

# *Wanganui Trampler*

*February - April 2018*



*Quarterly Journal of the Wanganui Tramping Club (Inc)*  
[www.wanganuitrampingclub.net](http://www.wanganuitrampingclub.net)

## *From the Editor*

Well haven't we been lucky with our wonderful summer!

This is your magazine and we would love to see contributions from members. This could be memories of how you became interested in tramping or an article that you think may interest other trampers. Please forward any contribution to me at the email below.

Our website is:

[www.wanganuitrampingclub.net](http://www.wanganuitrampingclub.net)

All contributions may be emailed to Jeanette at

[jvprier9@gmail.com](mailto:jvprier9@gmail.com)

No email? Handwritten contributions are perfectly acceptable.



*Jeanette Prier*

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Cover: Start of BOMBS trip on the Whanganui River Road

*The opinions expressed and articles published in 'The Wanganui Trumper' are not necessarily the views of the Wanganui Tramping Club Inc.*

*The Wanganui Trampler*  
Official Magazine of the Wanganui Tramping Club (Inc.)  
P.O. Box 7324  
WANGANUI 4541

ISSUE 256

FEBRUARY - APRIL 2018

*From the  
PRESIDENT*

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

Along with many others, I have been fortunate to have had some wonderful tramps in 2017. I reflect on these as I consider the beauty and diversity of our great outdoors and the comradeship experienced along the way.

Unfortunately I missed the very successful Club BBQ and Dutch Auction held at our December Club night - \$850 was raised! The committee has chosen to round this up to \$1000 and it will be donated evenly between the Manawatu and Taranaki Rescue Helicopter Services.

Thank you to all who helped with the running of this event and of course to those who participated in the auction. Well done you!

The hope is that we never have to use these Rescue Services. We each have a responsibility to ensure our own safety and that of our fellow trampers. This can start with something as simple as keeping our groups together and looking out for each other. Club leaders, and those borrowing club PLBs, must send details of their trip and names of participants, to the PLB contacts.

In April (weekend of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>), Mangaturuturu Hut turns 60!! We welcome suggestions of how you would like to celebrate this special event in a very special place.

I look forward to catching up with you all again very soon. Best wishes for many happy and safe tramps during 2018.

Cheers

*Margret McKinnon*

## Pleased to Meet You!

### New Members

Bobbie Cave, Bryan Christie, Jennifer Garrett, Jiri Krivanek, Joanne Merson, Wendy O'Malley, Marilyn McGlone and Reti Pearce, and Clive and Ann Rennie.



Our membership database needs to have the correct information so we can keep our members informed and up to date.

If there are any changes to your contact details please let Barbara Gordon (membership, ph 348 9149) or Dorothy Symes (treasurer, ph 345 7039) know as soon as possible.



### *Condolences*

We convey our condolences to the following members of our tramping family...

Heather and Michelle Mackenzie on the death of their mother/grandmother Joyce.

Colin Watson on the death of his wife Beryl.

Mark Sutherland on the death of his mother in law Maewa.

Kevin Ross on the death of his mother in law Lynsay.

Earle Turner on the death of his brother Brian and brother in law David Bourne.

Neil Farrer on the death of his wife Jen.

We apologise if we have overlooked any deaths.

### Club Nights

Club Nights are held on the first Wednesday of each month  
(except January). Meetings are held  
in the Hunters & Deerstalkers Hall, 100 Peat Street at 7-30pm

### Club Night Programme

For details of the Club Night programme please see “Scroggin” column in  
the Wanganui *Midweek* newspaper (generally the week before). All are  
welcome.

**Getting to the top is optional.  
Getting down is mandatory.  
Ed Viesturs**

Copy for the  
May 2018 Issue of the  
*Wanganui Tramp*  
to the Editor by  
April 16th 2018  
(Earlier appreciated)  
Thank You! - Jeanette



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*Thankyou*

## Club Activities

### **MIDWEEK**

**Wednesdays:** A more challenging midweek day tramp is offered weekly, planned by rostered leaders.

Coordinated by:

**Margret McKinnon 344 3899**, email [mjmckinnon@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mjmckinnon@xtra.co.nz)

**Thursdays:** A tramp every second Thursday. No bush bashing, generally over better tracks and a little easier. Planned and led by Earle Turner.

Coordinated by:

**Val Cowan 345 0456**, email [otterval@gmail.com](mailto:otterval@gmail.com)

Coming months' Thursday trips will be on the following dates:

**February 1 & 15**

**April 12 & 26**

**March 1, 15 & 29**

**May 10 & 24**



**TT2's (the second Thursday walk):** Alternate Thursday mornings.

Leader **Carolyn Shingleton 347 7644** will advise the meeting place and time. Easy, ideal for the more senior member / recovering from injury / or for that extra walk with companions.

### **WEEKENDS**



Overnight/multi-day tramps are advertised in *Tramper* along with the leader's contact details.

**Weekend DAY Tramps:** Ask to be on the email list if you are interested in Saturday or Sunday day trips. Contact **Dorothy Symes 345 7039**

**Mountain Biking:** Mountain bike trips are held from time to time. Enquiries to **Mark Kennedy 343 1135 or 027 757 1888**

**Tuesday Biking (BOMBS):** Depart from the I-Site 9.00am Tuesdays. Ask to be on the email list.

Contact **Carolyn Shingleton 347 7644**



## ***TRAMPING TUCKER***

*BY UNCLE HAL*

### **Mung Bean Sprouts by Irene Back**

In a plastic bag put 2 spoons of mung beans, cover with water and soak for 12 hours. Drain and rinse twice daily until sprouted, approximately 2 days. Irene used 2 plastic bags, 1 with small holes in, which is easier to rinse the sprouts and then another plastic bag without holes in to tie the sprout bag outside of her pack. Sprouts make a delicious crunchy topping to cracker biscuits. -- *From a South Island trip in 1989.*



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### ***CLUB EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER RUNNING EVENT***

Look for improvements on the western side of Mt Ruapehu's Round the Mountain Track. This is the good news to come out of an exchange of correspondence between the club and DOC. The committee wrote expressing concern at the announcement of the proposed Ruapehu Ring of Fire Volcanic Relay, Solo Ultra and Marathon planned for 7 April 2018.

"We are concerned about the possible effects of this event on the very fragile environment of Tongariro National Park. We ask if the department has undertaken an impact assessment and also considered whether the event is in accord with World Heritage values.

"A group of our club members walked around Mount Ruapehu over Easter, and was surprised by the serious erosion of the track in certain areas, principally between the Wahianoa Gorge and Mangaehuehu Hut and between Mangaturuturu and Whakapapaiti huts.

"The western side of the mountain already takes a pounding with the annual Goat Tongariro event. In our opinion, this new event – with 800 competitors next year and up to 1000 in future years – will only make matters worse for a highly sensitive area which is already prone to degradation by water, ice and wind."

In reply, Allan Munn, DOC Director of Operations, Central North Island, said monitoring has been carried out before and after the Goat event to gauge its impacts. "Any maintenance concerns arising from the event have quickly been dealt with by the event organisers and the physical impact of the track is minor. We would not expect the impacts from the Ruapehu Ring of Fire to differ."

Mr Munn said an increasing number of walkers are using the track every year which has impacts on the track.

"Planning has already been done to improve the surface and stream crossings on the section between Ohakune Mountain Road and the Bruce Road. World Heritage values encompass the opportunity for people to enjoy the park in a range of activities and does not preclude holding any event."

He invited the club to let him know if there were any concerns following the running of the event next April.



**Round the Mountain Map**

## Tramping Trips

### *Confirming your place*

For ALL trips, you must phone the leader to confirm your place on the trip. For day trips the latest you can phone the leader is 7pm the night before the trip. For weekend trips phone by Wednesday evening.

### *What you will need*

Good waterproof clothing including leggings or over-trousers is necessary. Woolen balaclava or hat and suitable mittens or gloves are **essential** for mountain trips.

You should carry your own immediate first aid supplies. Check with the leader for more details of what is required for the trip. Take lunches for each day, and your drink requirements, plus emergency chocolate, sweets and/or scroggin. On overnight (s) trips, all other food is supplied by the leader.





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## Rules For Those Leading Tramps

The destination and brief location, plus the list of participants, is to be placed on the notice board at the club rooms before leaving. These details must also be emailed to the five PLB contacts:

russelld@clear.net.nz (Russell Donaldson)  
btwcvaux@slingshot.co.nz (Bruce Thomas)  
tiger2@slingshot.co.nz (Earle Turner)  
dorothy@displayassociates.co.nz (Dorothy Symes)  
barbarajgordon@xtra.co.nz (Barbara Gordon)

Need help? We have a list template – ask Barbara or Dorothy.  
For leaders without computers/email, phone details to  
Barbara 348 9149 or Dorothy 345 7039.

