



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

March 2020



On the tops of the Kaimanawa Photo by John McArthur



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

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Member of: Federated Mountain Clubs of New
Zealand Inc

Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association

BULLETIN No 815

March 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
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Tramping Subcommittee

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Editor & Club Librarian: Dianne June djune@xtra.co.nz 8433066

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

AGM Wednesday 1st April

This is your opportunity to find out more about how the club has been functioning in the background and review the financial matters. It is also time to think about how you can help, be it on the general, tramping, or skiing committees. Remember you don't have to be a skier to belong to the latter committee – you may just have skills that can be useful at Waikato Hut. There are also subcommittees that would appreciate some help. Approach any club member to submit your nomination. If you wish to make a remit, this should be in the hand of the Secretary by March 13th i.e. pronto.

The business part of the evening will be followed by a slide show of past club activities – always fun to look at.

Venue: St. Stephens Church, Mahoe St,

Cost: no charge

70th 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

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
2883	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	Les Warren
2885	19 Apr	E/M	Rats' tooth	Selwyn June
2886	25-27 Apr	E-F	Egmont	Allan Wickens
2887	3 / 4 May	E/M	Omokoroa	Allan & Pamela Hughes

	6 May		CLUB NIGHT	Committee
2888	9/10 May	M/F	Moerangi Track, Whirinaki	Les Warren
	16/17 May		70TH REUNION	Committee
2889	17 May	E/M	Waiorongomai	Allan Wickens
2890	24 May	E	Waikato Hut	Allan Wickens
2891	30 May- 1 June	M	Pakihi/ Motu track	Merlyn Warren

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

TIME and FITNESS GUIDELINES

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bookings and Cancellations: no later than the WEDNESDAY before the trip. Any person withdrawing after this day without good reason will be charged the full cost of the trip.

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.

Please send contributions to the editor by MONDAY 23rd March

Trip Descriptions

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 **Grade:** E/M

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

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

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, Puppu 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.robbs@gmail.com **Grade:** E/M

Transport & accommodation: as above:

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. If the weather has continued to be dry from the beginning of March until this date, the trip will be cancelled and considered again in November, Check with the trip leader. 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 **Ph:** 027 9509546 **Grade:** E/M

Email: *allanwickens@hotmail.com*

Transport: Senior member \$ 20-25 Senior Non-member \$25-30

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

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 Mangahuia 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

Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance (i.e. tramp)

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

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

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 Waikato Hut. Friday: head to Mangaturuturu Hut. Saturday: Onwards to Rangipo Hut. Sunday: Onwards to Whakapapa village.
Leader: Club captain **Ph:** 027 9509546 **Grade:** M/F
Email: *allanwickens@hotmail.com*
Transport: Senior member \$80-105 Senior Non-member \$85-110

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

Trip 2886 **Egmont Nat. Park walks** **25-27 Apr**
On Friday night (24th) we will leave London Street and travel to New Plymouth where we will stay the night. Over the next 3 days, the plan is to do as many walks as we can fit in - with weather permitting - in Egmont National Park. There are 3 main entry points for these walks, at North Egmont, Stratford Plateau and Dawson Falls. For those who have yet to do any walking in this beautiful National Park, this will be the opportunity to much of what is on offer. For Saturday and Sunday nights we will stay either on the mountain where there is accommodation of different levels, or in the town of Stratford

which is closest to Stratford Plateau and Dawson Falls. Because it will be cooler, we will stay in comfortable lodgings. The trip gradings will be from easy to moderate and we will probably have two separate groups that meet up each night. One suggested walk was a 1 day Pouakai Crossing, for the fitter people.

