

Wanganui Trampler

May - July 2020

Quarterly Journal of the Wanganui Tramping Club (Inc) Issue 265
www.wanganuitrampingclub.net

From the Editor

Who could have ever imagined there would be a time when we were unable to go out tramping! Let's hope it won't be too long before we are able to be out in the bush once more.

In this issue are details about the photo competition (see pg 20). The special category this year is "Lockdown" so you can be busy with your camera wherever you are.

Also in the next three months, depending on lockdown being eased, we have our AGM 3 June (see pg 40), our mid winter feast (see pg 64) and the Old Timers Get Together (see pg 63).

Our website is:

www.wanganuitrampingclub.net

All contributions may be emailed to
trampermagazine@gmail.com

No email? Handwritten contributions are perfectly acceptable.

Jeanette Prier



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Cover: Jiri and Shane at Stanton Memorial

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 265

MAY - JULY 2020

*From the
PRESIDENT*

Lockdown! Bubble! These words are polar opposites to those in the normal vocabulary of trampers. Our words are Freedom! Outdoors!

As good citizens we are all abiding by the advice and direction from the government to kick Covid-19 into touch. And it seems to be working. So hang in there fellow trampers and hopefully it won't be too long before we are once again on the trail. Rest assured that the postponed trips will be rescheduled sometime in the future.

February and March 2020 presented us with a wonderful array of tramping opportunities, both day trips and longer so I hope you enjoyed some of them. Our South Island group exploring the Mt Cook area made it home just prior to lockdown. There are advantages to being "over 70" as they were given priority passage, a day earlier than their booking, due to their advanced ages!

We look forward to the time when we can, once again, exercise our freedom to tramp the outdoors. Tramping is what we do to relax the mind, soothe the soul and lift our spirits.

Keep safe in your Bubbles.

Cherry

Committee Comments

May 2020 Tramper Magazine

1. Van travel fees are to be waived when the destination is for planned track or hut maintenance, ie Waitahinga, pine clearing, Mangaturuturu.
2. Important reminder: Care of the vans – a change of clothes and footwear.
3. Carolyn acknowledges great support for clubroom cleaning and setting up.
4. Barry Hopper to display merchandise at club meetings.
5. QR (quick response) Trips Charts to be available at club meetings.
6. E-night presentation on hold. Club entering into the inevitable Electronic Era - no cheques. Members: Heather – Facebook; Diane - website and club administration. See how it might affect you on page 8.
7. Club members phone list due this quarter – on hold until next distribution.
8. Change to book-in times for weekend trips: Day trips Thursday 7pm; Overnighters Wednesday 7pm, or as advised by leader on multi-day trips.
9. Club PLB loan to members. Please plan well ahead so Margret can accommodate. In her absence phone Carolyn or Dorothy.
10. AGM Reports to be sent to Secretary Carolyn in time for prior circulation.
11. The subcommittee have met with the Deerstarkers. A working bee to repaint the club rooms will be arranged once we are out of lockdown.
12. WTC Facebook's secured page can be accessed to view. If you want to add any of your photos, we have six members who can help: Earle Turner, Mike Cole, Basil Hooper, Diane Harries and Royce Johnson. Heather McKenzie (phone 347 1250) is also keen to help you out.



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.

Pleased to Meet You! **New Members**



Pam McDonald and Linda Johnstone
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.

Copy for the
August 2020 Issue of the
Wanganui Trumper
to the Editor by
July 16th 2020
(Earlier appreciated)
Thank You! - Jeanette



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Club Activities

MIDWEEK

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

Coordinated by:

Victoria Kay email jvhwkay@gmail.com, 027 688 8190

Thursdays: A tramp every second Thursday. No bush bashing, generally over better tracks and a little easier.

Coordinated by:

Val Cowan 345 0456, email otterval@gmail.com

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

May 7 & 21

July 2, 16 & 30

June 4 & 18

Aug 13 & 27



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

Leader **Julie Kears** 345 0142 will advise the meeting place and time. Easy, ideal for the more senior member / recovering from injury / or for that extra walk with companions.



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

Contact **Carolyn Shingleton** 347 7644

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

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

Electronic Banking: How will it affect you?

For most of our members there is no change, and any new procedures will be for those involved in club administration. Most members receive their invoice and pay the annual subscription on-line. Anyone who does not have email will continue to receive the invoice by snail mail.