## February to May 2018 Club Activities

*Note: Trip cost estimates are based on 7 cents per kilometre*

- |              |   |                           |
|--------------|---|---------------------------|
| Feb 24 or 25 | <b>Six Discs Track</b>  | Dick Mitchell 344 4406    |
| Sat or Sun   | Dick will lead us on a Tararua circuit on well-formed tracks, starting near Levin. The track drops to the Ohau River where we have traditionally had lunch and there may be time to explore along the river for a swimming hole, so bring your togs. Continue back to the van via the track above the river. A good summer wander. Dick will choose best weather day. |                           |
| Easy/mod     | Approx cost \$18  |                           |
| March 3-4    | <b>Pine clearing</b>  | Margret McKinnon 344 3899 |
| Sat-Sun      | Our now annual visit to the slopes of Mt Ruapehu to clear wilding pines. We will again combine with the Hutt Valley Tramping Club. Camp out in a beautiful area of beech trees. Join el presidente Margret on a guaranteed fun weekend.   |                           |
| Easy/mod     | Free!   |                           |
| March 7-16   | <b>Travers-Sabine Circuit</b>   | Dave Scoullar 343 2836    |
| Wed-Fri      | This circuit in Nelson Lakes National Park is a gem to be savoured by all serious trampers. Dave has been on the Sabine twice but never the Travers so is keen to put that right. The cherry on the cake will be two nights at Angelus Hut. Tramp is full but you can go on the waiting list.   |                           |
| Mod/fit      | Cost to be calculated   |                           |

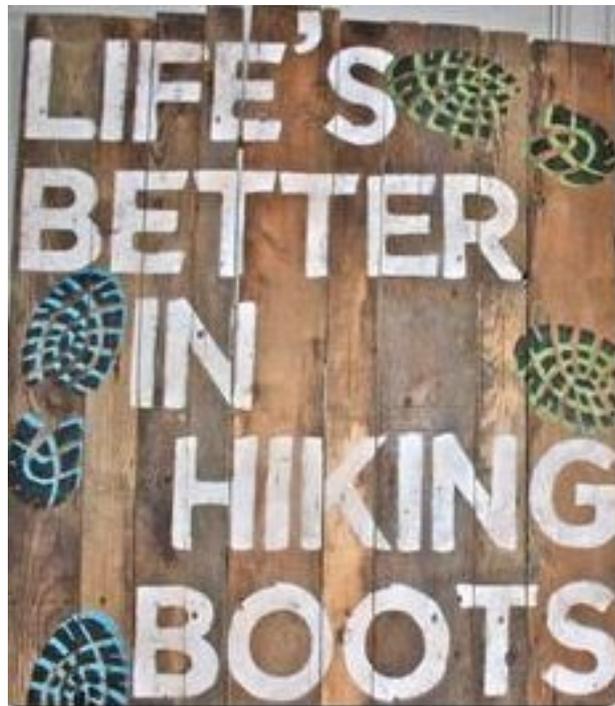
- Mar 10 or 11 **Mangaweka Boulders** Margie Campbell 027 259 1516  
 Sat or Sun The magical and intriguing Mangaweka Boulders, known as cannon ball concretions made from mudstone, are the main focus of Margie's walk which also involves a stroll over steepish farm land. If wet, crampons would be useful -- this is papa country! Also a chance for a swim in the Rangitikei River. Possible crossover.
- Easy Approx cost \$14 + \$5 donation to farmer
- Mar 17 or 18 **Old Coach Road** Frances Gibbons 345 8952  
 Sat or Sun Frances has tried for this trip before but been struck out by the weather. Surely during the sultry month of February everything will work out fine? This lovely track continues to charm and it's a great outing for new members and family groups.
- Easy Approx cost \$16
- Mar 23-29 **Kahurangi National Park** Brian Doughty 345 1135  
 Fri to Thurs Brian is heading up the Cobb Valley and will use Fenella Hut as a base for a series of day walks in the area. This



- delightful valley, full of history and wonderful views, should be on every trumper's wish list -- and now is your chance. Trip full but you can go on the waiting list.  
 Easy/mod Cost to be calculated
- Mar 24 or 25 **Castle Rock** Roger Kealey 348 8141  
 Sat or Sun We haven't had the best of luck weatherwise with our visits to Castle Rock in the Kaimanawa Forest Park in recent times but maybe things will work out this time and we will get better weather and the great views of Mt Ruapehu. This is a combined tramp with Rangitikei Tramping Club.  
 Easy/mod Approx cost \$22
- Mar 30-Apr 2 **Easter in Tararua** Tracey Hooper 346 5597  
 Fri-Mon Tracey is lining up a circuit in the northern Tararua which we haven't done for years, linking Herepai, Dundas, Cattle Ridge and Roaring Stag huts. It's another classic Tararua tramp involving bush and tops travel. Expect big views too - if the weather behaves.  
 All four huts \$5 each.  
 Fit Cost to be calculated
- Mar 30 or Apr 1 **Moonlit Tongariro Crossing** Esther Williams 347 8456  
 Fri or Sun Weather permitting, tramp the Tongariro Crossing by moonlight - will take place either Good Friday or Easter Sunday. Very likely we will spend the rest of the night at Possum Lodge.  
 Fit Approx cost \$26 plus \$10 hut fee
- Mar 31 or Apr 2 **Manawatu Gorge Track** Dorothy Symes 345 7039  
 Sat or Mon The second day trip over Easter is that old favourite the Manawatu Gorge Track. Not much new to be said. This is an oldie but a goodie. Note the choices are Saturday or Monday. Dorothy will pick the one with the best weather.  
 Easy/mod Approx cost \$ 17
- April 7-8 **Mangaturuturu Hut Birthday** Dorothy Symes 345 7039  
 Sat-Sun Our wonderful club hut is turning 60 years old and we want to celebrate this landmark with a bit of a knees-up in the old girl. The Mangaturuturu Valley will be a lively place this

- weekend, so join the fun. The catering is likely to be a bit special, too.  
 Easy Approx cost \$23
- Apr 7 or 8 **Mangaturuturu Hut** Bruce Thomas 345 6532  
 Sat or Sun Bruce is taking a trip into the club hut for day-trippers who can't make the full birthday weekend so they can join in the festivities. Bruce will choose the better of the two days.  
 Easy Approx cost \$18
- Apr 14 or 15 **Ridge Road** Margret McKinnon 344 3899  
 Sat or Sun Ridge Road lies west of Taihape and is now a paper road. The highest point is 839m but most of this is reached in the comfort of the van! Outstanding views on a clear day. This is an easy walk of approximately 13km.  
 Easy Cost to be calculated
- April 21 **Atene Track** Ken Howie 344 4452  
 Sat Dave Scoullar 343 2836  
 Hutt Valley and South Wairarapa tramping clubs are coming to town and we will take them over the Atene Track, a prime piece of our back country tramping estate, an area that we have visited often but always come back for more.  
 Mod Approx cost \$6
- April 21 **Pot Luck Meal** Dorothy Symes 345 7039  
 Sat We will host our Hutt Valley and South Wairarapa visitors at a pot luck meal at Dorothy's new house in Liverpool St (next to her old house). Come along at 6pm and enjoy a fun night.
- April 22 **Waitahinga Trails** Graeme Aitken 345 5100  
 Sun It's hard to know how many times we have visited these trails since they opened just a few years ago, but we keep going back because they are so enjoyable. Graeme will show our Hutt Valley and South Wairarapa visitors why we take such pride in these trails which we developed under Basil Hooper's inspired leadership.  
 Easy/mod Approx cost \$6

- April 25-29 **Waitotara Crossover** Brian Doughty 345 1135  
 Wed-Sun The crossover from Puniwhakau Rd, near Stratford, to the upper Waitotara Valley is a classic tramp through beautiful bush country. Brian will do it in easy stages over five days, so if you want to get a taste of the Whanganui hinterland, sign on with him.
- Mod Cost to be calculated
- April 29 **Kapara and Beyond** Murray Laing 345 3409  
 Sun Barry Hopper 345 3969
- Kapara homestead at the end of the Waitotara Valley is gone but we will visit the site of this once grand building and go beyond along the track to meet Brian Doughty's team who are completing a Waitotara crossover. Feel the history of this area and enjoy the bush as we wander alongside the Waitotara River.
- Easy Approx cost \$13



