

THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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

February 2021



Photo by Allan Wickens

A magnificent day in the hills of the Northern South Island

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

WAIKATO HUT

Your lodge on Mt Ruapehu
Tongariro National Park



www.wtc.org.nz

Is this edible? Waipakihi Jacqui Dick



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Club night, Wednesday, 3rd March

Gerard Kelly will be our guest speaker for this club night. He has the role of Community Planting Coordinator, Parks and Recreation for the Hamilton City Council.

>Gerard is going to speak to us about the wonderful Hamilton City Gully Restoration Project that he has been integral in helping to run for quite a few years, and the work that has been done to restore native flora and fauna to our network of gullies that run through the city.

Social Night on March 5th: Come along to a Movie night and enjoy a BBQ with your tramping colleagues. Graham and Andrea Haines will host the occasion at their home 9 Alison St., 6.30pm onwards. BYO meat to cook, refreshments, and a dish to share. We'll have the main course, watch half the movie, have dessert and coffee then watch the rest of the movie. Enquiries to the hosts 8395932. Cost \$20

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2021

	13/14 Feb	E/M	Waikato Hut workparty	Stephen Prendergast
	13/14 Feb	E/M	Pureora baiting	Dianne & Selwyn June
2922	15-20 Feb	M	Heaphy Track FULL	Peter Ayson
2923	14 Feb	E/M	Otawa Trig	Allan Wickens
2924	20-21 Feb	E/M	Tongariro crossing	Allan Wickens
2925	22-26 Feb	E/M	West coast wilderness cycle trail FULL	Margaret & Keith Robbins
2926	24 Feb-3 Mar	M	1000 Acre Plateau	Lois Rowell
2927	24-27 Feb		Jumboland / Wilkin R L Castella	Steve Cranefield
2928	28 Feb	E/M	Waikato River trails	Ron Dick
2929	1-7 Mar	VF	Ivory lake – Westland	Mike Peck
	5 Mar		Movie night	Graham & Andrea Haines
2930	5 – 8 Mar	M/F	Hump Ridge track FULL	Jacqui Dick
2931	7-15 Mar	F	Snowy Cr, Cascade & Arawhata Saddles	John Davies
2932	6/7 Mar	M	Kaiwhakauka Track	Les Warren
	6/7 Mar		Waikato Hut Workparty	Stephen Prendergast
2933	14 Mar	E/M	Ed Hillary Hope reserve	John Wilson

	20 Mar		Waikato Hut Workparty	Stephen Prendergast
2934	21 Mar	E/M	Bushcraft	Club Captain
2935	21-25 Mar	M/F	Kaimais - Sth to Nth	Rizal Razal
2936	28 Mar	M	Waiorongomai	John McArthur
2937	2-5 Apr	M	Mt Hikurangi	Allan Wickens
2938	11 Apr	E	Aviation mast	Merlyn Warren
2939	16-18 Apr	M/F	Cape Brett	Jacqui Dick
2940	24-26 Apr	E/M	Egmont Nat. Park	Allan Wickens

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.

Waikato Hut workparty

13/14 Feb

This weekend will be the first of 3 working parties so it's a useful chance to step forward to help. We have a further 2 planned for 6/7 March and 20/21 March. We provide the food and accommodation and put on a good social evening. Please let me know by emailing waikatoski@gmail.com.

We haven't seen too many heading to the Hut in summer this year, but all who have report wonderful days with glorious weather and plenty to do. It's a great time to explore the surrounding area and relax enjoying the glow of sunset in the evening. Summer rates are really cheap at \$25 a night for adults and \$15 for kids. The latest forecast holds plenty of fine weather all month and with Mt Ruapehu back to the lowest alert level a summer crater visit is a very enjoyable day out. For those heading south a faster ascent is a good leg tester for the more arduous trips.

The Lodge is also looking for a Custodian over the winter period running from June to early October - or thereabouts. Our preference would be to have a current or past club member in that role. If you are interested in finding out more please email me at waikatoski@gmail.com.

Stephen Prendergast

Pureora baiting

13/14 Feb

This is not an official club trip but with so many of you having participated in the past and enjoyed a leisurely walk in a beautiful forest, here is a description to entice you to join in again, and keep your fitness programme going. If Selwyn has correctly budgeted the bait requirements needed to kill all the rats in the Okahukura valley, you won't have much bait to put in your packs - yes this time we are removing whatever the rats (and occasional possum) have not eaten over the past 5 months. Expect your day pack to get fuller but not too much. Kokako numbers in this patch of forest are increasing markedly so you'll have a good chance of hearing or seeing them. We will stay at the Pureora Lions Lodge, arriving on Friday night. A safety briefing happens at 7.45pm, and we head further into the forest on Saturday morning. We will be able to do a tramp on Sunday if all the grid is covered on Saturday and my favourite is the Whangamata bike track to Kinloch. This is a scenic, mainly downhill, easy walk to the shores of Kawakawa bay (with time for a swim if you wish) before continuing on to Kinloch and our transport home. Alternatively, there are some nice short walks around Pureora village. If enough people are interested, we'll organise a club van but otherwise it will mean private transport. BYO all food, tramping gear, & a small pair of pliers.

Leaders: Dianne & Selwyn June

Ph: 8433066

Grade: E/M

Transport: Senior member: \$50-75

Senior non-member: \$ 55-80

Accommodation: **FREE** -Will be covered by the Pirongia Restoration Society.

Trip 2922 **Heaphy Track** **15-20 Feb**
This trip is now FULL
Leader: Peter Ayson **Ph:** 0274 797 077 **Grade:** M
Transport: Private arrangements

Trip 2923 **Otawa Trig** **14 Feb**
We will leave Hamilton at 8am and drive to Te Puke Quarry road to start the tramp at 10am The track follows the gently undulating ridgeline to Ottawa Trig with views of the coast and Mt Maunganui and Papamoa passing through lowland forest dominated by tawa and rewarewa. Lunch at the trig and then a descent down through the bush to Demeter road for our pick-up. Total distance 13km, expected time 5-6 hours the track will be mostly undulating and downhill in this direction. We should be back in Hamilton around 6pm. Hats and sunblock essential as there will be periods in the open farmland on this trip.
Leader: Allan Wickens **Ph:** 0274 368 216 **Grade:** E/M
Transport: Senior member \$20-25 Senior non-member \$25-30