On the eastern and south sides we can do parts of the Round-the-Mountain trip. Please note: If a van is used we must pay for 3 days of hire. The cost is lower per person if the van is full. If you want to go we must have all accommodation sorted a week prior to the cut-off enrolment date which will be Monday 20 April

Leader: Allan Wickens

Ph: 02709546

Grades: E-M

Email: *allanwickens@hotmail.com*

Transport: Senior member tba

Senior Non-Member tba

Accommodation: tba

Trip 2887

Omokoroa walks

3 / 4 May

Our trip leaders have recently shifted to live in Omokoroa and have even had time to explore and discover some lovely walks in the area. We are thinking of doing some easy to medium tramps in the Otanewaiianuku Forest - it is about 1 hr 40 minutes drive from Hamilton. This would include: the Rimu Loop Walk; the Lookout Track; and the Mountain Road to Whataroa Falls - all up it takes about 4.5 hours round trip. Schedule it for Sunday. I have done the Lookout Track part.

Leader: Allan Hughess

Ph: 027 757 7109

Grades: E/M

Email: *54days@gmail.com*

Transport: Senior member tba

Senior Non-Member tba

Accommodation: tba

Trip 2888

Moerangi Track

9/10 May

WE NEED TO TRY AND LEAVE HAMILTON AROUND 4PM. Those registering for this trip, can you please indicate whether this is a problem. From a very recent field visit to check out Okahu Valley Road and track to Skips Hut, I found a small problem – about 1km from the Okahu Valley Road carpark, the road has been washed out from some severe weather several months earlier. This will mean we have an extra 15/20min walk to the carpark from the washout. The stream is easy to cross as long as it remains low. Will also need to bear in-mind, that daylight saving would be over, so will be getting darker quicker. The new plan for the weekend is.

Friday: It is at least a 3hr drive to Okahu Valley Road ‘washout’ point, then a 15/20min walk to the carpark. Here we can camp and use toilets here.

Saturday: We will walk from the carpark to Moerangi Hut via Skips Hut (1hr 30) and Rogers Hut (3hrs 30 from carpark). It is another 3hrs from Rogers Hut to Moerangi Hut. The track is undulating with a gradual climb to Moerangi Hut. This will make it a 7-8hr day. The track is well graded and is also a mountain bike track. Moerangi Hut sleeps 9 people.

Sunday: We walk out to the River Road carpark, which is 5-6hrs. From the Hut, there is a stiff gradual climb to cross over Moerangi Saddle, then it is downhill to the River Road carpark. Then, we have the 3hr drive back to Hamilton. Further details will be sent to those registering closer to the time of departure.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: M/F

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport: Senior member \$ tba

Senior Non-member \$ tba

Trip 2889

Reunion walk in Waiorongomai

17 May

As part of the Waikato Tramping Club 70th anniversary celebrations, we will head back to where it all started. On Sunday (the day after the formal function), the plan is to meet up at Waiorongomai and do a pleasant and easy half day trip or longer (if there are some energetic people). This event can be held regardless of the weather - after all we are all hardy trampers! Unless we have a particularly bad weather forecast that is. We'd like to keep up the excellent safety record. It's not long till we record our 3000th tramp - amazing really.

Leader: Allan Wickens (Current Club Captain). We will have several past Club Captains along as well.

Ph 027 9509546

Grade: E

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com

Transport: tba.

Trip 2890

Reunion (Pt 2) at Waikato hut

23/24 May

Not long after the Club started, interest grew among members who wanted to go further afield, beyond the Waikato. In 1956 a hut was built at Whakapapa, alongside other Club huts. The primary interest was in skiing but walking up to the crater and other walks became a major attraction as well. Some members have spent many decades renovating and enlarging the hut since it was first opened. Nowadays, we have separate ski and tramping sections, but we often get together at the hut, which is central to our existence as a Club. As we normally do, we will leave Hamilton on Friday night (22nd) and travel to hakapapa. What we do for the remainder of the weekend is entirely up to the group's wishes. We can have leaders available to run whatever walk you wish. Please let us know what you would like to do so we can make the weekend a great one for you. We will be having a swept-up dinner Saturday night. All meals will be included in the cost.