- May 5-6  
Sat-Sun  
**Purity Hut** Shane McCulloch 021 614 753  
Access issues have meant we haven't been to Purity Hut in the western Ruahine for a number of years but Shane is hopeful that he will be able to negotiate passage. If not he will try for another hut in the vicinity. Purity leads on to the tops and there may be time for an explore towards Mangaweka, the highest point in the range.  
Mod  
Approx cost \$23 + hut fees
- May 12-13  
Sat-Sun  
**Taranaki Weekend** Dave Scoullar 343 2836  
Dave's Taranaki weekend is usually in October but given the unpredictable weather that month he has moved it to May. It will be the same format -- a do it yourself day in New Plymouth on the Saturday and joining in a day tramp with New Plymouth Tramping Club on the Sunday. Overnight in a tourist park. Always a fun weekend.  
Easy/mod  
Cost to be calculated
- May 19  
Sat  
**Quiz Night** Dave Scoullar 343 2836  
The quiz is again scheduled in May to avoid clashing with All Black games in June. So there's no excuse for not fronting up. A record turnout last year filled the hall. Make up a team of four in advance or on the night. Lots of laughs and a good supper. 7.30pm start.
- May 19 or 20  
Sat or Sun  
**Waverley Beach** Shane Wilson 344 5656 / 027 391 8144  
Shane will make his maiden appearance as a leader guiding the group from Waverley Beach down to the Waitotara River and back looking at blowholes and a partly-submerged totara forest. We may even see seals. Always a good walk.  
Easy/mod  
Approx cost \$8
- May 26-27  
Sat-Sun  
**Rangipo Hut via Tukino Ski Field and Whangaehu River** Mike Cole 344 7275 / 021 160 6875  
An alternative way into Rangipo hut, a bit longer but much more interesting. We will navigate down the Whangaehu River and rejoin the normal route there. On the way out may also try an alternative route to locate the bund preventing lahars from the Whangaehu valley getting into the Tongariro River.





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*Longdrop's*

## **PACK TALK FEBRUARY 2018**

*It's a curious thought but it's only when you see people looking ridiculous that you realise just how much you love them. -- Agatha Christie*

Welcome to 2018 and all the fun that promises on the track. It's going to be a big year of tramping and one of the highlights is in April when we celebrate the 60th birthday of the Mangaturuturu Hut. We hope this event will involve a large number of clubbies. See the trips list for details.

We really are a big-hearted lot! Members reached into their wallets at the Dutch auction in December and the result was \$850 to be split between Palmerston North and Taranaki rescue helicopter services. The committee came on board by deciding this amount will be rounded up to \$1000 and split between the two organisations. Take a bow auctioneer Brian Doughty, committee, and all those who dug deep.

While some clubbies got bargains and some odd items at the Dutch auction, spare a thought for Graeme Aitken. He was pleased to find he had bought a pair of binoculars, but somewhat bemused when later in the evening he found he had bought a second set of binoculars.

One of us! Congrats to Diane Harries who became a NZ citizen in October last year.

Counting candles: Shane Wilson turns 50 in February. And Dick Mitchell turns 80 in March. For the record, Dick celebrated his 60th in Te Matawai hut in the Tararua. The trip report noted that they decorated the hut with Happy Birthday balloons and after tea had a birthday party. So what's the plan this time?

We missed a major landmark for Ron Chapman -- he turned 90 in November.

Julie, impertinently addressing senior gentleman tramper (the one with the white hair) was admonished with "Any more cheek from you and I'll tell Long Drop."

Welcome back Dave Beech, striding out and completing his first TT2 walk

after a very long absence.

After being disgorged at Aramoho cemetery, one TT2er realised he'd left his pack on the departing bus. Surprised motorist waved down, agreed to give chase. Bus captured, pack retrieved, owner returned to the group, grateful thanks to motorist hero.

The same busload seemed unusually subdued after that morning's headline "*Unruly seniors booted off [Auckland] bus*". Eight 'elderly and raucous walkers' were said to be traumatised when the driver pulled over and refused to take them any further.

"You got a new bike, Jim?" No, he'd just given it a good clean.

One midweek trumper, I swear, has knife-edge creases ironed into his tramping shorts.

Make way for John Shingleton, proud owner of an E-bike. Iron-Legs Carolyn is left slogging up the hills, muttering to herself as hubby triumphantly whizzes past.

The Earle of T features prominently in Pack Talk but his latest escapade was less comical -- a nasty infection saw him spend three days in hospital over New Year.

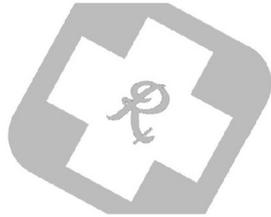
Everyone agrees the SH3 section of the Te Araroa Trail isn't very safe for walkers and two clubbies are trying to develop a coastal route -- Te Araroa Whanganui trustee Brian Doughty who is talking to landowners and Kevin Ross, who is Taranaki-Whanganui-Manawatu regional field adviser for the NZ Walking Commission.

We wish Brenda Collins a good recovery from her leg injury and note that Margie Campbell soldiered on gamely when she pulled a muscle on the Heaphy Track.

It's a hard life being a van driver -- everyone's on your case. When Ross McBeth stalled the van at the Harrison/Glasgow intersection this conversation followed.

Jeanette Prier: "Do you need lessons?"

Ross: "I need revs!"



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Ouch! Esther Williams was bruised in a fall at John Coull hut while on warden duty. And three of the 12 bikers who tackled the Tongariro River Trail had minor injuries in falls, reflecting that this ride was a step up from the BOMBS' usual road circuits.

Kate Jones wasn't on a BOMBS trip when she was monstered by a dog while biking over the Cobham Bridge. She needed six stitches in her thigh but still joined the River Road Gang of 2017 and rode from Raetihi to Whanganui.

A real bummer eh Lynn, when the new E-bike won't take you on those River Road "ups". But sterling service from Velo Ronny's bike shop, who enabled a much easier second day by bringing a replacement bike to Jerusalem.

The River Road Gang of 2017 certainly ate well. With Barbara Gordon orchestrating the kitchen, the sumptuous dinner at Jerusalem featured four different meats topped off by a Christmas cake made by Carolyn Shingleton.

Jeanette, steadily pedalling up a hill that seemed to go on and on, was surprised to learn she was indeed three-quarters up the dreaded Gentle Annie. She made it to the top and was deservedly pretty chuffed. "No, I'm going to walk it -- no way could I climb that hill" she'd earlier claimed.

Even when he's not there Graham Sutcliffe isn't far from the thoughts of his Wednesday mates. Eyeing up a mountain stream in Tongariro National Park, George Neil reflected: "We should bring back some water for Graham to put in his whisky."

The Wednesday team had a bit of drama on the Scott's Ferry tramp when a ute slipped off the Rangitikei River stop bank and finished up teetering at a dangerous angle. Fortunately, a passer-by managed to tow the vehicle to safety, helped (of course) by lots of advice from us.

Another mini-drama on the Wharite Peak trip when one clubbie was unaccounted for when the others reached the van. She had strayed onto the wrong track with a member of the South Wairarapa TC. Luckily, both soon realised their mistake and back-tracked and, as at Scott's Ferry, all finished well.

Seeing and climbing on The Nipple, on a loop of the Sledge Track,

prompted its share of cheeky comments as the male members of the Wednesday wanderers enjoyed their Bendon moment.

You heard about Lay Down Jacky Evans in the November *Tramper*, now we have Sit Down Sue McBride who got a wet bottom when she ended her trip to The Nipple with a tumble in a stream.

Brian Doughty and team were surprised to find a sign -- Bushline Cafe -- on the edge of the bush on the Kurapete track (off the Matemateonga Track). They were keen to put in their orders but that's all there was -- a sign.

Weekend chat ...

Shane Wilson: "There's not much wildlife here (Tongariro National Park)."

Esther Williams: "Only us."

You learn things at funerals. Chatting with trampers after Beryl Watson's funeral, Long Drop learned why Colin has lost his clothing flamboyance. It seems that Beryl quietly moved on the outrageous gear hubby was famous for in his tramping days.

The Wednesday tramp over the Waipuku track in Egmont National Park was a marvellous day out but it ended on a sour note for Bruce Thomas when he found his car, parked close to the clubrooms, had been broken into. Luckily, the thief was unable to get the vehicle to start.

Sometimes you catch the good weather wave and Tracey Hooper and her Tararua northern crossing team certainly did in November. Coincidentally, the last crew to go that way, led by Ken Howe some 15 years ago, also had great weather.

But you can get too much of a good thing. Apparently at least one member of Tracey's intrepid Tararua team which returned on a Friday was keen to go on another trip that weekend but was too sunburned!

Interesting exchange and we withhold names to prevent blushes ...

She (patting her bottom): "I think there's something in my underwear."