Trip 2924 **Tongariro Crossing** **20/21 Feb**
Note: This trip will depart from London Street in Hamilton on Friday night (time to be determined but somewhere around 5.30-6.00 pm).
Over this weekend trip to Tongariro National Park, we will be based at our Club hut at Whakapapa. One of the main objectives is to do a Tongariro Crossing, in which we will try to avoid the crowds as much as possible by taking a route over Mount Tongariro instead of the heavily used South Crater. We will also attempt a trip to the crater lake of Ruapehu if the weather is suitable. Other tramps can be done depending on what the group wish to achieve over the weekend. On Saturday night we will be having a BBQ at the hut (has this been done before?) For new members and prospective members, this will be a great chance to see what our large hut/lodge offers, not only for tramping but during the ski season. For those who want a lazy weekend, there is the Sky Waka gondola that can take you up to the highest café in New Zealand. Beyond that is a well-graded walk up to what has become an “Instagram” spot east of the Pinnacles, where the scenery is spectacular. You may also wish to do some of the easier walks in the Whakapapa area and have “high tea” at the Chateau café. Let the leader know what you want to do, and we will make every endeavour to satisfy your wishes.
Leader: Allan Wickens **Ph:** 027 9509546 **Grade:** E/M
Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com
Accommodation: \$50/person
Transport: Senior member: \$ 50-75 Senior non-member: \$ 55-80

Trip 2925 **West Coast wilderness cycle trail** **21-25 Feb**
This trip is now FULL
Leader: Margaret & Keith Robbins **Ph:** 02102320067 or 0211207752
Email: kandm.robbs@gmail.com **Grade:** M

Trip 2926**1000acre Plateau****24 Feb – 3 Mar**

The 1000-acre plateau is a great tussock tableland in the southern Kahurangi National Park north of Murchison. This 4/5-day trip offers spectacular views and interesting limestone formations. The track starts at the end of Matiri Valley Road with 3 hours walk to Lake Matiri Hut. Tents will be needed as all huts are small with only 4 bunks. The following day is a steep 800 metre climb to get to Poor Pete Hut on the plateau for lunch. Then another 3 hours of more gentle terrain to reach Larrikin Creek Hut where we will be based for two nights. The next day will be spent exploring the area – The Needle, The Haystack and the upper 100 Acres Plateau. We will retrace our steps back down to Lake Matiri Hut for the last night and out to the road end on day five.

There may be an add on trip to the West Coast to do a number of short walks. For example, the Ballroom Overhang at Fox River which is a 4-hour return walk just north of Punklike, Cave Creek and other walks in the Paparoa area. This will be decided closer to February

Leader: Lois Rowell**Ph:** 027 2881148**Grade:** M**Transport:** Private arrangements**Trip 2927****Jumboland/ Wilkin/Lake Castella****24-27 Feb**

This will be a more relaxed / exploratory trip of the Wilkin Valley. Tents required Day 1 starts with an early jetboat from Makarora to Kerrin forks hut then tramp up to Jumboland and if time and river crossings allow up into the Wonderland valley to camp the night.

Day 2 we will explore the valley then retrace steps to the Wilkin and head to Top Forks hut for the night.

Day 3 we will take day packs to visit the 3 lakes Diana, Lucidus, and Castalia then return to Top Forks.

Day 4 will be the return for a late afternoon Jetboat back to Makarora.

Leader: Steve Cranefield**Ph:** 027 4368216**Grade:** M**Email:** steve.cranefield1@gmail.com**Transport:** Private arrangements**Trip 2928****Waikato River trails****28 Feb**

The Waikato River Trail is made up of 100km of off-road trails that follow the banks of the Waikato River from Lake Karapiro in the north to Atiamuri in the south, taking in five lakes, five hydro dams and a number of small towns and villages, showcasing some of the best of the Waikato heartland. The section we will be walking is from Waipapa Dam to the Mangarewa suspension bridge. This is a return trip as the section from the suspension bridge to Jones Landing has been permanently closed. The distance each way is 10km, through bush, past picturesque streams, and with quite a bit on well-formed track. If you would like to see the suspension bridge which is 80 metres long and 42 metres above the water, then walking this section of the trail is the only way to do so. Bring a thermos as we will start with some of Jacqui's lovely home baking by the shores of Lake Waipapa.

Leader: Ron Dick

Ph: 021 2608149

Grade: E

Email: ronjmd@icloud.com

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member \$25-30

Trip 2929

Ivory Lake, Westland

1-7 Mar

Ivory Lake Hut is a remote hut in Westland. It's a three day walk up the Waitaha river to reach Ivory Lake and its' iconic hut. We'll stay two nights at the hut allowing a day walk to a surrounding peak. Day 5 will be an alpine crossing to Top Tuke Hut and then a further two days walk out down the Tuke river. There will be some long days tramping in a challenging environment, a good level of fitness and experience in river trekking essential. We have 4 trampers confirmed for this trip with a maximum of six.

Leader: Mike Peck

Ph: 021369256

Grade: Very fit

Transport: Private arrangements

Trip 2930

Hump Ridge track

5-8 Mar

This trip is full but if you want to put your name on a waiting list....

Leader: Jacqui Dick

Ph: 021 1375201

Grade: M/F

Trip 2931

Time on the Tops/Aspiring National Park

7-15 Mar

A journey with a difference, from Rees Valley to the Matukituki Valley and beyond; whilst allowing time to explore the tops above Snowy Creek, Cascade Saddle and Arawhata Saddle areas. Visiting the remote wilderness of Mt Aspiring National Park with its dreamland of mountains, glaciers, birdlife, river valleys and alpine lakes. If you enjoy stunning vistas of mountains and glaciers, some off-track travel and tenting at high altitudes this is the trip for you.

Leaders: Jo Walker

Ph 027 3097750

Grade: F

John Davies

Ph 027 4772209

Transport: Arrange own to Queenstown for start, we finish in Wanaka

Trip 2932

Kaiwhakauka Track

6/7 Mar

Depart Hamilton Sat 6th March at 7am and drive to Ruatiti Road end; approx. a 4-4.5hr drive. Then, walk along part of the Mangapurua Track to a campsite at Mangapurua Trig. DoC says this takes 5hrs but we should take a bit less. The track is a good one – a 4WD farm track a lot of the way and track also used by mountain bikers. Sunday 7th: will aim to leave by 8am and walk out to Whakahoro via the Kaiwhakauka Track, another 5hrs (or a little less). The last 1hr is along a good farm road. If the weather is not good for camping, I will explore some options closer to the time. At Whakahoro, there is ample camping space, shelter for cooking, toilets and an old 10-bed classroom that could be used.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 864 4937

Grade: M

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com.

Transport: Senior member \$50-75

Senior non-member \$55-80

Trip 2933 **Karamu Walkway / Ed Hillary Hope Reserve** **14 Mar**

This easy/medium tramp will start on the Raglan Road and traverse the Karamu Walkway almost to Old Mountain Road. Wide views over the Waikato basin can be had along this section, most of which is in farmland. We will then turn west and drop down a ridge into the Ed Hillary Hope Reserve, pick up the David Thom Loop Track and climb up to the airstrip, where we get nice views towards Karioi. The track takes us around and back down into the valley, a branch of the Mangakirikiri Stream, and we then take another track which will take us up the valley and finally up through bush to re-connect with the Karamu Walkway not far from where we started. The tramp is not a long one but there is a bit of up and down and rough travel.