Please note: Our Hut can only hold 32 people so any overflow will be at a neighbouring Club Hut. If you want to stay at our hut you MUST enrol early.

Leader: Allan Wickens

Bookings: via the reunion on the website

Accommodation: \$30 per night for members.

Food: Dinner \$25/person (Saturday night only), Full catering: \$40. BYO drinks/nibbles

Transport: tba Mixture of van and private vehicles. Get in early please - when you register for the Reunion weekend events or separately for the Ruapehu weekend if you cannot make the re-union itself.

Trip 2893 Te Whare Okioki & Kaimai ridge track 13/14 June

This will be a first for the Club, staying a week-end at the newly built Te Whare Okioki (hut). The hut was built in 2019 by the Kaimai Ridgeway Trust hunting and tramping volunteers. It is a 3 hour walk into the hut which makes for a pleasant Saturday. There is scope for walking more of the North-South Track if people want to. Return the same way on Sunday. Please note: This hut must be booked. It holds 12 people and is built to serviced standard. As a rule, we do not block book out an entire hut so some of the group will need to camp out adjacent to the hut.

Leader: Club captain

Ph: 0279509546

Grade: M

Transport: tba

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**Editorial**

Warm sunny days are great fun- if you are fully prepared! Anniversary weekend trips demonstrated both extremes. One group seemed to be in the swim on an hourly basis, refreshed and cool while the others on the mountain tops were seriously short of H<sub>2</sub>O. Please think carefully about your fluid requirements when tramping. Good hydration plays an important role in your enjoyment of the outdoors.

When you are sending me trip reports would you please not include pictures within the body of your email as I can't copy them out of there and into the bulletin. Attachments are the perfect way to send them please. Last month I had so many good photos to include that the digital size of the bulletin made for an interesting mission. Worked out ok though. We don't have enough advertisers inside our bulletin covers at present so I will use the spaces to include some of your photos from your stories – remember to have a look there too.

Note that I need your information for the April edition much earlier than usual – preferably before March 18<sup>th</sup> - as I will be incommunicado in Fiordland so have to get it sorted beforehand. I am aiming to get as much sorted as I can before this date.

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Presidents' Blog

Tramping trips this year have been well supported or over-subscribed. We've had two classic long-weekend forays, one into the depths of Te Urewera (where walking was regularly interrupted by frequent swims in the river) and another across the Kaimanawa tops where the lack of water was a problem. It's definitely getting hotter, even in the mountains, and these trips demonstrate the

implications for us. The South Island trip programme is well underway. Even here the hot weather and consequent fire restrictions have blocked access to several areas.

Federated Mountain Clubs asked for clubs to organise training courses on a regional level. Our effort was a Leadership Training course run over a weekend at Pirongia Forest Lodge in mid February. As well as our members we had participants from Kauaeranga, Wanderer's, Hamilton and Nga Tapuwae O Taneatua (Whakatane) tramping clubs. There were excellent presentations from our own experienced leaders and lots of useful discussion. A big effort to organise, but, according to those attending, well worthwhile as a way of gaining confidence in leading a trip. Thanks to John McArthur, Allan Wickens, Judith Bogle, Dave White, John Wilson, Dianne June and Margaret Robbins for the organisation, presentations and catering for the weekend.

Preparation for the 70th reunion celebrations in May continue apace. Allan Hughes is collecting amusing stories and other snippets for a special bulletin. Hundreds of letters and emails are going out to past members, if we can find them (electoral Rolls are a great way of finding recent address but it's a slow job!).

The next club night on 1st April will be our AGM. We'll start with the usual club business like the trip programme and follow the formal business with a short slide show of historic club photos of tramping, skiing and Waikato Hut photos.

Selwyn June

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**... from the ski Club.....**

Thanks to everyone who helped at the working parties over the last month. We have a good load of firewood restocked and some of the ongoing maintenance complete. The Hut is in good shape for a great winter.

