing rough route between Goats Pass and Taruahuna Pass



Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> – Awoke to a lovely morning and our destination to Taruahuna Pass. It was to be a short walking day! This part of the trip, there were no tracks or poled routes to follow. However, on part of the descent section there were cairns to follow.

The first part of ascending to a ridge above Lake Mavis was OK. Then, the real tricky descent took some planning. Much of the section between Goat Pass Hut and Taruahuna Pass, was scree or boulder scrambling.

Our Team Leader did a good job in finding the easiest of the hard routes, for us. For me, the descent from Lake Mavis to Taruahuna Pass was the most difficult

and trying and I was happy to make it down safely without any real dramas.



*On the 09 March 1929, there was a magnitude 7.1 earthquake at Arthur's Pass, where a 900m high section of mountain peak collapsed onto Taruahuna Pass, close to the epicentre. The landslide continued partway up the flanks of Mt Franklin. It then slid about 5kms down the remote valley of the west branch of the Otehake River. The collapsed peak was later dubbed Falling Mountain.*



The tarn on the southern edge of the Pass was arrived at at 1230 and made another good site to camp for the night. It was a very hot afternoon with no shelter around to put our tents up. Having done so, we tried to relax under the relenting sun

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> – Despite a hot day yesterday, we awoke from a pretty cold night. Even though I had three top layers and two bottom layers, I was still cold around my shoulders. Once out of my tent in the morning, I soon saw why it was cold during the night – we had a frost with the dew on our tents all frosted up. The other three did a side-trip up to Tarn Coll. On their return, we headed down Edwards River to Edwards Hut. It was a pleasant walk down to the Hut which included some welcome stream crossings to cool down from the hot weather. Although we enjoyed camping in the alpine environment for the last two nights, it was nice to spend our last night in a hut. Two of Allan’s friends, Ross and Trudy, met us at the hut, later in the afternoon.

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> – Final Day. It was a nice 5hr walk following the Edwards River down to where it meets the Minga River and where we had started on Wednesday. The walk was a bit more pleasant as we were in beech forest for most of the way, but the knees were starting to get quite tired. We had arranged with our shuttle guy to pick us up once we got back to the main road.

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> – Allan and John decided to do another day trip up the Waimakariri River and Crow River. I decided to have another rest day as my legs were still tired - after all I had done 11 days tramping over just the last two weeks. The day was spent relaxing and packing my pack ready for the trip home.

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> – Shuttle back to Christchurch, then an early evening flight back home. The end of a long and wonderful two and a half weeks exploring new areas.

Les Warren (scribe & photographer)

**Trip 2864**

**Waihi Beach coastal walk**

**19 Jan**



Photo by Jocelyn Widmer

A bus load and several cars assembled for the second day walk of the year. The walk from the no-exit road end down to the coast following the track to

Homunga Bay gave us stunning views with Mayor Island in the distance. This was our first beach stop for the day. Warren told us about his epic kayak paddle out to mayor Island and back. Someone pointed out the cloud of steam from White Island/Whakaari. Then along the top of bluffs, looking down on rocks and floating sea weeds in clear waters; then across gullies to Orokawa Bay where we had lunch on the beach under the spreading boughs of pohutukawa trees.

Walking amongst the beautiful nikau, pohutukawa and puriri trees. So refreshing to cool off with a swim at our destination Waihi Beach, followed by ice creams all round before the return trip back to Hamilton.



Orokawa Bay

photo by Jocelyn Widmer

Trip participants: Jan F, Jeanette B, Sharon S, Shuai Z, Elizsha B, Jennifer Y, Jean W, Debbie & Dave W, Ian McK, Margaret C, Joanna G, Dorothy C, Warren B, Jocelyn W (scribe), Dianne J (driver), Selwyn J (leader).



For all the 'hard' work done on the day..... a reward

photo by Dave White

## **Trip 2865a Highlights of Urewera White's Clearing & Waiiau R. 25-27 Jan**

### Friday:

- The road in – horrendous and winding
- Arriving in the dark, putting tent up , first time ever, with torch in mouth, bugs and moths getting stuck in hair – fly on upside down...mmmmm

### Saturday:

- Watching two ute loads of Manukau Tramping club members being driven up hill towards White's Clearing track – us setting off on foot – because we are real trampers...just saying
- The stunning weather, blue skies, seriously hot – all three days...fabulous
- Heaps of swims in the Parahaki stream, either in undies or boots and all, it was just too hot to care and the waterholes were to die for
- Seeing three whio ducks fly along the river ....magic
- Camping at Waiiau hut, most of us tented – fly on correctly this time