Leader: John Wilson **Ph:** 021 1682082 **Grade:** E/M
Transport: Senior member \$20-25 Senior non-member \$25-30

Trip 2934 **Bushcraft** **21 Mar**

Herr is your chance to learn some useful tips about bush survival, navigation, good gear selections, get a taste of GPS usage and pick the brains of those who have many years of experience. It will be a busy day with lots happening under the tutelage of club members. This trip does not happen every year so take advantage of the opportunity while it's available. We will be in the bush on Mt. Pirongia . Watch this space next month for more details.

Leader: Allan Wickens **Ph:** 027 9509546 **Grade:** E/M
Email: *allanwickens@hotmail.com*
Transport: Senior member \$20-25 Senior non-member \$25-30

Trip 2935 **Kaimai Full Length (South – North)** **21-25 Mar**

The trip is a five-day tramp over the Kaimai Range and will start from the entrance off SH29, on the southern side of the range, and ends at the Karangahake Gorge. Total distance would be approximately 82 km.

Leader: Rizal Razak **Ph:** 021 2676566 **Grade:** M/F
Email: *rizr@z@gmail.com*
Transport: This may involve private cars

Trip 2936 **The Chasm and Waiorongomai** **28 Mar**

Way up there in them thar hills, there's a chasm! It's called the chasm because it is a chasm: - "a deep fissure in the earth's surface". It is part of a fault line running from Buck Rock along the northern side of the Waiorongomai Valley which is situated a few kilometres south of Te Aroha.

To get from the Waiorongomai carpark we will follow the upper track, possibly side tracking to the top of Buck rock, until the end of the old mining tramline and then on to the Mangakino pack track for a short while to just past Premier creek. From there we will bush bash upwards, keeping close to the creek to where we should stumble onto (NOT INTO) the chasm. It is a gaping deep trench in the ground, quite amazing really and very interesting.

The return trip will most likely be back down via the May Queen incline and eventually to the bottom of the valley for an easy and pleasant stroll out to the carpark via the lower Waiorongomai track following closely beside the Waiorongomai Stream. Be prepared for a bit of bush bashing ...

Leader: John McArthur

Ph: 021 2889641

Grade: M

Email: mcarthur@outlook.co.nz

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: \$25-30

Trip 2937

Mt. Hikurangi

2-5 April

courtesy of Google)”*Mount Hikurangi (or Te Ara ki Hikurangi in Maori), is a 1,752m (5748 feet) peak in the eastern corner of New Zealand’s North Island, about 80 kilometres (50 miles) north of Gisborne and 50 kilometres (31 miles) southwest of East Cape Lighthouse. On a spur of the Raukumara Range in the Waiapu Valley, it is the North Island’s highest non-volcanic peak*”. Our Club undertakes a pilgrimage to this historic *maunga* approximately every two years and almost always on a long weekend due to the time needed to travel there and back. Again, from Google, ” *in Maori mythology, it was the first part of the North Island to emerge when Maui pulled it as a giant fish from the ocean.* ” So, there are several reasons to add a climb to the summit of this high peak. But, surprisingly, although Hikurangi stands aloft from other peaks, it has the nearby satellite summits of Whanokao (1,428 m), Wharekia (1,106m) and Taitai (678m) to keep it company. They all combine to make a wonderful panorama. We leave on Thursday night and travel to either Whakatane or Opotiki where we stay the night. The next day it takes most of the morning to drive to the trail head at Pakihiroa Station, in the Tapuaeroa Valley. After signing in with the farmer, we walk 4-5 hours up farmland on a 4WD track to the hut (10 bunks but can take up to 12 persons). We have booked Hikurangi Hut for two nights (\$30 per person). The next day we head for the summit, which is a 4/6-hour return trip. On Sunday (extra summit day if bad weather Saturday) we will travel to Te Araroa and stay the night after first visiting the East Cape and its lighthouse. Monday will involve a leisurely drive back to Hamilton. **Please Note:** This trip will be limited to 10-12 persons only and preference will be given to those who have yet to attempt Mt Hikurangi. We will all travel in a van as the cost for the 4-day hire requires a full loading.

Leader: Allan Wickens

Ph: 027 950 9546

Grade : M

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com

Cost: Senior member / Senior non-member tba (two nights backpacker level / 2 nights hut)

Trip 2938

Aviation Mast. Southern end Kaimai Range.

11 Apr

Meet at London Street, 7.30am. Trip starts off Old Kaimai Road, Henderson tramline track to North South Track, go to Hurunui Hut. This is where we go on an old track and a bit of scanning to find our way out to the back of the masts, then along the ridge and come out on the Summit Track. Pick up the Henderson

Tramline Track back to the vehicles. I have done this trip once and it will take 6-8hrs, depending on obstacles. Limit to 6-8 people because of the terrain.

Leader: Merlyn Warren

Ph: 0275249926

Grade: M

Email: *mylwarren@gmail.com*

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: \$25-30

Trip 2939

Cape Brett

16-18 April

(Depart 8am Friday 16 April, return Sunday 18th late evening)

We will leave early Friday morning and travel up to Northland, stopping on the way to do a short walk at a Regional Park. Friday night will be camping on the Marae grounds at Rawhiti. Dinner will be in Russell that night at Hones Garden Pizza Restaurant. The next day we start the Cape Brett walk.

This track traverses rugged terrain for 16 km through native and regenerating bush. Expect dramatic coastal views; steep cliffs and drop-offs to the side of the track are a feature. From the forested ridges, we will take in spectacular coastal scenery. Towards the Cape, walking alongside the dramatic cliff-face, you can often see dolphins and seals will come close to shore.

We may possibly take a side-track (1 hr return) down to Deep Water Cove, where we could enjoy a refreshing swim if it's a nice day. From Deep Water Cove onwards, the track gets more challenging and becomes quite exposed with steep drop-offs to the sea below. There are outstanding views of the outer Bay of Islands, north to the Cavalli Islands and south to Whangaruru and beyond to the Poor Knights Islands. The lighthouse at the end of the Cape Brett Peninsula is one of the many highlights of this spectacular walk. First built in 1910, more than 100 people looked after this station over its lifetime – including keepers, weathermen, butchers, gardeners, postmasters, painters and carpenters. It was decommissioned in 1978, although a replacement light still functions to this day.

That night we have booked out the 23 bunk Cape Brett Hut so we will have it all to ourselves! Sunday we head back to the way we came in. There is a possibility of the option of using a water taxi for part of the return trip but this is yet to be decided depending on logistics. Bookings require a \$55 deposit which covers the track permit and hut fee. Total costs will be approx \$150 - \$190 (depending on whether we use the water taxi) Pop into Bivouac Outdoors to talk to Mike if you have any questions at all.