With Easter and Anzac weekends coming up in April why not spend a few days chilling and enjoying the mountain as the warm weather starts to draw to an end. If you are thinking about Snowcraft this year, you could always get a summer ascent in over either of these weekends as a lead in.

With a developing ski programme, it would be great to see some more tramping parties making use of the hut when the winter rolls in. Using the hut as a base opens up some fantastic terrain for the adventurous. With more day visitor traffic last season we're expecting some changes to Saturday access, to help with the congestion on peak days. Getting up on Friday night is still the best scenario. Sometimes the weather looks dicey, and the mountain conditions can be changeable. Over the years we've found that unless it's a blizzard you will still make it up with 4WD or chains, and the weather clears during the weekend. We've got plenty of reading material and jigsaws for those slower times. Our biggest group of members are joint tramping and skiing members. This provides very affordable winter Hut booking, as well as access to online

booking and skiing activities. You don't have to ski to take advantage of the surrounding area, and the bountiful back country, largely unexplored or visited even on Buddy mountain days.

A big thank you to our committee members over the last several years, especially to Mary who is tasking a well-deserved break. We hope to see all of you over the next few weeks and sometime during the winter season as well.

Stephen Prendergast, Ski chairman

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## Trip reports

### Trip 2866

### Tui Mine to Mt Te Aroha

2nd Feb

Most of us have been up Te Aroha a number of times but I have not been up the Tui Mine route. We started out from Hamilton at the normal time of 8.00 a.m. With eleven on board including our leader / driver Allan, the forecast was for a stinker of a day but with a little overcast cloud promising a bit of relief. We arrived at Te Aroha township and headed up Tui Road just north of the township. A narrow winding road led to a large parking area that had already gained us some altitude. With loads of liquids on board and kitted up, we headed off at 9.15 a.m. With the road ahead of us leading up to the summit padlocked to traffic, we jumped the gate and following the road another k or so on a solid gradient past the old Tui Mine site before branching off and going bush. Now that we were under cover, the sky started to clear as we ascended and the heat built up. Not much air movement on this side of the mountain until we hit some more exposed areas and caught the cool breezes. Regular drink and breathing stops gave opportunity for a few photos. A bad case of the hiccups was soon remedied by Dave who spun quickly on the hiccuppee with a huge BOOO in the face. The ensuing scream reverberated through the bush, a shuddering realisation that I had nearly caused a heart attack, and then the giggles began. In the confusion, the hiccuppee thought I was just being mean, then I enquired after the hiccups, the penny dropped, and the ex-hiccuppee burst into laughter. I reckon I have cured her for a good two years.

The pace was steady, and as we started to get glimpses of the eastern ocean out over Bowentown, we re-joined the road briefly, before hitting the steeper climb up to the transmitter. This is where the beautiful views came hand over fist. The whole eastern coast came in to view, from out over Waihi Township and North, Waihi Beach, Matakana Island and Mt Maunganui and a little further South. Unfortunately, although the cloud had broken apart, the air was hazed by the smoke from our Australian neighbours and everything was “fuzzy”. Rounding the Southern end of the mountain before our last climb, the area over the Waiorongomai Valley opened before us and the view south along the tops of the Kaimai Ranges. Spectacular.



Our goal....

Photo by Dave White

The wind coming in from the West was humming in the steel framework of the transmitter and we found just enough shelter on the very top of the viewing platform to comfortably have lunch and enjoy the 360 degree views including up to the Firth of Thames and the Hauraki Plains.

Rehydrated and hungers sated, our trip down the Te Aroha Track began. All in all, a quick descent but the knees and ankles of some were making themselves known. Oh the joy of having a walking pole! We arrived near the bottom at the Domain at 3.20 p.m. (around six hours on the track) with a choice of some heading down to the hot pools or a café, and the rest taking the Tui Domain Track back to the van on Tui Road. Six opted for a break and five headed on. The speed increased to an Allan Wickens pace and we were off. It is a myriad of paths through this section with tramping / walking and cycling trails. There are numerous signs and coloured markers so easy to navigate.