If you opt to pay by cheque, you can still do so while you have a cheque book and as long as banks continue to accept cheques. One bank has already stopped issuing cheque books and receiving cheques to bank. You can still drop in cash payments to Treasurer. Or, preferably, take your invoice to your bank and ask for an electronic transfer to the WTC bank account number shown on the invoice. Do make sure your name is shown on this transaction.

WTC will no longer issue cheques. If you need reimbursement for club purchases, please supply an invoice as proof of purchase and your bank account number for payment.

I hope this is clear, but if you need further help just give me a call **345 7039** or email **dorothy@displayassociates.co.nz**



May 2020 Quiz

1. Name the longest river in the Tararua Range
2. The Bridge to Somewhere crosses which river?
3. Moutoa Island, site of a big Maori battle in 1864, is above or below Jerusalem?
4. If I visit Awatere Hut which forest park am I in?
5. The wrybill (ngutu pare) is the only bird in the world that possesses a laterally-curved bill which always points to the left or right?
6. Field is the oldest, so what is the second oldest hut in Tararua Forest Park?
7. The advert in the FMC magazine tells us that a backcountry hut pass gives us free use of over how many huts?
8. We are familiar with the Moeawatea Valley, but what does Moeawatea mean?
9. Which has more national parks — NZ or Tasmania?
10. Which major peak was first identified as Peak b, later renamed Peak XV and receiving its most-used name in 1865?

ANSWERS page 18



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Tramping Trips

Confirming your place

For ALL trips (not TT2), you must contact 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.

If making a booking for any trip you may enquire from the leader advertised, a time for estimated return. Please be advised timing cannot be guaranteed for whatever might occur on the day and this will be the call of the leader in charge.

What you will need

Good waterproof clothing including leggings or over-trousers is necessary. Woollen 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 four PLB contacts:

btwtcvaux@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.

May to July 2020 Club Activities

*Note: Trip cost estimates are based on 8 cents per kilometre
(this will vary with increases in fuel prices)*

**NOTE: THIS LIST WAS COMPILED WHILE CLUB TRIPS WERE
SUSPENDED BECAUSE OF COVID-19. WE PUBLISH THE NEW LIST IN
ANTICIPATION OF THE RESUMPTION OF NORMAL SERVICE.**

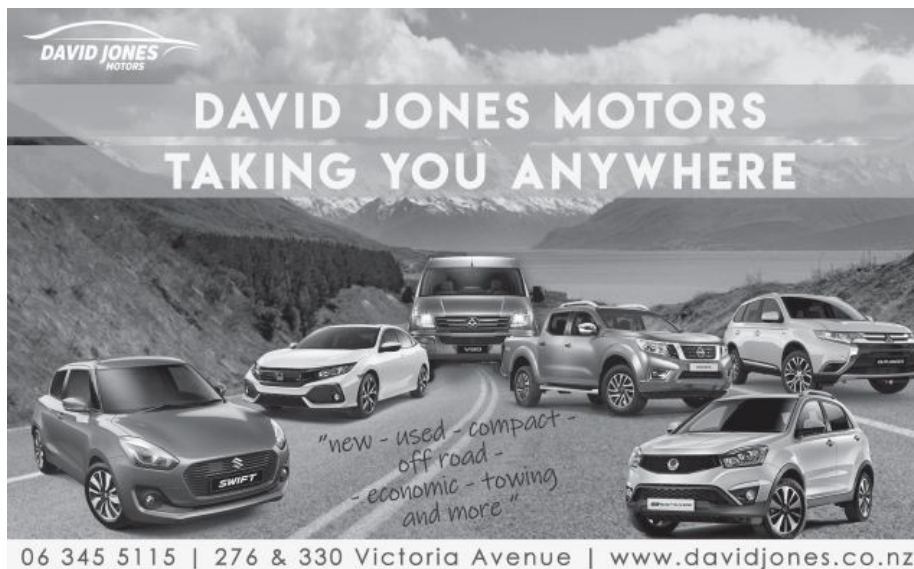
| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------|
| May 9-10 Sat-Sun | Taranaki Weekend The Rugby World Cup and poor weather ruled out our annual trip to Taranaki last October, so Dave plans it again this month. On Saturday he has a number of places to visit on the Surf Highway route to New Plymouth. In town we will do the usual — stay in a campground, go out to dinner, see a movie and then team up with New Plymouth Tramping Club on the Sunday. Always a fun weekend. | Dave Scoullar |
| Easy/mod | Cost to be calculated | |
| May 9 or 10 Sat or Sun | Waiinu Adventure Calling all beachcombers — this one is for you. Waiinu Beach-based Graham Ellett has a number of options to choose from and the walks on his patch are always well planned and a pleasure. He will make his choice on the day and choose the better day weather-wise. John is in charge of marshalling the troops and transport. | John Baxter |
| Mod | Approx cost \$8 | |