Leaders: Jacqui Dick

Ph: 021 1375201

Grade: M/F

Mike Peck

Ph: 021369256

Email: *jacquimd@me.com*

Transport: Senior member \$60-90

Senior non-member: \$65-95

Track/hut fee: \$55. Water taxi and marae camping cost tba

Approx total cost for weekend: \$200.each.

Trip 2940**Egmont National Park****24-26 April**

Over this long weekend, we will look at doing a variety of tramping trips at Egmont National Park (Mount Taranaki). Initially we travel down to North Egmont where the plan is to stay Friday night at *The Camphouse*. This is an historic building clad in original corrugated iron from the time of the New Zealand/Maori Wars. From there, on Saturday, our group/s can do parts of the Round the Mountain walk, to the eastern and southern sides (Stratford Plateau and Dawson Falls) or north to Holly Hut and the Pouakais. Depending on the weather and the group/s wishes, pick-ups can be done at the end of each day and some re-positioning can be done as well. Sunday may be a repeat of Saturday, with further options for doing other tracks. This is a time to knock off a few of the tracks you've always wanted to do, without the worry of limited hut space as we can stay at *The Camphouse* each night, or you can book into/stay at huts at the end of each day yourself as well as camp.

This means the driver/s will be doing a fair bit of work over the weekend. Ideally, we will have enough participants to make it economical to have two vans. This means more flexibility in what we do. Otherwise, feel free to base yourselves at *The Camphouse* and do lots of short walking from there – as well as having a relaxing (easy level) weekend.

Please note: Bookings are essential well in advance for *The Camphouse*. The whole complex sleeps 34 people in 5 rooms (4 rooms have 8 bunks) and one room sleeps 2. It is largely self-contained with cooking gear, showers, and a communal lounge with heating. The cost is \$25 per night (child 5-17 \$10.) We are aiming to get two vans with around 20-22 people going on this trip.

Leader: Allan Wickens

Ph: 027 950 9546

Grades: E/M

Email: allanwickens@hotmail.com

Accommodation: The cost at the Camphouse is \$25 per night (child 5-17yr \$10)

Transport: Senior member \$60-90

Senior non-member: \$65-95

NOTE: There is no intention to climb Mount Egmont/Taranaki over this weekend. As it is autumn, there may well be fresh snow on the heights. This is the most problematical time to climb as the mountain will also be quite icy with frozen scoria.

Editorial

We're not going to let last year meddle with our plans for this year are we? Keep up the QR code tracing if you find them and sign in at the hut books.

And because our trips are so popular these days, there will be many of you moving around in the outdoors. This makes it really important to be in good health when you join the group in the van or car or bus and make your best effort to assist with contact tracing.

And on that note, I'm working on some contact tracing of my own but need a wee bit of help. The club has had over 2500 members since its' formation in May

1950. I would like to see us make contact with as many of the past members as possible and with modern technology I think we can do lots more than we were able to do for the clubs' 60th reunion. I have prepared lists of members and their last-known addresses to help make searches through electoral rolls much easier. If you would like to help with the searching by spending some time at the central library using a list of people from a particular region. Please give me a call if you can help. I would like to see the task finished by the end of March so we time to make contact with those we can locate and let them know that the 70th Reunion (well it'll be the 71st this year) will take place in early May in Hamilton followed by a dinner at the Waikato Hut the following weekend.

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### *Presidential Blog*

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A busy time of year for the club: lots of tramps, and some sightseeing, plenty of keen trampers. The beach doesn't always beckon.

We lost a Life Member in December: Gordon Yates. Gordon and his family did a lot for Waikato Hut, as well as being trampers. Gordon was the leader of the major extension to the Hut in 1974-5 and was responsible for drafting the wonderful design we enjoy today, complete with large windows on surrounding peaks. Quite a legacy.

I was interviewed by Radio NZ about the lack of Covid QR codes on DOC huts and campgrounds. DOC said that other methods can be used, like recording your name in hut books or intention sheets but this doesn't go far enough in my opinion. Some huts do have them, e.g. Pahautea Hut on Pirongia. If they are in place, please use them.

Donations made in honour of Paul McLennan have been used to install a water filter in Waikato Hut. Hopefully now, the water won't taste of ash.

Russell King and Stacey Thompson have resigned from the Ski Committee. I would like to recognise the tremendous effort they have made over many years looking after the maintenance and upgrading of Waikato Hut. As a result of their dedication, we have a comfortable lodge with new bunk rooms and warden's room, a weather-tight exterior, reorganised ski locker room and attic, secure chimney and many more improvements and repairs, not to forget the signs and clear directions all through the building. Many miles were travelled by the pair to Ruapehu and attending meetings in Hamilton. As well as many individual efforts, they ran regular work parties and liaised with DoC on work plans.

My term as President runs out in April at the end of the three years mandated by our constitution. A replacement is sought. The role is fairly limited, being mainly the chairing of the General Committee (three meetings a year), organising the AGM and generally 'keeping an eye on things'. The real work is done by the tramping and ski committees. Have a chat with me if you would like to know more.

## ... from the Ski Club.....

Waikato Hut members' rates for the summer will be adults \$25 children \$15. We ended the Ski season on the same rollercoaster ride that this year has been. Mt Ruapehu operations were extended with some late snow, but unseasonal warm weather and rain put paid to the last few weeks. A lucky few got the benefit of the last-minute opening of the Far West T bar.

With a few of us venturing overseas there's little remaining Xmas accommodation at most spots. However, a Xmas at The Lodge might be just the experience. There are lots of wonderful summer activities available around Tongariro National Park, and the easiest on mountain parking you will experience. Drop us an email at [waikatoski@gmail.com](mailto:waikatoski@gmail.com) to enquire or book for Summer.

Our working party dates next year are Feb 13/14 and Mar 6/7, with a further option Mar 20/21. There's more maintenance planned and it would be helpful to have a good turnout for all of these dates. There's always a good evening meal to be had, and the club provides the catering for the weekend.

Have you thought about making the most of Lodge and being a Custodian during our winter season ? We'd love to have a club member in this rôle, and we're going to chip in on expenses too as a way of saying thanks. Send your enquiries or expressions of interest to us ... [waikatoski@gmail.com](mailto:waikatoski@gmail.com)

Finally, we say thanks to Russell and Stacey who were founding members of the original Hut Management Committee in 2006. They are stepping back from the frontline. We wish them both well and look forward to seeing them down at the Lodge enjoying the fruits of their labour.

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## Mid-week Walks & Tramps

We are going to continue with the current format for these having a walk or tramp on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month. The activities have proven to be as varied as the group is and the communication via the Mid-week W & T s Group page on WhatsApp is working well.

If you would like to be part of this communication please download WhatsApp on your phone & text your request to Sharon 021 458 525.