For the most part, the path rises gradually with a serious incline nearing the end. Very pretty bush, although along the first part of the Tui Domain Track, hundreds and hundreds of privet trees have been ringbarked by chainsaw to kill them. My understanding from the Council is that they will die, dry out, and ultimately come down in their own time. It just looks such a mess.

We came out at the van at 4.30 pm – seven and a quarter hours on the track but a number of rest breaks and a nice long lunch stop. A brief stop to pick up the rest of our gang, a welcome ice cream or milkshake, and the trip home. Mischief managed.

Thank you Allan for taking care of us and your wealth of knowledge and tips. Other trampers were Marianne L, Wenyu X, Jennifer H, Akasha W, Shuai Z, Dorothy C, Margaret C, Greg E and Dave and Debbie W (scribe and Boo'ette). Sorry again to the Boo'ette.

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Trip 2867 Sawtooth Ridge in Ruahine Ranges 6/9 Feb

For most of our small group, this was the first venture into the distant Ruahine Forest Park. Distant from our usual haunts that is. Several days are needed, as the travelling times there and back limit the amount of time available to tramp. This year however, Waitangi Day thankfully fell on a Thursday. By taking Friday off as well, we had the luxury of a four day "longer than normal" long week-end. On Wednesday night, Steve, Les and Dale left Hamilton first while John and Allan attended the monthly Club meeting. Eventually we all met up at cabins attached to Mohaka Rafting on the Napier-Taupo Road, at a place called Time Out @ Titiokura. John and Allan arrived not long after the others just before mid-night. Early on Thursday, we drove the remaining 2 hours via a very dry Hawkes Bay landscape, to Moorcock Saddle car-park situated at the end of Kashmir Road (720 metres elevation). The remainder of the day was spent tramping up the well-used track to Longview Hut, which we by-passed and on to Pohangina Saddle at 1200m. We passed several hunters who were onto a target or two, as well as people doing a morning run to the hut and back. From Pohangina Saddle, we headed north along to Otumore (1519 metres) and Taumatatua on the Daphne Ridge before dropping the lovely Howletts Hut for the night. The day's effort took 7 hours in total, in fine and mild conditions. Howletts Hut is owned by the Heretaunga Tramping Club and can take up to 12 people. It was originally completed in 1940 and has been modified several times. This is a very worthy destination in its own right - situated in the heart of the southern Ruahines. However, we had bigger fish to fry! Friday started out fine as we left early on our longest day. After a 7.00 am start, we climbed up the big lump of Tiraha Peak (1668 m). This was the start of the serious stuff, being at the southern end of the sometimes dreaded Sawtooth Ridge. However, from here on it was up close and personal as we had no views along the entire length of the ridge. In fact, a cold rain had set in and it meant negotiating one "tooth"



Near Longview Hut

Photo by Allan Wickens

at a time in worsening conditions. Thankfully there was no wind. In the gloom, we went around some of the teeth and over some of them - one after the other for two hours and 2 kilometres. This is one of those ridges that looks more formidable than in reality. A faint track was visible most of the time and there is only one small section of down-climbing that took a bit more care. One account we read recommended avoiding the northern peak of Ohuinga by traversing across its southern face, to avoid a rocky section. In the murk we ended up on Ohuinga (1686 metres) regardless. From here on, we took an eastern turn on to Black Ridge with John's GPS working overtime in order to find the correct track.