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| May 16-17 Sat-Sun | Parks Peak Hut Shane is busy picking off huts and this time he has in his sights Parks Peak Hut, on a ridge at about 1300m in the eastern Ruahine. He calculates it is about a five hour walk with one river to be crossed. | Shane McCulloch |
| Mod/fit | Approx cost \$40 + \$5 hut fees | |
| May 17 Sun | Egmont Exploration Join the New Plymouth TC in a walk into some unknown territory in Egmont National Park. They know this place like the backs of their hands. The plan is to follow the stream above Wilkie's Pool and circle over to the Manganui ski field. Those who wish for an easier tramp may return back down the stream instead of going up and over. Should suit a wider range of fitness levels. | Dave Scoullar |
| Easy/Mod | Cost to be calculated | |
| May 23 or 24 Sat or Sun | Mikimiki Walkway Situating in the eastern foothills of the Tararua, this is a native bush-clad track which has regenerated well after logging in the 1930s. It is a pleasant and well-graded track along a river that follows old bush tramlines. There is also a loop track with a magnificent stand of redwoods. Adrian will choose the better day. | Adrian Pike |
| Easy | Approx cost \$26 | |



| | | |
|---------------------------|--|---------------|
| May 23-24 Sat-Sun | Waikamaka Hut | Tracey Hooper |
| | The Waipawa riverbed provides the route into the delightful sub-alpine heart of the central Ruahine Ranges. A short distance from the Waipawa Saddle is our destination, Waikamaka Hut. A great introduction to Ruahine tramping or a return for those who know how beautiful this area is. | |
| Mod/fit | Approx cost \$39 + hut fees \$5 | |
| May 30 Sat | Cafe Tramp | Sandra Rogers |
| | Join Sandra on another of her famous cafe tramps. And, yes, there is some tramping involved as well as serious coffee drinking. Sandra is heading for Dawson Falls in Egmont National Park and eyeing up the Kapuni Track and Wilkie's Pools loop. 8.30am start. | |
| Easy | Approx cost \$21 + coffee money | |
| May 30- Jun 1 Sat-Mon | Orongorongo Valley | Mike Cole |
| | A new area as we have not been much before in the Remutaka Forest Park. An easy walk into the hut, only two hours, and then we can do a couple of excursions from there. Should be able to cater for all levels of fitness. Be in early to book your place. | |
| Easy/mod | Approx cost \$65 | |
| June 6 or 7 Sat or Sun | Marton Sash and Door Track | Dorothy Symes |
| | This circuit track at National Park, named for the timber company which once worked in the area, has been a staple on our trips list for many years and maintains its popularity. No surprise as it is an excellent workout on a mainly flat track. | |
| Mod | Approx cost \$20 | |
| June 10 Wed | Trips meeting | Dave Scoullar |
| | September/October/November will be on our minds at this trips meeting at 7 Wairere Rd, starting at 7.30pm. Want to go to a location, or to lead a trip? We want to see you there. Can't come? Phone up or email dkmscoullar@gmail.com | |
| June 13 Sat | Quiz Night | Dave Scoullar |
| | We have had a lot of laughs and some nail-biting finishes in our annual club quiz night over the years — and why not tonight once more? Form a team of four in advance or make one up at the Deerstalkers' Hall on the night. The prizes aren't much but you earn bragging rights for 2020. The fun starts at 7.30pm so don't arrive late. A good supper guaranteed. | |