He (innocently and helpfully): "Do you need a hand?"

We can all be a bit careless at times but Shane Wilson aka Mr Forgetful takes that to a new level with a propensity to leave bits of his gear behind in huts.

The Wanganui Camera Club has a new award, the Margaret Walford Memorial Trophy for top Landscape Image. We hear that an award in Marg's name is being considered for the club annual photo contest.

Use them or lose them. Steve Hormann has been missing in action and was a bit dismayed when he made it on a Thursday tramp to find his boot soles had perished. Better to wear them out, mate.

Ridgy's Tongariro Alpine Crossing in December was enjoyed by all and particularly by non-club member Murray Whitlock. Aged 80, he had a few problems on the way, but soldiered on to complete the walk and achieve something on his bucket list. We probably won't see him out tramping with us again, but we know he has a warm place for us in his heart.

Wednesday chat ...

Sandra (observing Ian Kirk rubbing his hands together on a Tongariro National Park tramp): "Got no gloves?"

Ian: "I think I left them in Scotland."

Droll Dick Mitchell: "Rather a long way for you to go."

"That's the most entertainment I've had for \$1 in a long time," said Jeanette, speaking for the eight who enjoyed a riverbank and South Beach wander with Sandra Rogers just before Christmas.

The Wednesday Wanderers' interest in mines peaked in November with visits to a cave in Egmont National Park associated with metal recovery and the following week to the copper mining operation in the Ruahine.

"I can still hold a paddle," was the defiant response of Esther Williams after damaging a finger a few weeks out from her annual river outings. It'd take more than that to keep her off the awa.

There's a strong rumour the Earle of T has been seen, resplendent in lycra, pedalling along Somme Pde. Stay tuned.

We witness quite a few retirements, but an un-retirement? Yes, Tracey Hooper is back at the hospital as a casual.

In the news ... Darrell Grace was profiled in *River City Press* and Esther Williams' educational work at Bushy Park was acknowledged in an article

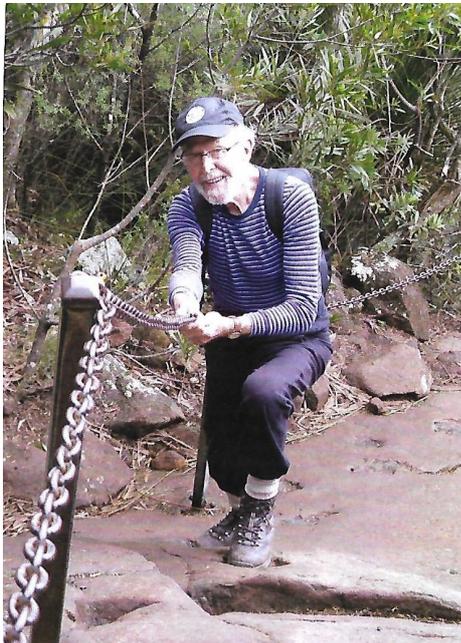
in the *Wanganui Chronicle*.

Now into their second year, the BOMBS have spawned an offshoot: The OAPILS - Old Age Pensioners in Lycra.

When the silver van was rescued from the sales lot at David Jones to fill in for the new van which was undergoing a repair, it was like saying hullo to an old friend.

Barbara Marshall, a former FMC stalwart and a real character, featured in an obituary in the last issue of *Backcountry*. A longtime member of the Tararua Tramping Club, we came across her from time to time in the hills. Dee Ess recalls being in Powell hut on a stormy day and hearing her loudly tick off one of her colleagues for not showing courtesy to other hut users. RIP Barbara.

*Handy hint:* You can calculate how far away lightning is in kilometres by counting the seconds between seeing a lightning flash and hearing the thunder, then dividing by three.



**Ron Chapman  
90 years young!**

## February 2018 Quiz

1. Without predator control what percentage of kiwi chicks hatched in the wild die before reaching breeding age -- their fourth birthday?
2. How is JB Saxon, who surveyed the Heaphy Track in 1888, remembered on the track?
3. On what track do you find Lake Grim and Lake Cheerful?
4. The oldest continuously used road in Europe, dating back to the Stone Age, shares its name with which Wanganui Tramping Club member?
5. Who uses the most energy -- canoeists or gardeners?
6. In which national park was there an outbreak of norovirus at Christmas 2016?
7. Wilderness readers voted which hut as Hut of the Year in 2017?
8. Which bird was voted Bird of the Year in 2017?
9. Which bird did the Green Party support for Bird of the Year in 2017?
10. Why should trampers be worried when they spot a bull downhill from them?

Answers - see page 28.



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## Quiz Answers

1. 90%
2. By Saxon Hut and Saxon River
3. Old Ghost Road
4. Ridgway Lythgoe -- the road is called The Ridgeway
5. Men consume 213 calories paddling 3km, while the same time spent weeding burns 574, according to the NZ Nurserymen's Association
6. Nelson Lakes National Park
7. Angelus Hut
8. Kea
9. Kereru -- it came second
10. Because bulls can run faster uphill than downhill

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**John Muir**



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*River Walk Makaretu Hut to Awatere Hut*



*Puniwhakau to Aotuhia Trip*



*Turangi Trip*



*Tat Parade - Brian and Dave*



*Sue Inadvertently Cooling Off!*



*South Beach*



*Mangaturuturu Hut – Christmas Trip*



*Mt Tihia*

From our archives... June 1990

### ***THE ELECTRIC JUG TRAMP***

Suddenly we were up on top of Mt Hikurangi (near Taumarunui), plenty of flat grassy patches under the radio masts encircled by horopito shrubs. What's that? A radio control shed door has been forced with a padlock pretending to do its job! Wild whoops from Peter Panton (Taumarunui Tramping Club) as he bursts into the shed and flies out waving an electric jug.

I've never seen anyone quite so wild with joy, the reason being he was cook on this combined tramp. Plugged in and making us endless cups of tea in seconds. Needless to say we were rather taken aback. This was a new one for the club records. Who would have believed after climbing to 4000ft finding an electric jug just waiting to be used!

### ***ODD SPOT: NATHAN'S NUTTY CLIMB***

People planning to climb Snowdon are being urged to dress appropriately after a teenager developed hypothermia after hiking up the mountain in just his underwear. An ambulance crew were called after 19-year-old Nathan French completed the 1,085m climb of the highest mountain in Wales but became unwell at the summit.

French, who was dressed only in Superman underwear for the climb, was raising money for the Dementia UK charity in honour of his grandmother, who has the condition.

Emergency services were called to treat the student after he became unwell while taking the train back down from the summit. Paramedics discovered his blood sugar and blood pressure had dropped and he was beginning to suffer from hypothermia.

A mountain rescue team spokesman said the outcome could have been much worse. "While we are sympathetic to his charity fundraising for a very worthy cause, we would question the planning and perseverance which went into his day on the hill."



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## *Outdoors News*

### **Booking system going ahead**

After a trial last summer, DOC has implemented a seasonal booking system for beds at Rangiwahia and Sunrise huts in Ruahine Forest Park. DOC Manawatu District Operations Manager Duncan Toogood believes this will help manage overcrowding and encourage new people into the outdoors.

“The trial indicates that use of a booking system is likely to improve visitor experience if it is well-publicised and properly managed” he said.

Overnight visitors can book a bed during the busy season, from Labour Weekend to the end of April each year. Though hut tickets will still be accepted, making a booking is the only way to guarantee a bed. Bookings can be made at <https://booking.doc.govt.nz/>. Annual hut pass holders can use their hut pass number to create a booking by contacting any DOC booking office.

The huts won't be locked, and shelter in a storm is guaranteed.

### **Bridge closed for repairs**

The Whangaehu swing bridge has been closed for repairs from last November until March 2018. The swing bridge is on the Round the Mountain Track and is approximately 3km south of the Tukino ski field access road. Damage to both main cables on the swing bridge has been identified meaning the bridge requires partial replacement. Until this work can be completed the bridge is closed for all pedestrian access.

In the interim, river crossing access has been marked to the most practical point on the river, but hikers are advised to be careful of loose rocks in the river channel and not to attempt crossing in flood conditions. DOC Operations Manager Bhrent Guy stressed that any river crossing should be carefully evaluated and whenever possible crossed as a group. DOC is committed to completing work as soon as possible with all to be completed before the Ring of Fire ultra-marathon which happens in April.



*Johnny Channon on the Whangaehu swing bridge in April 2017.*



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**Te Araroa route revised**

Taumarunui will continue to be a stop for those walking the 3000km Te Araroa Trail following agreement of a revised route that takes in the Timber Trail, King Country back roads and Taumarunui's main street.