Thankfully it stopped raining so the gloves and parkas were put back in our packs. Several easy rocky sections followed, some with large slips that have taken out part of the route. With almost no cairns or markings, the GPS was handy until we reached the first of the large tarns. By now the cloud was lifting and when we reached Tarn Bivvy (1420 m) at 2.15, we were at last able to take in most of the Sawtooth Ridge. This small hut made for a very pleasant brew stop and the "al fresco" long-drop toilet made for a humorous photo opportunity. John managed to photograph a falcon that swooped onto nearby rocks. Although we had already done a day's work, there was still more of Black Ridge to do before reaching our night's stop. Daphne Hut is situated in the Tukituki River



A welcome break at Tarn bivvy

photo by Allan Wickens



Howletts Hut

Photo by Allan Wickens



Trip leaders attendees

Photo by Allan Wickens

Course as well as instructed on matters relating to technology such as GPS, PLB's etc. John Wilson, Allan Wickens and Judith Bogle concentrated on the bulk of the topics involved, Dave White brought everyone up to date with OHS matters and Selwyn June diligently recorded all that was discussed. Some of the group started Friday night with an informal gathering. Saturday and Sunday were dedicated to such topics as the Qualities of a leader, Trip Preparation and Planning, Leading a trip, Before and After protocol. Several practical exercises were also held in the nearby bush. As a result of the week-end we are confident that those who attended as trainees have enhanced their knowledge on leadership matters and all agreed they feel more confident in leading trips in the future. The feedback they gave was very positive and gave the Instructors encouragement to hold future leadership courses on the same scale. Many thanks to Dianne June and Margaret Robbins

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**Trip 2873                      Thompsons' track & Wairere Falls                      29 Feb/1 Mar**

I will start from the last hour of this trip, unanimously agreed we are not doing Thompson's Track again this year, and possibly also next year. Until this road walk, we tramped though delightful old native bush, with tempting views out towards the East coast. After a jittery road trip with a van that was on its last legs, we began with the climb up to Wairere River and Falls, never seen the river level so low, and the flow was a-dawdling meander over the edge for the 90 meter drop into the valley.

We carried on along to the junction with the North South track, headed north and soon found a cool spot for lunch, off the track about 50 metres up a stream. It was a very warm day.

Fully loaded with calories and off we went to find the elusive camp site Allan remembered from 10yrs previously. The Kaimais are a beautiful place to tramp under cover all day, good tracks and easy-going gradients. After passing the Aongatete Road track and the Upland Road track Allan assured us we were close, and then there it was, right on the track, just as Allan described, a rock fireplace, sofa made from punga's enough spots to fit 6 tents and space to spare, a good flowing river, bliss. Had a spattering of bird life throughout the day. At night, we heard Morepork, and a couple of restless sleepers heard Kiwi.

Next morning up and off we went to conquer the hill to the top of Thompson's Track, and home via the icecream shop.

With thanks to our Leader (Young) Allan W, Driver (Younger) Allan W, Debbie and Dave, Peter, Amanda, and Merlyn (scribe)

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From the committee table:

New members: Cathy Dickson, Allen Geck, Brent Barber

Resignations: Bryre Pritchard, Len Davies, Anne Macindoe, Paul Quinn

Membership: We have 181 tramping members. Invoices for annual subscriptions and hut lockers etc have been emailed or posted to all members. Payment were due by 20 February. Please ensure you are paid up soon.

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.

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*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. The planning is well underway now and you can register on the club website. Several members have been helping to search the electoral roll for past members (until the time of writing the club has had 2565 members so lots of searching). If you know of the contact details for your tramping colleagues, please contact the editor of this bulletin with the information. Join in on the tramp and don't forget to visit Waikato Hut the following weekend.

➤ Introduction to Photography -Workshop. **Saturday 14 March 9 – 12pm**

To be held at the studio, Herbal Touch Centre, 22 Kensington Place, Chartwell, Hamilton. This beginner's workshop will get you up to speed on the basics of how your camera works, and more importantly, how you can take control of your camera to get the photos you want. Whether you've been shooting for 2 weeks or 2 years, if you are still shooting in auto, this class is for you. You will need to bring your camera that is capable of shooting in manual and semi manual modes (not necessarily a DSLR). If you are in doubt contact us before booking to come. Your camera will need to be fully charged and have an empty memory card so that you can take photos on the day.