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------|
| June 14 Sun | Mt Bruce Plane Crash | Dave Scoullar |
| | Perhaps the loneliest grave in Tararua Forest Park is not far from Mt Bruce. First we climb a logging road and then into the bush proper. The remains of the RNZAF plane, which crashed about 1951 when trying to cross the range, are strewn around next to the grave. Hutt Valley and South Wairarapa Tramping Clubs have been invited to join us. | |
| Mod | Approx cost \$23 | |
| June 20 Sat | Wairere Stream | Cherry Channon |
| | This is a delightful circuit walk in Tongariro National Park. Starting from Whakapapa Village, we go offtrack along the flank of the mountain, then drop down to walk alongside the Wairere Stream with some wonderful rock formations, joining the RTM Track at Taranaki Falls. We have invited Taumarunui Tramping Club to join us. | |
| Easy/mod | Approx cost \$22 | |
| June 20-21 Sat-Sun | Kiritaki Hut | Shane McCulloch |
| | Shane has been to this hut in the eastern Ruahine a couple of times but never on this interesting route from the west, starting on a DOC track on the end of No 2 Line and then going on an informally marked track through leatherwood to the hut. Our only other trip on this route was several years ago and Shane is keen to have a try, too. | |
| Mod | Approx cost \$22 + hut fees \$5 | |



| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| June 26-28 Fri - Sun | Mystery at Omori | Margret McKinnon |
| | A mid-winter break with comfortable private accommodation. Enjoy walks, activities, hot pools and fun in the Turangi area. Note: A Friday start to maximise the weekend. | |
| Easy/mod. | Approx cost \$40 | |
| July 4 Sat | Opunake Cafe Trip | Sandra Rogers |
| | This time Sandra's endless pursuit of a fun day out — and good coffee — will take us to the Opunake area for a lake and cliff top walk. As always, bring extra money for the coffee stop. | |
| Easy | Approx cost \$21 | |
| July 11-12 Sat-Sun | Waiaua Gorge Hut | Dorothy Symes |
| | This cosy hut in Egmont National Park has often been a destination and Dorothy has fond memories of it despite breaking her leg nearby! A mainly flat track with some interesting features nearby including the Brames Falls and WW2 plane crash remains. A particularly good trip for any member new to an overnight trip. | |
| Easy/mod | Approx cost \$32 + \$15 hut fees | |
| July 18 Sat | WTC Midwinter Feast | Julie Kears Esther Williams |
| | Julie and Esther host the four course dinner at the Camera Club's Room in Handley St off Carlton Avenue near the vets and Hunting & Fishing. Let either of them know what you can bring. Eating starts at 6pm. | |
| July 19 Sun | Old Coach Road | Adrian Pike |
| | This route, the first stage of the Mountains to Sea Cycleway, is studded with historical features including the Hapuawhenua viaduct and tunnel and old Taonui viaduct. The bush is superb and the track well within the capacity of most of our trampers. What's not to like? | |
| Easy | Approx cost \$16 | |
| July 25 or 26 Sat or Sun | Lake Dive Track | Tracy Hooper |
| | Plan A is to take the closed lower Lake Dive Track in Egmont National Park via the access from the farm, which we used to take. This requires permission. Plan B will be to be where the weather is the best, which could be in Ruapehu district. | |
| Mod | Cost to be calculated | |
| Aug 1-2 Sat-Sun | Sayers Hut | Shane McCulloch |
| | Join Shane when he bags another hut, this time in the eastern Tararua. Sayers Hut is a bit different, make that very different, and | |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Mod | visiting it is an experience. Shane plans to start from the Waiohine Rd end or conversely from Totorā Flats, depending on river levels. Cost to be calculated + \$5 hut fees |
| Aug 8 Sat | Mangaturuturu Hut John Cook John is leading a winter trip in to our hut in Tongariro National Park. He may go in from Horopito or the usual way off the Turoa Mountain Rd. Either way, it is a marvellous place for lunch and there should be snow around as a bonus. |
| Mod | Cost to be assessed |
| Aug 9 Sun | Old Timers' Afternoon Dorothy Symes This has become a traditional outing with Dorothy once again the hostess at her 77 Liverpool St home. A 2pm start and look forward to a flash afternoon tea. It is a pleasant opportunity to reflect and catch up. Many members may not have emails so let any old-timer friends know, please. If you are no longer a club member Dorothy will take the opportunity to record your emails to make sure you are all advised each year. |
| Aug 15 or 16 Sat or Su | Tongariro Winter Crossing Esther Williams A chance for an invigorating winter trip, plagues and weather permitting. Snowcraft course/experience an advantage, but instruction given en route. Bring your ice axe and crampons, or else borrow the club's. |
| Fit | Approx cost \$25 plus \$ for a snack at National Park in the evening. |
| Aug 15 or 16 Sat or Sun | Annabell Homestead Brian Doughty The Annabell house sits on a four-acre remnant of the 1200 acre Waitotara Valley property bought by J R Annabell in 1890. This house was built by JR's son, Bernard Annabell, in about 1920. The 30 minute walk from Makakaho Junction is along a clay road. The Annabells relied on a swing bridge across the river to Ngamatapouri village rather than this road and remnants of the bridge may still be seen. The sadly neglected house sits in a diverse setting of mature trees planted by Bernard. We will do a short loop from the house up to the original house site and a view over the Ngamatapouri church. The loop will then continue through the pines planted on the main property. |
| Easy | Cost to be calculated |
| Aug 22 Sat | Pot Luck Meal Sandra Rogers Sandra's home at 1 Lancewood Pl, St John's Hill, is yet again the venue for a night of good eating and sparkling conversation. Her pot luck meals are legendary, so we are in for a treat. No need to |