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## Trip Reports

### Trip 2912

### Ngatuhua Lodge

12/13 Dec

Nana and I went to a lodge to stay for the weekend. My favourite part of the trip was the first tramp we went on. We voyaged across streams and forests to get to a memorable waterfall named Te Rere i Oturu. The lodge itself was homey and a great place to stay. I enjoyed the confidence course, kayaking, and I learned a lot there. I hope to go back one day.

Liberty

This was my second trip to Ngatuhua. The Te Rere I Oturu and Ngatuhua waterfalls were respectively as spectacular and as pretty as I remembered, but after seeing these two, the Wharawhara falls were an anti-climax. We set out on Sunday morning to find these last falls, climbing up a well-formed road on the other side of the Ngatuhua stream and then going along an initially straight and open path in the bush. Signage was infrequent, faded and not totally reliable. When we came down into the bed of a small stream, we saw that this stream disappeared over the edge of what appeared to be a sizeable bluff forming the Wharawhara falls. Despite clambering up the banks and peering down through the trees, we were unable to see the falls and I for one was not game to stand right at the edge or lie on my stomach to peer over. So, this was the waterfall that we found but did not see. Perhaps on another trip, intrepid trampers might find a way to a lookout, or to the base of the falls so the Wharawhara can be compared with the others in the area. A great weekend, thanks to Selwyn and Diane. **Fiona**

This was our third visit to Ngatuhua Lodge with the club, but the first since our 10 year old twins Crystal and Victoria came along. The girls have done a few tramps but can be a bit hard to motivate when it's just us (especially Crystal). This time they both managed well and had a great time. Even though Saturday's walk to the big waterfall was about 6 hours return, they didn't flag and had plenty of energy left over for kayaking in the canal and the confidence course afterwards.

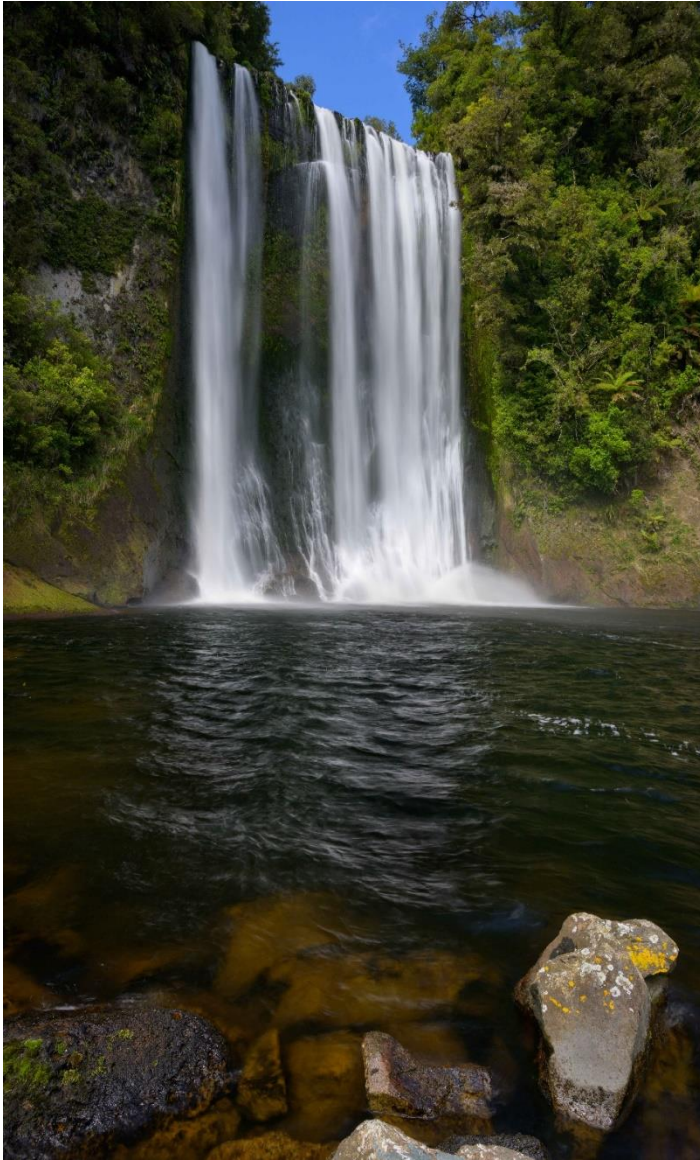
Saturday night's pot luck was quite a banquet, yet amazingly most of it seemed to get eaten with just a few left overs to be polished off for lunch the next day. Sunday was also full of entertainment with several short walks to spectacular waterfalls and a chance for a quick (and cold) swim in the swimming hole with its rope swing and 2 wire bridge before we all hit the road again. **Peter**

14 of us met behind McLaren Falls in the Kaimai range on Friday night and travelled in convoy, through the locked gate on a private road to Ngatuhua Lodge. We had stunning weather on Saturday as we walked to Te Rere I Oturu Falls. The first hour and a half were walking along an old forestry road with lots of flowering Rewarewa and then a turnoff took us down through the bush to the falls. The falls are 42m in height and legend has it that Oturu, who was being hotly pursued by his brothers-in law, took a flying leap over the falls to escape capture.

About an hour beyond the falls, we had lunch at a lake on the Opuiaiki river. We got back to the lodge after just over four hours of walking. Back at the lodge, some took the opportunity to try their hand at kayaking in the canal, others swam in the river, took their chance on the confidence course or read in the sunshine.

Saturday night was eventful with Jade Lye sleep walking off the top bunk and two false fire alarms in the early hours of Sunday morning.





On Sunday we visited three waterfalls: Ngatuhua Falls, Tauwharawhara Falls and Hydro Falls. Hydro Falls are very picturesque with the falls themselves being recessed in a small canyon which then opened up to a beautiful pool surrounded by walls of moss-covered rock. I'll definitely be keen to come back and capture more photos.

Te Rere I Oтуру Falls

Selwyn June was our trip leader, accompanied by Dianne J, Peter, Lily and Jade L, Peter & Christina & Crystal & Victoria B, Sharon S; Lynette M, Fiona G & granddaughter Liberty, and

Photo by Nicola Guy

**Nicola G (scribe).**



Water sports on the Ngatuhua stream

Photo by Sharon Sholl

**Trip 2914**

**Mount Tapuae-o-Uenuku**

**31 Dec-3 Jan**

As mentioned in the trip description, Mount Tapuae-u-Uenuku is not only the highest peak north of the Mount Cook region, but it was the mountain Sir Edmund Hillary called “... *A decent mountain at last*”, after he had climbed this peak in 1944. At 2885 metres (9465 feet), it is almost 100 metres higher than Mount Ruapehu.