### Sunday:

- Walking & crossing the river, walking in te ngahere ataahua -beautiful bush
- Listening to the birds – kotare, kereru, tui, pipiwharau (long tailed cuckoo )who sang for us every day – so special
- Arriving at a cute orange painted hut - Te Totara hut
- Lots of conversation, getting to know each other, a whiff of whiskey in the air, cards and into bed

### Monday:

- Back into the bush heading for home, more chat about birds, identifying trees – mingimingi, horopito, matai, previous trips, disasters that had occurred, caring for the elderly, vet school in Switzerland.
- Amazing amount of knowledge these club members had and willingly shared

This is what tramping is all about. A big thank you to Alan for organising the trip and also to you Stephen for driving us there on *that* road!

Lastly thanks to my fellow trampers for making this a great weekend – till next time – I'm hooked!

Participants: Cathy, Selwyn, Peter, Stephen (driver), Beatrix, Steve, Miriam, Lesley, Alan (leader), Kevin and Barb.

## **Trip 2865b**

## **Junction tops – Kaimanawas**

**25-27 Jan**

8 am start at London Street was a pretty relaxed start time and then there were a couple of pick-ups so by 9am we were off down the road, full of the excitement and anticipation of another long weekend in the bush and on the tops. It's a long way down to Taupo on a hot day with plenty of holiday traffic, and then up the long Kiko Road to road end – still enthusiastic.

Now for the hard work (for some of us) or the gentle stroll (for others). The Ngapuketuru track lulls you into a pleasant effort for the first 4 or 5 km. The

bush is thick, but warm and dry (should have noted this), and then it starts to lift up the spur from the 1000m mark up towards the peak (same name) at 1500m. Bush gives way to the open tops at about 1300m and the expansive views..... are dominated by the Australian smoke. From the peak its downhill to the camp, and down, and down, and there's the camp area which we scatter ourselves about on. Nice chat at the cooking spot.

Day two starts with a bang, 300m climb, first through a bit of scruffy bush, then up the tussock to near where we started from. Now what... off along the open ridge tops on a pretty hot day with little breeze and no cloud. The first couple of km were in the open but then into a bush covered plateau, with very thick bush hanging on to us. Here too, the bush was hot and dry, and the progress exhausting. Lunch at Ignimbrite Saddle and a futile search for water down the gully. Some of us getting pretty dry, and a 400m climb up the ridge to Junction Tops just ahead of us. As we continued along the ridge Mike decided to take a small party to retrieve water from the hut. The rest of us changed down a gear (or two) and chugged slowly up and over Junction Tops and on down to the Waipakahi hut. Luckily cloud came in and a slight breeze relieved some of the heat stress. Phew! That was a tough day, - time for a swim in the *warm* water of the Waipakahi river.

Last day – outski. Many of you will know the Umukarikari route from the hut. A 200 – 300 m climb followed by a gentle rise, then up and over the Umukarikari peak and the long walk out. ~~Great~~ The BEST views of Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro on a fabulous day, then into the bush and a very long walk out. Then, more water to drink, trip to Z Energy in Turangi, and a wonderful swim in the lake.

Total distance: 36.6km. Elevation gain: 2604m

Reflection; a very hard tramp (middle day) due to high temperatures, no shade and little cooling breeze. As our summers are getting hotter; lesson, Water planning needs to be perfect for all the team.

Thank you Mike for an excellent trip into places I've never been before, and Dianne for driving. The great team was; Mike P, John A, John D, John G, John M, Martin W, Steve and Regan D, Callum M, David T.

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### **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.



facebook

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!

**From the committee table:**

**New members/ Resignations:** Nil

**Membership:** We have 156 tramping members and another 30 who are partners of some of these 156. So, in total, 186 members.

**From the tramping committee:** The Club has upgraded its Personal Locator Beacons and has three older ones for sale (Accusato GME and Kannard brands). They have expired batteries which still work; these can be replaced. The club takes no responsibility for the continued operation of the units. Offers to John McArthur.