phone her, simply turn up at 6pm with a food contribution, plus your own plates, glasses and eating irons.

Aug 23
Sun

Egmont Circuit

Bruce Thomas

Bruce has been eyeing up a bush circuit in Egmont National Park. Parking at the Mangaoraka picnic area off Egmont Rd, he will proceed along the Ngatoro Track to the North Egmont Visitor Centre, then down the Ram and Kauai tracks back to the transport. A good day out in the goblin forest where ferns and moss hang from twisted tree trunks.

Sun

Approx cost \$25

Aug 29-30
Sat-Sun

Gourmet Meal Trip



Dave Scoullar/Juliet Kojis

This is our annual tramp where we focus on a flash dinner with everyone contributing but also enjoy a leisurely wander. The 2020 location has yet to be decided on but will be revealed in the next *Tramper*.

Easy

Cost to be calculated





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From our archives... 1994

TE MATA TRACK — POTENTIAL IS THERE

Te Mata, a branch of the more famous Kaiwhakauka-Mangapurua track, was once a 6ft track which was surveyed as a proposed road. Carved out of the side of the ridge, it wanders in and out of every undulation.

The track is still there and seven club members spent several days exploring, finding it obliterated by slips in places and sometimes at stream crossings and overgrown by supplejack, coprosma, rangiora and other vegetation but fairly apparent much of the time.

We clipped and sawed some obstacles and clambered over and around most. Several farms were established here and second growth indicated where they were, along with bits of fence line, yards and the odd house site.

On day three the track was getting harder to find, so we opted for ridge travel. This led to an old fence line which was followed to a hut site and thence down through manuka and other second growth to the Mangapurua Stream. We crossed opposite Bettjeman's and returned to Whakahoro via the established tracks.

The exploration convinced the group of the potential for a round trip link with the Mangapurua Valley.



Footnote: This tramp hasn't been repeated. Maybe something to do sometime soon.

Te Mata track trippers (from left) Bob Charteris, Brian Wansborough, Dave Scoullar, Harry Stimpson, Peter Bassett and Harry Cloughton. Photo by Darrell Grace.

QUIZ ANSWERS

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Waiohine River | 6. Cone Hut |
| 2. Whangamomona River | 7. 900 |
| 3. Below | 8. Sleep in the daytime |
| 4. Ruahine Forest Park | 9. Tasmania |
| 5. Right | 10. Mt Everest |

NEW NAMES IN PIPELINE FOR MOUNTAIN, NATIONAL PARK

After more than 30 years with two names, Taranaki's most prominent landmark is about to have only one. Considered an ancestor by iwi, the mountain will soon be known only as Taranaki Maunga. Following an agreement between Ngā Iwi o Taranaki and the Crown as a result of Treaty of Waitangi negotiations related to the mountain, the names Mt Egmont and Egmont National Park will be scrapped. The national park will instead be known as Te Papakura o Taranaki.

The name changes were first mooted in 2018 by Ngā Iwi o Taranaki lead negotiator Jamie Tuuta when he provided an update on the negotiations, which began in March 2017. Tuuta confirmed all the names associated with Taranaki Maunga will have Māori names under the new legislation expected to come into effect this year.