On the last day of a forgetful 2020, our group of six trampers travelled from Blenheim, up the vineyard-packed Awatere River, to Gladstone Downs Station at the confluence of the Hodder River. Leaving our vehicles there, we walked for about 7 hours up the Hodder River, negotiating two gorges in the process and crossing the river about 90 times. En-route, we passed a group of Auckland trampers who had just climbed “Tappy”. They said crampons and ice axes were not needed as there was little snow on the route. As no one else was at the two huts, we had plenty of room, for the whole 3 days we were there.

On New Year’s Day 2021, we were away early and by mid-morning had passed from Staircase Stream to an area of very loose scree and rock, relentlessly heading up. Advice we were given said we were to follow cairns towards a prominent col near the summit. However, the cairns and any evidence of footprints ran out and we were left wondering if we were “off-route”. Eventually, we reached a large, flat area where we were able to look down into a cloud-cloaked Clarence River. The nearby, dramatic peak, aptly called Mount Alarm (2877 metres) cleared as we ascended. By the time we reached the summit just before noon, Mitre Peak (2621 metres) was also clear. Surprisingly, the cool breeze dropped to a mere zephyr, and it was very warm on our lofty point, where we had lunch. However, as clouds rolled in, the temperature dropped, and the wind increased.

We made a cautious down-climb, using the familiar route we had used on the ascent. Very loose scree made walking difficult and we had to be ever watchful when loose rocks were dislodged. Eventually, we were back into Staircase Creek, and after a 9-hour day, were back at the huts. Satisfied with our efforts, we declared the next day to be a “rest day” before we faced the long walk out down the Hodder.

The following day, it was cloudy, which made the huts more enticing. Most of the day was spent doing the hut jigsaw, a 1000-piece devil of the type where you have no idea of what it’s about and you’re looking from the “inside out”. Using the combined skills of our group of six, we spent a total of about 35 man/woman hours completing the puzzle. In the meantime, David and Russell went for a walk, part way up the headwaters of the Hodder towards Muzzle Saddle.

On our last day, we walked back out to Gladstone Downs in perfect weather. We enjoyed chatting with Alan and Bev Pitts, who have farmed in this area for many years. We mentioned the number of goats we had seen, including dead ones. Alan said his son had recently been doing aerial shooting of feral goats in the area. On one day they killed over 700 and the next over 600. In doing so, they “hardly made a dent in the overall population”.

After making the last crossing of the Hodder before climbing up to the farm track, Allan said that would be his “last ever crossing of the Hodder”. Over 9 trips up this river, mostly in winter, he would have done over 1000 crossings. There would have been more but a rescue by helicopter in 1995 from a snow packed



Kaikouras, plus a retreat in 2018 halfway up the Hodder (when a Club member was injured), meant less crossings.



On the top of Tapuae o Uenuku

Photo by Allan Wickens

Allan Wickens (leader and scribe), David T, Susanne H-S, Jeanette D, Russell K and Sarah P, enjoyed this trip. Jeanette (formerly of Blenheim) was particularly pleased to have “knocked off Tappy” as she was the last of her siblings to have done the same.

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Trip 2915 *Cafes and Ramblings in northern South Island* 6-17 Jan

Fresh from their trip to Tapuae-u-Uenuku, Susanne and Allan then met up with Lynette and Ray, at the start of this trip. The intention was to visit as many DOC parks as possible throughout the Marlborough-Nelson-West Coast-Arthurs Pass-Mid Canterbury areas. Not only that, but cafes and some form of “glamping” would be done as well. As it was the peak holiday time for Kiwis, the aim was to be as self-sufficient as possible during the trip. To this end, we had a large marquee, all the camping equipment one needs, as well as larger than normal tents to sleep in. Luckily, the weather gods were with us and we enjoyed almost totally fine weather, except when it heavily rained one night.

Prior to this group meeting up (and setting the tone for this trip) the first café was in Blenheim, where David Totman (ex “Tappy” as well), Susanne and Allan had already enjoyed a late afternoon stroll up the Wither Hills, for a good view of the Blenheim area. We also visited the excellent Omoka Aviation Heritage centre featuring World Wars I and II aircraft, largely funded by Sir Peter Jackson. Our last evening together was spent at a wonderful DoC campsite at Ohinemahutu,

beneath the Richmond Range. This spacious, grassy area had few campers and the adjacent native bush and stream for swimming was lovely to visit. On our first official day of Trip 2915, we drove to St Arnaud to find no campsites available at all. Instead, we managed to get a unit at the Alpine Lodge. That day, we had a very enjoyable time, in perfect weather, doing the Mount Robert Circuit. Starting on Paddy's Track, we climbed up to Bushline Hut where we had lunch. From there, we walked to the junction of Pinchgut Track and along to Peak 1577m, where we were able to look down at the old skifield buildings. The remainder of the day was spent walking downhill to where we had started. After this, the next day we did the St Arnaud Range Track from Kerr Bay. Starting out in cloudy conditions, we reached the bushline at Parachute Rocks, where the clouds finally relented, and we were fortunate to have more fine views. That night (still no campsites available), we travelled to the nearby Tophouse Historical Inn, where we had a very enjoyable night with fine dining, courtesy of the resident (Polish) chef. Satisfied with what we had already achieved at Nelson Lakes National Park, we then drove via Murchison, to Springs Junction and a DoC campsite at Marble Hill, where we spent two nights camping. That afternoon, Susanne and Lynette walked up the Alfred River to the family-friendly hut at Lake Daniell. Ray pottered around and went part way while Allan set up camp. On his return, he said he had an interesting encounter with a weka that pecked at him while he was having a nap. That night, after a pleasant barbeque, it rained heavily, and cooled the air down. The following morning, we went to a foggy Lewis Pass, climbing up onto the Lewis Pass Tops as far as Peak 1561m. Ray rested up a short distance



. We were rewarded with fine views of the Spenser range (Mount Faerie Queene and Gloriana prominent). Later that day we all had a cool but refreshing bathe in the clear Maruia River. From the Lewis Pass, we drove to Punakaiki and Paparoa National Park (stopping off at a nice café in Greymouth for the first of two stops there). By now, the holiday crowds were thinning out as locals went back to work.

At Punakaiki, we did two walks. The first was up the Porarari River as far as the Inland Pack Track and the following day we did the newly opened Cave Creek Memorial Walk. The latter, opened in 2020, commemorates the deaths of 13 Tai Poutini Polytech students and one DOC worker 25 years earlier, when a badly built platform plunged 40 metres to rocks below, taking a total of 18 people with it.

The next DoC estate we visited was Arthurs Pass, where we stayed at *“The Sanctuary”*, a backpacker’s establishment that primarily caters for Te.Araroa Trail walkers Susanne and Allan had stayed there a year ago. Since that time, the owner (Bill) had reported a 90% drop in revenue due to Covid-19. His comment was reflected in the extremely low tourist numbers at Arthurs Pass and other places we were to visit, once the main flush of Kiwi holidaymakers had gone back to work. This area of New Zealand is in for grim times ahead no doubt. Les joined us at this stage.