The revised 137km route takes walkers from Mt Pureora to Owhango at the north-western end of the 42 Traverse. It takes in Ongarue Back Rd and Hikumutu Rd rather than sending walkers along the road edge of SH4 as was previously the case.

Te Araroa Trust chairman Dave McGregor says the change is an improvement to the trail and provides a safer and more scenic experience for walkers. He said Ongarue landowner Cliff Tombleson deserved particular recognition for allowing a campsite to be established on his property at the southern end of the Timber Trail.

**Bad behaviour unacceptable**

Obnoxious hut behaviour is again concerning DOC after a tramper laid a formal complaint against a group of jet boaters at Lake Alabaster Hut on the Hollyford Track. The tramper alerted DOC staff to the behaviour after staying in the 26-bunk hut along with the group. The group, who had been flown by helicopter into the hut with their jet boats, had brought with them a large amount of alcohol.

It is alleged that members of the group were unnecessarily noisy, rude to other hut occupants and went hunting at night while drunk. Greg Lind, DOC Operations Manager in Te Anau, said obnoxious behaviour will not be tolerated. "There was clear disregard shown by the party for other hut users."

Meanwhile, three people have been trespassed from the Kaweka Forest Park for illegally lighting fires which threatened not only the campsites, but people and native wildlife.

### **Solving the wild pine problem**

Manuka used to be eradicated and now it's valuable for the honey trade. Do wilding pines also have a future? Wilding and Co think so. Unhappy with a multimillion-dollar plan to eradicate Central Otago's wilding pines by poisoning them, Michael Sly decided to harvest and distill them into Douglas-fir essential oil.

This caught the eye of the world's largest distributors of essential oil and Wilding and Co was born. Now Sly and his co-founders want to make various consumables -- soap, body wash, even dishwashing liquid. "If everyone in Queenstown used a wilding pine-based soap, we'd consume 100,000 Christmas-sized wilding pines a year. You can solve the problem" Sly says.

He wants to work with DOC to get Wilding and Co certified -- "the end goal is to go into the shop, buy a Wilding and Co product and you know that 100% of it is connected to pest eradication."



**Wilding Pine**

### **Jumbo Hut opens again**

DOC has reopened Jumbo Hut in the Tararua Forest Park after completing strengthening work. The second most visited hut in the park, Jumbo was closed in July after engineers decided it might be unsafe in extreme high winds and heavy snow fall. It was braced inside and out to the latest building standard for extreme alpine weather.

The hut was closed as a safety precaution until the work was complete with DOC noting the park can be an extreme environment and they didn't want to take any chances. Above the bush-line at 1230m and clearly visible from Masterton, Jumbo is visited by more than 2000 people each year.

Meanwhile, the picturesque Waiohine Gorge camp site, west of Carterton, is open for campers now the road has been reinstated after a slip last year. Campers and trampers can drive all the way to the camp site.

## ***BOMBS***

On 28 October I attended the Sports Whanganui Ride Leader Workshop, an interesting day covering safety and bike skills. If held again, I would encourage other cyclists to attend. One part that really did catch my attention was truck blind spots. They'd organised a truck and trailer unit to attend, placing our bikes at various points around the unit. We each had a turn in the driver's seat to see how visible the bikes were – many not visible at all. We ended the day biking to the Yellow House for a coffee stop – how appropriate!!

Eleven of us travelled to Kapiti on 17 October to cycle Pekapeka Cycleway again. Always a popular ride covering approximately 50 kms. Magnificent weather, and many continued their ride through to Paekakariki.

On 31 October, we travelled to Turangi to cycle the Tongariro River Trail. This trail was a little challenging with tight corners and gravel surfaces, but we all learnt new biking skills. After lunch we went to the Tokaanu Hot Pools and then on to a small scenic thermal walk before returning home.

After a cycle ride around Rapanui on 14 November we arranged to visit Ed Boyd's Auto Barn on Pickwick Road/SH3 corner. A very interesting museum of vehicles and memorabilia that Ed has put together over many years. It was enjoyed by all who attended and our grateful thanks to Ed for taking a break from his business to open up for us.

During November we had very good numbers attending the Tuesday rides – averaging 26 per Tuesday.

Our final big ride for the year was the Whanganui River Road trip, cycling from Raetihi to Wanganui, staying overnight at the Old Convent at Jerusalem. After a drizzly start, with 21 cyclists and two support drivers the day improved and we had great cycling weather. Many cycled up Gentle Annie hill (Jeanette being one who hadn't even realized she was actually on the GA) and others continued their ride back to Wanganui. Well done.

Now we are into 2018 with many more trips planned throughout the year. Happy and safe cycling - and if you have any trips you would like to do, please let me know.

*Co-ordinator Carolyn Shingleton*



**Victoria on the Tongariro River Trail**



### ***TT2 Report***

**26 Oct:** Fred Verschoor led 14 on a walk from Trafalgar Square, out to Bignell Street and through the walkway that was the old Balgownie Tip. After morning tea we returned back via the river walkway making our excursion a little shorter due to the strong winds.

**9 Nov:** A bus trip for 18 out to Aramoho Park, walking back to town via Somme Parade and the river walkway.

**23 Nov:** On a beautiful sunny day Jan Pavarno led 27 from Seafront Road, through Manuka Street, Mill Road to the Titoki Wetlands and back via Castlecliff Beach.

**7 Dec:** Pam Watson led 18 walkers through the Westmere Walkway, Matipo and Hylton Park tracks.

**21 Dec:** A walk from Peat Street through the wetlands via Parkdale Drive and onto Virginia lake, and then to Carolyn's for some Christmas cake - 23 people attended.

***Carolyn Shingleton***

## ***WTC Trip Reports***

### **Atiwhakatu Hut**

Sat-Sun 14-15 Oct 2017

Scribe: *Shane McCulloch*

Holdsworth car park was the fullest I've ever seen it, and a bit of a worry how full the hut would be. It was a very easy three-hour walk to the hut – full, but we still got a bed. There were a lot of family groups with kids. A large group of about 20 hunters turned up in the afternoon but they were on a training exercise and just passing through. It was evidently a very intensive 10 week course.

It was very stormy at Atiwhakatu Hut that night, but when I got up at 6am it was calm. I woke the others and they were all keen to go to the tops. We were on the track by 8am with a large 800m climb to Jumbo. There was even a light snow shower just before the hut.

We then had an 11am lunch.

After lunch we headed off for Powell Hut. It was a pleasant afternoon with light winds and pretty good views. We got there in about four hours; after a rest and food it was a downhill leg to the car park.

In total it was an 11-hour walk from the hut but we were all happy with the day and after Subway in Masterton we were back in Wanganui by 10.30pm.

On trip were Shane McCulloch (trip leader), Andrew Milham, Shane Wilson, Brigitte Hund, Dorothy Symes, Linda Hart and Petra Czerwonka.



**Atiwhakatu Hut**

### **Makaretu/Leon Kinvig Huts**

Sat-Mon 21-23 Oct 2017

Scribe: *Tracey Hooper*

This was the planned trip, but due to high winds on top of the ranges we had the luxury of changing our route as there were choices in the area.

Once on the tops to Longview Hut the wind was severe, making it difficult to keep upright. The majority of the group had not experienced such strong gales before but we agreed later that it was memorable. After lunch we carried on along the tops with increasing sheltered spots to gather our wits, and stayed at Makaretu Hut. During the night at river level the winds increased with the hut door flinging open periodically but as there was

someone sleeping on the floor he sacrificed his body and lay across the doorway. Discussion in the morning was based around the safety on the tops where we had to go to Leon Kinvig, and all agreed to take the river route to visit Happy Daze Hut and carry onto Awatere Hut. The river was enjoyable walking with a little wind, and made for some fun navigation.

Awatere Hut slept six, perfect for us with no other visitors. The last day was just an hour's pleasant walk up the hill along the ridge to the carpark at Kashmir Rd, and nice early return home. Trampers were: Cherry, Mark, two Shanes, Mike and Tracey.

### **Kapakapanui Track**

Sat 28 Oct 2017

Scribe: *Valarie Wackrow*

The Kapakapanui Track in the Tararuas, east of Waikanae, is a fairly relentless climb to 1102m. We struck a perfect day and the river crossings were not too deep, although a relatively new experience for some members. The climb is through forest of old tortured trees, mosses, ferns and fungi.

Unfortunately about a third of the way up one of our party was unable to continue, so while the six others continued on I took the member back down to the van, then returned to the climb, catching up to the others not far from

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the trig point. At this point all in the group were happy to turn and head downhill and back to the van, disappointed at not having quite reached the top and finish the circuit, but pleased with what they had accomplished.