In 1770, British explorer James Cook named the mountain after the Earl of Egmont, a man who never set foot in the region. In 1986, the New Zealand Geographic Board officially listed the dual names of Mt Egmont and Mt Taranaki as interchangeable ways to refer to the mountain.

There are more than 100 sites of cultural significance to Māori within the national park and the maunga was an important feature in the history and whakapapa of Taranaki's eight iwi groupings.

As part of the settlement, an apology and cultural redress have formed part of the negotiations; however, the deal will not include any financial or commercial recompense.

Taranaki Maunga will also be bestowed with protected legal rights and the Mt Egmont Vesting Act 1978 repealed. Under that piece of legislation, the mountain was returned to the region by vesting it in the Taranaki Māori Trust Board, after which it was immediately given back to the Government by the board as a "gift to the nation".

However, the Waitangi Tribunal, in its watershed 1996 report on Taranaki, said there was little evidence to show there had been agreement from Taranaki hapū to do this.

Hemi Sundgren, of Te Kotahitanga o Te Ātiawa Trust, the entity set up to manage its treaty settlement resources, said the change was about acknowledging their ancestor.

"This has long since been the wishes of our old people since the 1970s. Our elders have wanted to restore our ancestor's name and remove Egmont, return his true identity in his own right."

Ngā Iwi o Taranaki, which represents the interests of the region's eight iwi, had earlier signed a record of understanding with the government that will see the mountain become a legal personality which recognises its status in a similar approach taken with Te Urewera and Te Awa Tupua Whanganui River.



PHOTO COMPETITION 2020

This year's deadline is Wednesday 1 July 2020

This year all entries shall be received as electronic image files. There is no need to print off any images.

Ways to submit your entries:

- a) On a memory stick
- b) Using a link to a dropbox (or similar) site with the link emailed to Basil Hooper
- c) Emailing image as an attachment directly to Basil Hooper. (Make sure your software does not downsize your image with this method.)

Baz's email address **bas.hooper@xtra.co.nz**

Please don't leave it to the last minute to send your photographs. If there is spare time I can try to remedy any issues with them. The images will be judged on a screen that takes an image size of at least 1920 x 1080 pixels. It is in your interest to present the images at least as big as that.

If possible, rename images with your proposed title. And include in associated documentation your name, the class you are in, and the category of the entry.

There are two classes: Novice and Open - entrants who have previously won a category in Novice will be in the Open class.

RULES

- 1) All entrants must be financial members of the club in the year up to that point.
- 2) All photographs must have been taken by the member submitting them, and taken on club or private mountain biking outings and tramping trips within the previous two years.
- 3) Entries must not have been entered in any previous club competition.
- 4) Limit of two images per category per person (total of eight images).

CATEGORIES

Human Interest - Anything that involves people

Pictorial - Landscapes, views etc. People can be included but not dominate the image.

Natural History within NZ – Landforms, flora and fauna etc.
(Defined as: non-domestic life forms, geological and meteorological features etc - must not contain features of human intervention.)

Special Category - For this years special category in the tramping club photography competition let's record our personal perspective of the incredible circumstances we are currently in - **LOCK DOWN**

Funny – mad – memorable – artistic – poignant – anything goes. Above all something to look back on to remember these times.
If the photographer happens to be the model in the image and someone else in your bubble has pushed the shutter button then so be it. Not the time to be picky!
A great way to fill in an afternoon at the moment.



The competition closes on meeting night 1st of July.

Be safe all

Winners will be announced at the club meeting Wed 5 August

Organiser: Basil Hooper ph 346 5597 Email bas.hooper@xtra.co.nz



“Somewhere between the bottom of the climb and the summit is the answer to the mystery why we climb.”

Greg Child



On Tuesday 24 March, while we were having our morning coffee we were looking at ways on how we could best manage 'safe distances' while we cycled, only to hear within 24 hours that we would be going into Lockdown - therefore no communal cycling or socialising.

Many domestic chores are now filling our days, along with hopping on the bike to go for our bit of exercise in our local areas. By the time we get the all-clear from the government, our homes and gardens will be pristine, with plenty of time for us all to get out and enjoy ourselves.

While in shut-down mode, what a fantastic time for newbies to cycling, to get out there and practise their skills on the near deserted roads.