Starting or finishing?

Photo by Allan Wickens

Walks we did here, from the village, included to Bealey River (right up near Mount Rolleston), Otira River and an Avalanche Peak circuit. The brilliant weather continued throughout our stay at Arthurs Pass. On our last day, we did the Bealey Spur walk to the old (built 1935 and still original) former musterers’ hut.

Finally, we travelled to Methven where we stayed at the home of Ross and Trudy, long-time friends of Allan. Ross accompanied us all on the two-day Woolshed Creek to Pinnacles walk. At Pinnacles hut, we were entertained by an exuberant 5-year-old child. Chatty and outgoing, her aura was broken somewhat, when Allan witnessed her being dragged to the long drop toilet by her father. She was screaming *“I don’t want to go in that toilet – old people have been using it!”*. Cafes featured a lot on this trip, as promised. We did, however, manage to fit in a total of 12 walks as well. All-in-all, a wonderful trip that was no doubt made that wonderful by the brilliant weather. Susanne H-S, Lynette M, Ray H, Les W and the scribe and leader, Allan Wickens were certainly lucky this time.

Trip 2916

Pirongia circuit

16 Jan

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John's Initiation Ingenuity

John made a rather ambitious call to take us three newbies up the Mahaukura Track to the Pirongia summit. Scrambling over rocks and roots, we wondered whether this was some sort of initiation ritual to the Waikato Tramping Club! With two bung knees, a twisted ankle (from half way up onwards) and some track anxiety based on a previous trip, we certainly had our work cut out for us.

But with John's cheerful patience and quiet determination to get us to the hut before dark, we dug deep, faced our challenges and made it. Day 2 down the Tirohanga was much easier, thanks in part to someone having cut the overhanging grass.

The slower pace also gave us a chance to stop and appreciate the bush, which was a bonus. However, we've also heard about Alan's cafe tours, so might give them a go next time!! Thanks John for a memorable trip. We actually do appreciate you taking the time and energy to initiate us.

Note: The Mahaukura Track is overgrown in places, a longer route than Tirohanga and much more scrambling than Tahuani, for anyone who's thinking of following our footsteps. A nice challenge for the more seasoned trumper. According to someone we met on the track, the Bell has been apparently largely forgotten by DoC. The team: Maddy, Wendy, Naomi (scribe) and John.

## **Trip 2919A**

### **Waipakihi River and Thunderbolt**

**29 Jan-1 Feb**

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This trip was a little different as we had two groups travelling to the same destination, but travelling different tracks. We started with two vans and 20 trampers on the Friday evening. A brief stop in Wairakei to top up and empty out.

We arrived at the camp site in the dark and proceeded to pitch tents at a great rate of knots. We went to bed with the knowledge that in the morning we would be gifted something extra to put into our packs. The following morning having received our gifts, the “Fit” team were dropped off at their start point. The van returned and the rest of us were transported to the start of the Urchin track. A

steady climb up to the trig with reasonably clear views , but a very nippy breeze which required at least one more layer to be added. A lovely brisk walk (due to the cold) across the top until we could see down into the Waipakihi valley and the river. A reasonably steep climb down for the next hour/hour and a half and we were at the bottom. We zig zagged across the river several times, wandering past the sign for Thunderbolt and up the river further. It took us quite some time to find a suitable spot where we would be able to pitch 19 tents in amongst the tussock and brush. Eventually we found a nice spot next to the Thunderbolt river just where it joined the Waipakihi river. Tents were pitched and we were shortly joined by the “fit” group. Gifts were collected and the chef began to create. That evening we were treated to crackers, cheese and humus followed by wild venison curry, venison steaks, sausages, cranberry jouch, and two salads. This was followed by chocolate brownie. So, with very content stomachs we retired for the night, only to find our tents quite white and crisp in the morning.

The “fit” team packed up and headed upstream. We packed up and headed downstream to the start of the Thunderbolt track. We were almost there when there was a cry and then all that was visible was a pole. One of the team had rolled her ankle and been unceremoniously dumped on her butt. She was able to hobble to our destination but made the wise choice to stay in camp with one of the others opting to remain behind with her, whilst we set off for higher ground with much lighter packs having pitched our tents and unpacked unnecessary items. We filled our drink bottles from the fast-flowing water coming out from just above the Waipakihi river and then climbed up through the bush to the top. We wandered along the barren tops and enjoyed the amazing views from White Island down to Mount Taranaki and more. We stopped at the top for some lunch and took time to really appreciate the beauty of our country. We then wandered along to Thunderbolt and had a look at where the “fit” group were planning to camp for the night. We then returned the way we had come, with many opting to have a dip in the lovely swimming hole when we returned to camp. Good old dehydrated food for dinner!!

Monday morning we were up (frozen boots and tents) and moving on down the river. The call was made to airlift our wounded party out. The group split in two with four staying to see off our helicopter thrill seeker and the rest setting off up the hill on the Urchin track. We were about half way to the top when we heard the helicopter land and then take off again. The top was much warmer today and we were able to take time to enjoy the views and the environment around us. We stopped at the trig for lunch – some opting for the shade just down from the trig and by time we finished lunch the “fit” group and four had caught up with us. Everyone walked back down through the bush to the waiting vans.

We were able to collect our wounded from the Taupo Hospital – no broken bones, , but a very swollen and tender ankle. Great weekend away.

• We have liftoff

Photo by Callum McDougall



Trampers: Jacqui D (Trip leader & 2nd Chef), Amanda C & John Mc (drivers), Steve D (Chef), Jeanette, Jan F, Cathy, Lynette M, John D, Russell, Sheryl T (scribe), Beatrice, Judith B (there is someone missing, but I can't figure out who)

We have liftoff

Photo by Callum McDougall



View from the Urchin track

Photo by Callum McDougall

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**From the committee table:**

**New members:** Welcome to Joshua Hughes, Dean Robertson & Dora Luo, Jane Schick, Lynda & Bill Izard. May you have many great trips with the club!

**Resignations:** Bruce Laugesen

**Membership:** We have 195 tramping members this month.

**From the President:** Yesterday I was interviewed by Radio NZ about the lack of Covid QR codes on DOC huts and campgrounds. It was aired today on Morning Report.