WPS Members are free. Non-members at the time of the workshop \$30

Bookings essential as places limited. Any Questions or to book email

*jacqui@mainz-ltd.com*

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

✓ DoC welcomed Cardrona Alpine Resort Limited's decision late last year to halt chairlift construction as it would disturb an extremely significant site for New Zealand's jeweled geckos and other lizards.

✓ The new booking system for DoC huts and campgrounds is going live in Autumn this year, accepting booking dates from 1 July onwards. The existing booking system will only accept bookings for dates up to and including 30 June. You will have the opportunity to create an account in preparation to add bookings for your services to our system. An online application will be available on our website.

✓ David Agnew, DoC's Acting Operations Manager in Whitianga, says DoC laid charges under the Dog Control Act after the remains of a kiwi were found near Papa Aroha coastal forest – a known kiwi habitat – in July last year. He says two dogs have been linked to the death of the kiwi through DNA evidence. The owner of the two dogs will appear in Thames District Court in March. Eight kiwi were killed by dogs in the Coromandel area in 2019. Dogs are a major killer of kiwi in Northland, and a Northland dog owner will appear in the Kaikohe District in March for a similar incident in July 2018.

✓ DoC is investing more than \$3 million into upgrades at popular camping grounds at Waikawau Bay, Stony Bay and Fletcher Bay near the northern tip of the Coromandel Peninsula. Work on 10 new toilet and shower blocks at the Waikawau Bay campground has already been completed, with the improvements including a water reticulation system fed by a natural spring near the site. Further north, at Stony Bay, work is underway to install two new toilet and shower blocks at the campground, with water sourced from a local stream. At nearby Fletcher Bay campground – also a key location for people using the Coromandel Coastal Walkway - work is also about to commence on two toilet

and shower blocks. Water conservation is an important aspect of providing toilet and shower facilities at the camping grounds, so all sites have automatic shut-off systems to minimise water consumption. The systems give 30-second bursts of water from taps and showers, limiting water use.

✓ **Latest track info:** The Routeburn experience is now a return trip which can only be accessed from the Glenorchy side of the track. The track from Lake Mackenzie hut to the Divide carpark is closed. Anyone entering the Mt Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks need to be vigilant and careful about the conditions. While repairs have been made and the tracks are assessed as safe, bad weather could continue to impact the landscape. On the Milford track: partially reopened as a three-day return journey now called the Southern Milford-Mackinnon Experience. Note that the final 7km of the Milford Track is impassable at the northern end.

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

✓ Sir Edmund Hillary's Himalayan Trust is challenging you to climb 8848m – the height of Everest – in March to help remote mountain communities in Nepal. You can climb, run, walk or bike it. Complete it solo or share the climb between a team. Go hard out and tackle it in one weekend, or spread the challenge over the month. It's up to you! . (Ed comment: this is 19.7 times up Mt Kakepuku). Join the Summit Challenge in 2020 and help bring quality education, vital healthcare and safe drinking water to the Everest region of Nepal. Register on the FMC website.

✓ With the years' focus on family tramping ongoing, FMC are very pleased that "*Monster Merinos*" is offering discounts to FMC members. This family-owned business specializes in kods merino clothes which are made in NZ

✓ FMC is calling on NZSki to consider alternatives to charging for vehicle access to the Remarkables. In conjunction with the Queenstown climbing Club, it has h=started a petition asking NZSki, Minister for Conservation, and Director -General of DoC to ensure the long term future of the iconic Remarkables landscape, FMC is seeking your support and signature for guaranteed year-round free vehicle access to the Remarkables Conservation Area, and asking DoC to urgently re-classify this area to give it the environmental protection it deserves, You can read more background information on the website and sign the petition there too.

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*Free to a good home: Lesley has a tube for a platypus hydration system (not one for hydrating platypusses!) that she is happy to give to someone who can use it. Ph: 027 4942414*





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