Unfortunately we had to postpone a couple of out of town trips – a day trip to Kapiti and an extended weekend trip to the Wairarapa. Both will be rescheduled as soon as time and weather permit.

The new bridge at Upokongaro has now been placed across the Whanganui River, although it will be a few months before the pathways on and off will be ready for the grand opening. We will all be looking forward to experiencing the return trip from Wanganui to Upokongaro via the bridge and back on the Aramoho cycle path.

In the meantime, stay safe and happy cycling.

Carolyn

Members' Cycling Trips

Twin Coasts Cycle Trail, Bay of Islands to Hokianga - Barbara Gordon

Tues 10 Mar - Thurs 12 Mar 2020

Traversing Northland from Opuā to Horeke, this ride is a cruisy, mostly Grade 1 rail-line trail featuring farmland, water views, native and exotic forest, tunnels and bridges, towns and villages. We based at Opuā and did our customary there-and-back sections over three days.

The new track was in excellent condition with good signage, marred only by numerous wriggle-through cross-road barriers. The western Okaihau-Horeke section was the highlight, offering a vigorous climb with sharp, steep switchbacks. Steely nerves and good brakes are useful on the descent. This section is Grade 3 and on the steepest turn we noticed a memorial post showing dates and 'Paul'. The roller-coaster, twist-and-turn ride along a river valley, ending with a 1200m boardwalk through mangroves, was a blast. The trail ends at historic Horeke pub, and it's just a little further to Mangungu mission house and expansive harbour views.

Twin Coasts can be ridden either direction but for a one-way 87km trip an eastern start provides the steep downhill option. Worth the trouble to haul two bikes all the way to Opuā?

Resounding YES.

The Wanganui Tramp

22

May - July 2020

Alps to Ocean - Esther Williams

Sun 8 Mar - Fri 13 Mar 2020

Day 1

Five outdoor enthusiasts, Helen, Janice, Louise, Esther and Ross left Whanganui by car to begin a cycle journey from Mount Cook to Oamaru. By Sunday, with everything prepared, we walked in good time to the Twizel cycle depot for the Mount Cook transport. Without us, the bus had departed! It U-turned and we took the five remaining seats. Continuing alongside the Tasman River flat, we finally reached the DOC campground. Our arrival coincided with kea encircling us, joyfully screeching and examining the nearby roof material. We had arrived! Saddled up wearing hi-vis vests, we rode seven kilometres across tussock to the airport.

Our group requested the helicopter flight together over the Tasman. "We put people in order we receive lists." Mmmmm...

Weighed, we soon boarded, were uplifted, floating over the braided Tasman. A sharp U-turn with downward dive brought us to the waiting spot, draughty, cool and moist. Our bikes arrived in the crate soon after. The familiar A2O logo confirmed the route, seventy kilometres - a long way for day one. We rode and walked the rock studded shingle fan, wove through a matagouri and tussock track till the Braemar Mount Cook Station Road.

Pukaki Lake shone glacial blue and vast. Slow peddling broken with walking uphill, I vowed an ebike next time. At the southern end of Pukaki we rode on a dedicated walking/cycling track with flowering St Johns wart, thistles, mullein and vipers bugloss. Just a block before our return to Twizel accommodation, I indicated a right hand turn, then stopped to check behind. The car had also stopped. Maybe the town folk respect the outdoor tourists who keep the settlement ticking.

Day 2

Road kill gives an indication to the amount of pests in this area, as do wilding pines. Cycling from Twizel along a little used sealed road by Ohau Weir we passed a few recreational fishers. The off-road cycle track at Lake Ohau brought us to significant sculptures depicting the original landowners. We battled strong head winds till Lake Ohau Lodge grounds, open for hot drinks at 4pm and dinner at 7pm. Cyclists arrived using spare inner tubes to tow their ebike mates who had run out of battery.

The three course meal was worth waiting for. Ross ate three chocolate puddings.

Day 3

The hill Tambræ sidles above yesterday's lakeside road, a 450m climb up to 900m in alpine meadow. The white flowered gentian stood above low flowering alpiners. A group of Te Araroa walkers peeled off to Hawea Conservation Park. Downhill with two hairpin bends we whizzed past paddocks with curly dusty merinos. Three of us deviated to the QE11 Badlands/Clay Cliffs. One hour against the wind, half an hour return for a donation for road upkeep. The Willowbrook cycle trail, pleasantly undulating, passed numerous campervan sites and some folk walking the trail in the late afternoon. Finally Omarama Motels and the lure of Hot Tubs on the main road about 1km from the accommodation. They are open aired, heated by pine and



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discretely hidden from each other by mounds of earth. After each designated time use, the tubs are drained and filled. Two of us soaked for an hour and a quarter. The ache disappeared from my left knee. No more painkillers.