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/morningreport/audio/2018780543/trampers-bemoan-the-lack-of-qr-codes-at-doc-huts-loos>

I wasn't sure if there were codes in place, but John has since confirmed that Pahautea Hut on Pirongia has none. DoC said that they only have them at Visitor centres and campgrounds with a DoC ranger present. DoC said that other methods can be used, like recording your name in hut books or intention sheets. My points were that: our members would use them as they made everyone safer; that we had them on our own Hut and would expect them on DoC huts. I wonder if DoC will respond and change their approach. It couldn't be too hard to put scanning codes up on the main huts at least, as DoC staff visit them. They've had more than 6 months. Selwyn (speaking as President)

.... And 7 days later DoC issued this. (they got the message):

We're expanding the use of COVID-19 QR codes at our huts and other facilities to enable better contact tracing. While our online booking system already ensures our most popular huts have an effective contact tracing system in place, more QR codes will encourage people exploring the outdoors to follow the right behaviours. Read more: <https://bit.ly/36l2PVj>

## **Advance Notice**

The Waikato Tramping Club will hold its  
**2021 Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 7th April.**

An AGM booklet will be mailed to you in late March and will include an Agenda, annual reports, financials and budgets.

Written nominations for members of WTC's General Committee close on 17th March. The positions are President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-presidents for Tramp and Ski as well as three representatives for each sub-committee. Nomination forms can be obtained from our secretary, Judith. Completed forms can be handed to Judith at club night, posted to Waikato Tramping Club, P O Box 685, Hamilton 3240, or scanned and emailed to [waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com](mailto:waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com)

**OBITUARY FOR GORDON YATES**  
**Life Member of Waikato Tramping Club**

The following words have been compiled from notes written by Annette Kidd (King), Russell King, Graham Haines, and Nigel Lancaster.

From Annette:

Gordon came to the forefront of WTC when a decision was made to build a hut on Mt. Ruapehu. He was a draughtsman in the architectural division of the Education board so he began many hours of drawing and designing many buildings amongst the building committee, including an oval roof barn type. This design was thrown out by the committee in favour of a more conventional design. He also spent many hours participating in working bees on the mountain in Hamilton which included hours of firewood gathering, shovelling sheep and chook manure as part of a massive fundraising project. Gordon had a motorbike and he would visit the Kings in Matangi on many weekends. He then turned his interest to sailing and bought a trailer-sailer yacht which he enjoyed on many trips. In later life he developed a voice problem which caused him some difficulties in talking to people. Our thoughts go to his 3 children and sister Diane.

From Russell:

Russell says remembering that Gordon Yates was the architect behind the dream of the present Waikato Hut to have a view in 3 prominent directions. Namely those directions being to view the Top of the Mountain, Mt Ngauruhoe and Mt Taranaki. The present-day lodge, completed in 1975, has achieved all these views thanks to the design vision of Gordon. We must thank Gordon for his flair and design interest for a location that he absolutely loved. Without Gordon's flair the lodge would not be what it is today. His design wish was to hide the old building and create a new building as one complete new building. He did achieve that.

From Graham Haines:

Last month, one of our Life Members died. Gordon was certainly a good age but had not kept the best health for a while. I first met Gordon when I joined the club in 1968. At that stage, because of family commitments, Gordon wasn't doing much tramping but had a strong interest in Waikato Hut. About five years later, the rules changed regarding the number of people who could stay in the hut. The Taumarunui County Council deemed all huts on Ruapehu to come under the boarding house regulations and because of the then size of Waikato Hut, the maximum number of people that could stay was 9. Gordon was President at the time



and he organised a meeting of our members to approve extending Waikato Hut from a small single storey building to what it is today. Fortunately for us, Gordon was also a registered architect and it was his design that was accepted and how the building looks today. He did an amazing job in merging the old and the new to give us a building that looks totally integrated.

Saying yes to extending the building was the easy part, raising the money and constructing the new building was the hard part. A lot of the success of the project has to go to Gordon's efforts. He drove the project hard and motivated club members to contribute a lot of time and money to give us the building that we have today. I cannot remember any time since when in the Club's history, the club was focussed to such a high level. We have had many projects on the hut since the 1970's which have taken a lot of work and enthusiasm from members, but by comparison, what we did in the 1970's was huge.

During the four years from deciding to extend and officially opening the new building, I and other club members got to know Gordon very well. He got a bit grumpy with people at times – definitely it was well deserved, but once said, all was forgotten and we carried on as if nothing had happened. Most members don't know the huge debt the Club owes to Gordon and it was sad to find out that he passed away last month.

One final thought – Gordon gave a lot to the Club – he didn't have to and would only have done this because he strongly supported the Club and its members.

Thanks Gordon for all you did and may you rest in peace.

## Snippets from here 'n there

✓ Do you have a PLB story to share? do you own/hire one and why/why not? Why do/don't you own/hire a beacon? The Mountain Safety Council team are looking for positive stories about PLB usage in an emergency situation, and what were the events leading up to it. It's important to us to share real stories about people packing a PLB and having to use them. By sharing these stories, we aim to highlight good preparation and highlighting the importance of a PLB. Send your story to Rebekah: [rebekah.wilson@mountainsafety.org.nz](mailto:rebekah.wilson@mountainsafety.org.nz).

✓ **Recycling gas cannisters.** Take them to: GasPro, 134 Grey St., Ham East.

✓ **Recycling Lithium batteries.** Take them to: Grimmer Motors, 998 Heaphy Terrace, Claudelands, Hamilton East, opposite Vege King.

## From the DoC website

- A swarm of earthquakes shook Rotorua on 25 January. The largest was a magnitude 4.9 earthquake which struck at 8.12am at a depth of 5 km. Okataina, 20 km east of Rotorua, was the epicentre for the shakes. DoC, which manages the walkway on behalf of the Lake Okataina Scenic Reserve Board, was made aware of a significant slip approximately 250 m from the Lake Okataina Carpark shortly after the swarm ended and closed the track pending a geotechnical assessment. An engineer has now visited the site and noted parts of the slip are highly fractured and unstable. “We are advised ongoing rockfall and slipping is expected in the short term. Potentially this will include large boulders. Given this risk it is not appropriate for anyone, even my staff or contractors, to enter the slip area at this time. Consequently, the popular track remains closed along its entire length from both the Lake Okataina entrance and the Humphries Bay entrance.
- Ten captive-raised juvenile kākāriki flew with Christchurch Helicopters into the Hurunui South Branch in Lake Sumner (Hoka Kura) Forest Park recently, bolstering the wild population. They were released into the wild after spending two days acclimatising in an aviary. The budgie-sized birds were raised at The Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust (ICWT) facility in Christchurch, where a successful breeding programme has been running since December 2003. DoC field staff recently found 10 nests in the Hurunui South Branch, signalling a good breeding season is underway. Unfortunately, this comes after 17 chicks in the captive breeding programme died from heat stress during the unusually hot days recently,



Passing the buck... oops boot at the Christmas party

Phoro by Ray Hoare



**Trumper of the year Judith Bogle receiving the trophy from Selwyn June (President) at the February club night.**





Trip 2919B Kaimanawas Photos by Mike Peck





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toothbrush

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15% off RRP for Waikato Tramping Club

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