This tramp is a good test of legs and lungs and on a good day offers spectacular views from the top point. We now have unfinished business for most of the group!!

On the trip were: Brigitte Hund, Helen Adams, Nikki Wink, Graeme Aitken, Andy Beck, Andrea Bunn, Kat Dimes, and myself Valarie Wackrow.

### **Scott's Ferry**

Wed 1 Nov 2017

Scribe: *Sandra Rogers*

Permit obtained from Ernslaw and off we headed for Scott's Ferry. A pleasant walk along the stop bank and into the forest, across the road and into the forest on the other side. A gravel road amongst the pine trees until 11.30, then we headed left for the beach. The sea was very still and just a slight breeze blowing to stop us from getting too hot. Dave Scoullar was the only one brave enough to go for a swim. Back along the beach to the end of the road and through the village. It is worthwhile taking a walk through there to see the amusing names on the houses. Most end with 'Inn' - eg Seldom Inn, Fish Inn, Come on Inn.

Back at the van we heard a horn tooting. A woman had driven off the edge of the stop bank and was in risk of rolling her ute. A good Samaritan came along and towed her out. She was so lucky her vehicle didn't roll over when being towed. One of the narrowest escapes I have seen.

On the trip were Barry Hopper, Brenda Collins, Bruce Thomas, David Scoullar, Dick Mitchell, Esther Williams, Fred Verschoor, George Neil, Graham Sutcliffe, Jacky Evans, Jeanette Prier, John McClintoch, Juliet Kojis, Margaret Chainey, Margret McKinnon, Shane Wilson, Sue Haden, Victoria Kay, David Taylor and Sandra Rogers (leader).

### **Rhododendron Ramble**

Sun 5 Nov 2017

Scribe: *Sandra Rogers*

A cold, cloudy day saw 15 head off for a Rhododendron Ramble to Heritage Park Gardens and then onto Cross Hills Gardens, both in the Kimbolton area. The rhododendrons and azaleas were stunning - from titanium white to vibrant colours. What a show. Tracks led to various scenes, waterfalls, ponds and farm views. A lovely day.

On the trip were Sandra Rogers (leader), Ross McBeth (driver), Jeanette Prier, Jan Pavarno, Bruce Thomas, Jeanette Maskery, Margaret Lankow, Lynn Larsen, Dianne Weekes, Trish Herbert, Kate Jones, Anshu Prasad. Plus Mark, Sharon and Aiden Kennedy who took their own car.

### **Wharite Peak**

Sat 11 Nov 2017

Scribe: *Dave Scoullar*

Our four clubbies joined two from Rangitikei TC and eight from South Wairarapa TC for the combined climb up to Wharite Peak (920m) in reasonable conditions. Eight of the 14 reached the tower where, as usual, there was a strong wind but luckily the rain stayed away. The track was muddy in the leatherwood, as always. A good day out and it's always nice to tramp with people from other clubs.

On trip: Shane Wilson, Andy Beck, Kathy O'Donnell and Dave Scoullar.

### **Egmont NP Circuit**

Wed 22 Nov 2017

Scribe: *Dave Scoullar*

Egmont National Park turned on a fantastic day and amazingly dry tracks for the 6hr 40min circuit. Beginning at Stratford Mountain House, the group of 14 took the lower track to the Curtis Falls turnoff where we had morning tea. Continuing on towards Matekawa hut, we turned off up the unmarked Waipuku track, pausing to explore the cave and later stopping for lunch in the shade of the leatherwood.

Refreshed, we battled on upwards along the narrow track, now being encroached by vegetation, until the Round the Mountain Track was reached. Then it was along to the Manganui ski field, Stratford Plateau, down the Enchanted Walk and back to the van. A great day out with a clear mountain and many flowers, including clematis and bush lawyer.

On trip: Barry Hopper, Bruce Thomas, Cherry Channon, George Neil, Helen Atkinson, Jacky Evans, Jeanette Prier, Juliet Kojis, Ken Howie, Kevin Ross, Laurel Stowell, Mike Miller, Pipa McLay and Dave Scoullar.

### **Coppermine Creek Loop**

Wed 29 Nov 2017

Scribe: *Laurel Stowell*

My co-leader Brenda was out of action with a sore knee, so Dave Scoullar kindly offered to guide this walk. Suzanne, Dick and Barry helped with the

driving. We drove the Saddle Road from Ashhurst to the little Coppermine Creek car park on the eastern side of the Ruahine Range. Then it was away up the creek, passing notices about intermittent attempts to get at a seam of copper there, attempts over the last 120 years.

Some of the walking was up the creek itself, with lots of opportunities for wet feet. We saw "the magazine", a tunnel where ammunition was stored in World War II, and went to the mine site itself, but didn't find any remaining shafts or tunnels. Then it was back down to the turnoff to Wharite to take a different route up a very steep ridge for the loop. There were marvellous views of the shaggy Ruahine bush/scrub at places on the way. After lunch and a further scramble it was down the other side, through first bush and then across farmland and back to the van.

It was a hot day, with some atmospheric clouds and the odd rumble of thunder. The last stop was for ice cream, in Ashhurst.

There were 13 on the trip: me, Barry Hopper, Bruce Thomas, David Howard, David Scoullar, Dick Mitchell, Graham Sutcliffe, Helen Atkinson, Jacky Evans, Margie Campbell, Sally Gray, Shane Wilson and Suzanne Roberts.

### **Northern Tararua Crossing**

2-5 Dec 2017

Scribe: *Tracey Hooper*

The drought did have its happy side, although at the time of this trip we did not know it would remain a drought for the whole of December as well.

*Day 1:* Arriving at Poads Rd end, we made a decision to walk up the Ohau River as levels were so low. This ended up quite hard work as rocks were very slippery and the going was slow. Reaching the South Ohau Hut was welcome for lunch, and then it was up the Yeates 500 very steeply to Te Matawai Hut.

*Day 2:* From the hut we headed up to unmarked track to access the main range, to reach the tops. We headed for Arete Peak, then down to Arete Biv for lunch. We soaked up hot sun, following the odd cairn and obvious track markings to the Waiohine Pinnacles, which had been described as "formidable". My description would be "bloody hard". Pack came off in order to squeeze around steep jugged rocks with steep dropoffs either side. We had to carefully pick our way down through these, all of us fairly nervous. At the bottom of this steep ridge was the old hut site on Tarn Ridge. We were fairly hot and tired by now, with shaky legs, but onward to try and find the new hut site. This evaded us for some time, hoping that we were travelling in the right direction, up another steep hill. Finally the memorial

cross came into sight, then the hut. The views from the verandah were magnificent, better than any posh hotel.

*Day 3:* This was the summit day for Girdlestone and Mitre Peaks. Day 3 and still no let up from the hot sun. We felt very fortunate to be in this place with blue skies and no wind, able to see forever. Still some very steep climbs to get through but the views were distracting us. We spent considerable time on top, but were getting quite burnt, so started the descent down to Mitre Flats Hut. It was a relief to reach the bushline to get out of the sun and travel through lovely bush to reach the hut and river. We all headed straight for a soak and cool down at the river. Then Kathy and Shane went searching for Kathy's cell phone which had been lost, and thankfully found.

*Day 4:* A fairly straightforward walk out to the road, approximately three hours in bush then farm track access. The van was waiting where Basil and Tony had dropped it off for us on Day 1. Thanks guys. Masterton was about 28 degrees and we had a hot drive home.

We feel very fortunate to have done this trip in pristine conditions, and our raincoats stayed at the bottom of our packs. Our times were slower than advertised by the Kennett Brothers, as much as four hours on Day 2. A memorable trip with a great team of Kathy O'Donnell, Shane Wilson, Shane McCulloch, Mile Cole, Rozy Rawlinson, and myself.

### **Paekakariki Escarpment**

Sun 3 Dec 2017

Scribe: *Marilyn McGlone*

Two vans parked; eight members in each. We left from Paekakariki Village and meandered along the coastal track, gradually climbing higher as we mounted many flights of well-constructed steps. The traffic on the highway below became smaller resembling match-box toys. At this stage of the walk it seemed wiser to stop moving and stand still to appreciate the stunning views out towards Kapiti Island. The path was narrow and care needed to be taken in single file, particularly if another person wished to pass from the opposite direction, which happened several times. At least this provided the opportunity to enjoy the pause and take a breath or two.

This wonderful track was a first time experience for six others including myself, and while not being for the faint-hearted it is certainly one to place on the bucket list for consideration. The weather was kind to us, warm with sunny spells and patches of cloud which threw beautiful shades of blue/green onto the ocean.