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

➤ **70<sup>th</sup> reunion.** Allan is progressing well with getting his thoughts and stories together. If you have been shoulder-tapped to put pen to paper please get on to it soon. And if you haven't been shoulder-tapped, how about volunteering something? The registration form is now ready to use and will have been available at club night. We still need some more volunteers to do electoral roll searching. Contact the editor if you can help please.

~~~~~  
*.....from the Doc website.....*

➤ A Coromandel highlight is the Northern New Zealand dotterel programme. This is enjoying a record year for breeding success with 500 of New Zealand's 2,200 dotterel now on the Coromandel Peninsula. Key to success has been the advocacy of New Zealand Dotterel Watch, fencing off sand dunes, and bans on dogs and vehicles on beaches.

➤ Heading towards Predator Free Chatham Islands. There is remarkable conservation work happening on the Chatham Islands. Chatham petrels/ranguru numbers have gone from 40 birds to 4,000 birds in 10 years. Chatham Island oystercatcher/tōrea now have around 350 birds after recovering from a 50-bird low. With 30% of New Zealand's threatened species on the Chathams, the potential for new landscape scale conservation programmes has significant benefits. Key to this will be One Billion Trees - the potential to establish active nursery stocks to achieve larger scale revegetation programmes where healthy ecosystems, along with being predator free, are the key to biodiversity recovery.

- A signed MOU between DoC and NIWA has agreed they will work together to explore the implications of their multi-year Endeavour Programme funded study looking at rates of carbon sequestration in Fiordland forests. There is evidence they sequester far more than currently thought but questions remain about where this carbon is then actually stored. One emerging theory is that it may be linked to the tannin rich waters which then go into the marine part of the carbon cycle. There will be ongoing secondments of NIWA climate scientists into DoC, and marine, freshwater and biosecurity research. They will undertake research on the West Coast and Taranaki into New Zealand's recently discovered blue whales as well as share Subantarctic logistics.
- Since DoC's snail monitoring programme in Kahurangi National Park and Marlborough Sounds began 30 years ago, we have seen a significant decrease in summer rainfall and increasing summer soil moisture deficits. Here are **some** key facts on how climate change is impacting our *Powelliphanta* population:
  - increasing summer droughts are making life much worse for *Powelliphanta*. Our land snails need moist soils to survive (eggs and juveniles die if exposed to dry conditions).
  - Many species of *Powelliphanta* are still declining, despite predator control.
  - Spectacular shell "growth-checks", visible in all members of the affected populations, correlate neatly with periods of severe drought.



- The Milford Track will be closed while DoC assesses the damage, considers options and undertakes critical repair work. Access will be restricted during this time. The Routeburn Track sustained significant damage and is currently closed. The track will require considerable repair work to be fully operational. Access will be restricted while an assessment is undertaken

The Kepler Great Walk and Fiordland National Park tracks south of Te Anau remain open and operational.

Other tracks along northern Fiordland National Park, including the Hollyford Track, and in southern Mount Aspiring National Park (Glenorchy end of Lake Wakatipu) have also been damaged in the flood event. The scale of this weather event means this will take some time yet and there are some locations which remain inaccessible due to landscape and road closures.

You can see updates on road closures on the NZTA website

~~~~~  
... from the FMC website...

➤ **Kea Survey Tool.** Playful, sociable and highly intelligent, curious, bold and often mischievous, the kea embodies the free spirit of those venturing into the mountains, prompting writer and mountaineer Paul Powell to state that "dead climbers get reincarnated as kea" (NZAJ 1975, Vol 28, p126). While the bird is everyone's favourite, anecdotal evidence suggests that its range and numbers have declined dramatically over the last few decades. The kea is currently listed as 'Nationally Endangered' in the New Zealand Threat Classification System, with the population trend showing a strong decline. Population size estimates range between 1,000 and 5,000 birds. Truth is, we don't really know how many kea there are. The recently launched Kea Survey Tool aims to get a more accurate estimate of the bird's population size and geographical distribution. For the purpose, we need to know both where people see kea, and where people don't see kea. Anyone visiting the backcountry for one hour or more can contribute. All you need to do is set your intention to survey for kea in advance of your trip, then record your hours, approximate location, what you were doing and whether or not you heard or saw kea, for each hour that you were out and about. All outdoors people getting out and about this summer are strongly encouraged to use this tool. Any sightings of banded birds should be entered in the online Kea Database.

➤ FMC welcomes **Torpedo7 to our member benefit scheme.** Show your current FMC discount card in store to receive 20% off Torpedo7 branded gear and 10% off non Torpedo7 branded gear. (Discounts are off RRP and exclude electronics, gift cards and services).

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Official Bulletin of  
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NEW ZEALAND REGISTERED MAGAZINE