As we continued on the exposed parts we entered several interludes of bush, a nice gentle contrast, and further on the Wellington Wind decided to give a thrill as it met us astride the swing-bridges. I heard our leader give

warning – “hold on to your hats and sun-glasses” - as the wind strengthened as we staggered and danced over the gully. My walking pole was awkward to handle and I didn't dare look over my shoulder at a fellow tramper coping with two poles: suffice to say we landed intact on the other side without losing any items over the edge! That wind was behind us, possibly helping us on the way, while walkers coming from Pukerua Bay towards us seemed in slow motion.



**Paekakariki Escarpment**

Our leader Esther gathered our group together and kept us informed about plants and noxious weeds, the latter being cleared from the track with a swipe of a pole, providing another use of a trusty aid. After lunch on a grassy hillock we boarded the train back to where we started and then homeward-bound with a pit-stop at the Honey Store for ice-cream lovers. Overall comment: great day enjoyed by all with superb scenery and expertly led by Esther and Juliet.

### **South Beach**

Wed 6 Dec 2017

Scribe: *Sandra Rogers*

A forecast 27 degrees - a really hot day in front of us, not to mention the Club BBQ and Dutch Auction that night. South Beach it was. Parking on Landguard Road, we walked around the base of the hill, next to the river. We continued along here as long as possible, then bush-bashed over to South Beach. A cool wind was very welcome along the beach. Home early, so no one was too tired to come to the club night.

On the trip were Sandra Rogers (leader), David Taylor (driver), David Beech (own car), David Scoullar, Graham Sutcliffe, Jeanette Prier, Shane Wilson and Sue McBride.

### **Waterfall off Tukino Skifield**

Wed 13th Dec 2017

Scribe: *Tracey Hooper*

This is an area that Basil and I had explored previously and we knew the group would enjoy it. Thankfully another nice day as we left the skifield after a hair-raising drive up the road. We took the RTM track toward Waihohonu

Hut, and then shortly after veered off track to a spring. We then followed a valley heading across the river towards the waterfall at the head of the valley. We climbed above the impressive falls to where it starts as a spring, and then climbed even higher above this. This forms a loop of approximately five hours, then head back to the RTM track. A nice uncomplicated walk, able to be completed by those unused to mountain walking.

### **John Maher's property: Ngaturi Road, Brunswick**

Thur 14 Dec 2017

Scribe: *Linda Clarke*

David Howard led 15 on an interesting walk over John Maher's farm at Brunswick. We enjoyed a fine sunny day, with easy walking tracks most of the way. High points on the farm gave us views over surrounding countryside of the Tokomaru East Road and Papaiti areas.

Lunch was had sitting on the verandah of a delightful little "get away from it all" country bach. John and his wife Susan had positioned the building overlooking a native bush area. Not too far away was the outhouse complete with flushing toilet. Highlights of the trip for me was meeting John Maher and seeing the improvements on the farm.

My aunt and uncle purchased this property in 1945, when Uncle Ned Clutterbuck returned from the war. Then in 1964 my father purchased the property and farmed *Ngaturi* with my two older brothers, until it was sold to John Maher in the 1990s. Gorse was always a problem, but John, with the help of David Howard, has that well under control. I was interested to see the riparian areas John and Susan have developed, with lots of native plants having been planted.

John showed the group where the original farm homestead had been. I was able to tell of my memories of this wonderful old building, and the fun my family and friends had staying there. The homestead was a single storey, six bedroom building, complete with servants' quarters. The long hallway that ran down the middle of the house was said to be the length of a cricket pitch.

Shortly after purchasing the property, my father had a smaller, more practical house, moved to *Ngaturi* for my brother and his family. When John Maher bought the property, the old homestead was full of hay and "way past its use-by date". All that remains of the site today is a lovely old magnolia tree.

From there we drove to Caroline's Boatshed for food and refreshments. Thanks David for organising this trip today.

Participants were: Earle Turner, Helen Atkinson, Linda Clarke, Jacky Evans, Barbara and Jim Gordon, Kate Jones, Victoria Kay, Jiri Krivanek,

Walter Lennox, Jeanette Prier, Carolyn Shingleton, Tim Stubbs, Ray Walton and David Howard.

### **Mangaturuturu Hut and Beyond**

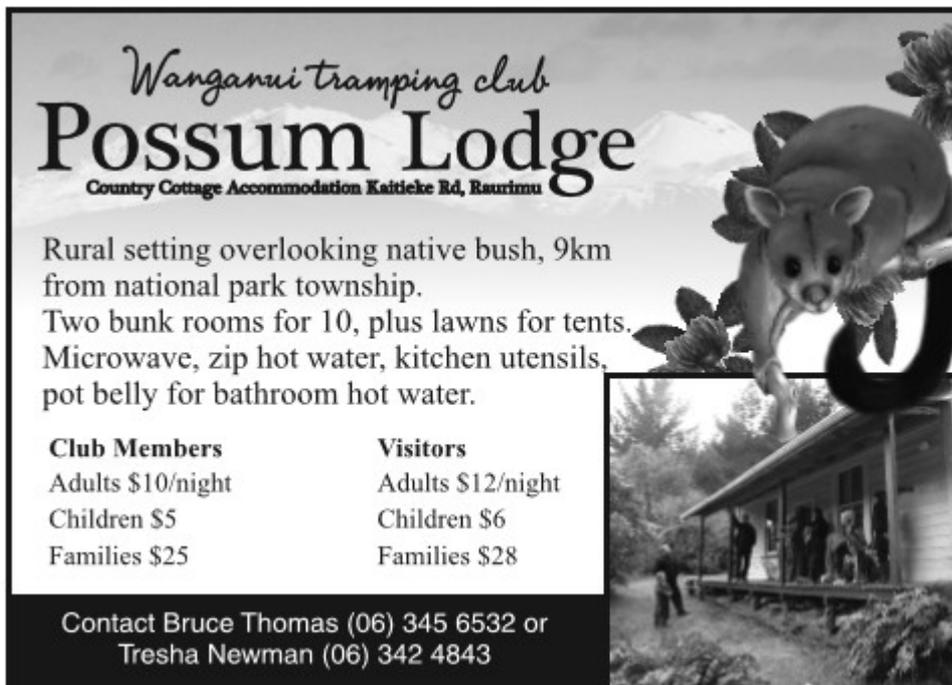
17-20 Dec 2017

Scribe: *Tracey Hooper*

This was a great idea that paid off well and should be done in the future at this time of year. Once the logistics were worked out, it came together really well.

*Day 1:* Six multi-day folks on the team, with Royce leading the five day-walkers, we headed to Tom's garden, as there are still people around who haven't witnessed this beautiful area. We took the traditional track down to the hut, said goodbye to the day walkers, and then headed down to the Mangaturuturu waterfall, which took a few hours. Lyneke was able to point out lots of small alpine flowers which I usually admire but don't know their names. Basil arrived at the hut just on dark.

*Day 2:* We woke to rain, so decided to start on the hut cleaning, achieving quite a lot with six of us setting to work. The hut was in pretty good nick anyway, and then the sun came out around 11am, so off we went to do some of the thousand waterfall walks off track. We had our fill of waterfalls



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by the end of the day, each one more stunning than the other. The hut was full with an extended family that night, good to see young kids out.

*Day 3:* This was red rock day. It turned into an eight-hour day, with some serious climbs to get to the rock and plane crash area. We found some bits of the plane. The red rock is ochre coming out of a rock from the hillside, colouring the area a bright orange. Getting out of here proved a little difficult with loose rocks tumbling down around us. We reached snow level, and then started our descent down the mountain. Adrei was very new to all this mountain clambering, fresh from the Netherlands, but coped beautifully. That night the hut was full again with a young team doing the DoE award.

*Day 4:* Party day: Some of the team went exploring in different directions, while I set up for the group Christmas party. We all ate too much, gained a prezzie, and went home via the tree route. Baz and I had our car parked at the skifield, and when we arrived home there were phone messages from the police, trying to track down the owner of our car. Nice to know they were making an effort to find us 'lost' folks. A coffee in Ohakune ended our trip, with everyone in good spirits.

Our multi-day group was Tracey and Basil, Mike Cole, Shane Wilson, Lyneke Onderwater and Adrei. Thanks to Margaret for cleaning the toilet for us!

### **Mangaturuturu Hut**

Sun 17 Dec 2017

Scribe: *Bruce Thomas*

Conditions were quite pleasant at Wanganui corner as we all got our gear together, half the group staying until Wednesday and for the rest of us, a day trip.

A small detour off the track to Tom's garden was well timed for morning tea with excellent views on such a fine day - we could even see Mt Egmont.

Stream crossings were good – maybe a few wet feet and we made it to the hut at lunch time to boil up the thermette for those who wanted a hot drink. The walk out after lunch, with a few small rest stops, made for a perfect day.

Some comments from two young members of the party:

"I tasted the fresh air and saw the Cascades with my feet jumping on the slippery rocks. Hard going up and down but enjoyed the day." - Ethan Toy (8)

"My favourite part was the huge waterfall that cuts through the track. Climbing it was the same amount of fun as climbing a mountain but much easier. To rate this walk would be 1a/1a." Darcy Johnston (9)

## **Mt Tihia**

Tues 2 Jan 2018

Scribe: *Dave Scoullar*

The forecast was not encouraging but 12 from WTC joined four from Taumarunui TC on the tramp to Mt Tihia (1165m) from the Te Ponanga Saddle, near Turangi. The informally-marked track climbs through good bush including giant rimu and emerges on alpine slopes, rocky outcrops and low scrub, finally reaching Tihia about 45min above the bush line.

From here we were surprised and pleased to get views of lakes Taupo, Rotoaira and Rotopounamu. Also Pihanga, Turangi, Omori and Kuratau. Ruapehu and accompanying mountains remained clocked by low cloud. We descended to our vehicles to complete an enjoyable trip of just under five hours. No sooner had we driven off towards home than the predicted rain arrived. That's New Year luck!

On trip: Bruce Thomas, Helen Atkinson, Jeanette Prier, Amy Richards, Marilyn McGlone, Dick Mitchell, Dorothy Symes, Ross McBeth, Philip Kirkwood, Juliet Kojis, Ken Howie and Dave Scoullar.

## **Mangahao-Makahika Track**

Wed 10 Jan 2018

Scribe: *Dave Scoullar*

A wet day and where to go? Why not the Tararua, so we headed towards the gloom, dividing the 12 punters into two groups of six for a crossover. Team Kojis started from the Mangahao dams road and Team Scoullar from behind Levin. We met for lunch in drizzly rain which lasted much of the day. But it was warm.

A well-marked track with lots of stream crossings (someone counted 32), but they were no problem. Muddy, but not too muddy. Some lovely bush, interesting former tramline routes with benched track and cuttings from logging days but none of the promised views. A total of 15km accomplished in some six hours.

This is part of the Te Araroa Trail and Team Scoullar met six TA walkers on the trail plus three in tents, which gives some indication of how popular this marathon has become.

On trip: Bruce Thomas, Cherry Channon, Helen Atkinson, Juliet Kojis, Dave Taylor, Derek Barrett, Graham Sutcliffe, Kathy O'Donnell, Tracey Hooper, Val Wackrow, Esther Williams and Dave Scoullar.

## **Tongariro Forest Conservation Area**

Fri-Sun 12-14 Jan 2018

Scribe: *Graham Sutcliffe*

We stopped at Possum Lodge on Friday night ready for an 8.30am start from Owhango on Saturday where Brenda Martin was meeting us. On Saturday we met the team of five from Taumarunui: Peter Panton (leader), Annie, Dora, Ken and Rogan.

The start of the track was at the Pumice Pit and after that Peter led us through bush and quad bike and forest tracks - and tracks that had been so little used recently that Peter was clearing as we walked. Although members were given a map of the tracks, and some were named on the maps, not one track over all the weekend was signposted. In fact Peter was once or twice called back by members of his team as he had missed the turn-off.

Lunch was had watching the spectacular 70m Owhango Falls. Not long after we dropped packs and took a 45 minute return detour to see the dam that still supplies Owhango with water.

Although an amazing area of bush and streams, definitely not an area to go into without someone who really knows as it's literally covered in tracks.

Between 1903 and 1978, 43 mills systematically felled the best timber. Eventually the dwindling supply saw the decline of the mills and in 1987 the area was added to the conservation estate and the long process of rehabilitation began. Hardy light-tolerant manuka, toetoe and cabbage trees now act as the nursery crop for rangiora, rewarewa, lancewood, marble leaf and mahoe.

We were extremely lucky as although rain was predicted on Saturday afternoon we had only a couple of drops and the same at night. Interestingly, although we were a party of eleven we had five tents up Saturday night. The hut is full of character with carpet on the floor, tongue-in-cheek letterbox and telephone, wood furnace, couch and heaps of room. There are eight bunks but with the tent city we only used five and had the hut to ourselves.

On Sunday we went another way out on three linking tracks - another experience. We set off at 8am and arrived at a pre-arranged area by 11.45 where we had lunch and waited for the van, kindly driven by John Martin. What a treat he brought: freezing cold drinks.

Back at Owhango we farewelled our Taumarunui friends. Many thanks to Peter for showing us the way. We left John and Brenda at Owhango and arrived back in Wanganui at 4.45pm.

Those on the trip were: Graham Sutcliffe (leader), Helen Atkinson, Helen Chitty, Jacky Evans, Ken Howie and Brenda Martin.

## ROKARE HALO PROJECT EXTENDED

The outstanding success of pest eradication and native species population growth achieved within Taranaki's Lake Rotokare Scenic Reserve over several years is now requiring the "halo" beyond the reserve boundaries to be extended ever further.

Following sustained pest trapping regimes that started in 2004, and erection of a predator-proof fence around the reserve in 2008, the reserve near Eltham has once again become home to many treasured species. These include kiwi, tieke, toutouwai, hihi, matata, spotless crane and many others that previously failed to survive among the wide range of pests and predators.

The reserve, which is managed by the Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust, includes a 15-hectare lake/wetland area containing pukatea and kahikatea swamp forests and rushlands. Such has been the success of the fenced sanctuary that bird populations in particular have been 'spilling out' beyond the boundaries of the 234-hectare reserve, demanding the implementation of pest control programmes on surrounding reserve and privately-owned land.

Operations Director for DOC's Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki Region David Speirs says the need to extend the wider halo concept around Rotokare was recognised several years ago with the extension of predator control trapping in 4050ha of surrounding land.

"This work has enjoyed much practical and hands-on support from other agencies including South Taranaki Forest and Bird and the Taranaki Kiwi Trust and its ongoing success is highly dependent on the support of many conservation partners from the local community."

DOC's Community Fund will be contributing \$20,000, spread over the next three years, in support of major funding agencies Taranaki Regional Council, Taranaki Savings Bank and local landowners.

The major work ahead includes monitoring existing trap networks to identify any hot-spots, increasing trap networks where required, installation of wasp control bait stations and development of a pest plant surveillance plan.

"Rotokare Sanctuary and the surrounding protective halo over large areas of forested private land are hugely important contributors to enhanced biodiversity in South Taranaki and the wider aims of Predator-Free 2050 generally," David Speirs said.



**Rotokare Reserve**

## Limericks

Shane W's a table tennis man  
To win titles is part of his plan  
But point him at a peak  
And his knees go all weak  
For dizzy heights he's also a fan

Carolyn leads our BOMBS team  
A difficult task it would seem  
Put this lot on a bike  
And they go where they like  
Or that seems the familiar theme

There was this bloke called C Dub  
And, ah, here's the rub  
He wore funny gear in the bush  
But we couldn't give him the push  
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## **Great Walks may cop tourist levy**

The Government is investigating a possible levy on overseas tourists using New Zealand's Great Walks as figures show they now make up 62% of visitors on the nine trails. The figures from the Department of Conservation show the gap between foreign and domestic tourists on the Great Walks has widened every year since 2012. Of the 120,000 trampers in 2016, about 74,000 were from overseas.

Tourism Minister Kelvin Davis has confirmed he is seeking advice on a possible tourist levy and DOC is looking at whether differential pricing could be part of a new booking system. If introduced, it would allow tourists to be charged more than New Zealanders. Last year "modest" accommodation price rises up to 30% for some huts and camping sites were brought in to help cut the \$1.2 million lost each year running the Great Walks. Extensive overseas marketing has seen tourist numbers on them increase by 40,000 over the past five years. The most over-subscribed is the Milford Track which is booked solidly until April. Demand for Tongariro Northern Circuit accommodation leapt 34% last October compared with the same month in 2016.

Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (FMC) president Peter Wilson was not surprised to hear Kiwis were in the minority, particularly at the height of the Great Walks season, which started in October. He said the trend of tourists outnumbering Kiwis was a concern. Wilson said that those parks exist for their intrinsic, not their economic value and while visitors create economic spinoffs, making money should not be the priority. "I wouldn't want us to constantly reach for economic justification for special pieces of land" he said. FMC was "not opposed" to a tourist levy but it would prefer that DOC was better funded.

DOC director of recreation, tourism and heritage Gavin Walker acknowledged demand was high among tourists but said Kiwis still have old access -- "like any other popular attraction, it's a matter of first in, first served."



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