Day 4

On top of Omarama Hill, technicians were installing a camera. Some vehicles we noted drove close or swept past over the double yellow line without slowing. As the oldest and slowest, I caught up with all the other cyclists at the top who applauded. Thanks.

Down to Otematata, another dam constructors' town. Coffee cart was doing a brisk business. My travel cup holds 500ml and it was full. The track and road led to the top of Benmore. I dawdled taking photos of humorous paintings with an international flavour on the outer toilet wall. No lack of toilets for cyclists at the lakeside deserted caravan parks. Three times I passed a cyclist with a one-speed bike practising for a local event. Above, the sun wore an ice crystal halo. Two cyclists on the other side of the road U-turned to pick apples off one of the loaded unpruned trees. We cycled past Aviemore and Waitaki Lakes to a new uphill zigzag route then down to Kurow Camping Ground. Our accommodation was a large hall, like a medieval building: a large gathering area with three dormitories, kitchen and bathroom on the sides.

Day 5.

On the map, the route looks flat till Duntroon. We deviated round a wetland, passing a person whose bike had run out of battery. She didn't have far to go for assistance from the company she was with. In the township, the local kast geology is celebrated with a fossil museum. In the classroom, lumps of limestone await the blows of little hammers to find the minutest of fossil evidence. I was tempted but we had more kilometres to ride. The day was mild and relaxing. Inevitably a hill, private land and electric fences. Just over the low fence stood a nectarine with split fruit. A welcome mouthful. Our Rothesay farmhouse accommodation had welcoming messages, plenty of room and food, prepared, ready to cook. We ate the lot. Great to be still, with our bikes on the rack in the garage beside a child's trike. The weather pattern throughout the trip varied from cool overcast evenings and mornings to almost unbearably hot afternoons.

Day 6

Cycling round the rural community, we found a farmer's race with a zigzag to the top ridge. School children had enhanced the area with native planting. Along the ridge to a disused railway line with Rakis Tunnel where we dismounted. Visions of the Otago Rail Trail. We stopped at Windsor, a converted church building for just a coffee and cycled beside the road through small communities on the outskirts of Oamaru. Congregating in the Gardens, we felt we had nearly finished. Following the A2O logo we found ourselves enmeshed in traffic with lights to obey, through the Arts Centre on to the shore depot. Bikes and saddle bags returned, we mingled with people who had started the same day, an American couple, and large group of NZ and Aussies, all jubilant we'd completed the 308km journey.



REFLECTIONS OF A TE ARAROA TRAIL TRAMPER

How do you feel after completing the Te Araroa Trail? Danny Strayer, an American who finished in February in 90 days and clocked up some big days — up to 50km — provided these thoughts on his trail blog ...

After completing this epic 3000km journey, it didn't really sink in what I had just accomplished. Originally Tom (a walking mate) and I had planned on me finishing early so we could go off to Stewart Island and Fiordland to do some more hiking.

We looked at the weather and rain was forecast for a week straight so Stewart Island didn't sound very appealing. As we drove away from Bluff trying to decide what we should do, I realised what I wanted most was to simply sit around and do absolutely nothing. After bingeing on nature for three months I was now ready to binge watch Netflix!

And so we headed back to Christchurch to relax and laze around at my mate's house. At first I thought I was missing out on Stewart Island. I had been pushing myself the entire hike to go farther and faster to have time for more exploring and now that I'd exceeded my goal I didn't really feel like hiking any more. I wondered if I would regret having hiked so fast.

Perhaps I may not have enjoyed every moment on the TA to the fullest due to my relentless pace. But because I pushed myself, I avoided nearly all the bad weather. I pushed through the Tararuas and Waiau Pass to avoid inclement weather and I pushed on to Bluff and completed the trail before the tracks closed.

If I had stayed true to our original schedule of finishing in 98 days, I would have got stuck in Queenstown or Te Anau. It felt like everything worked out the way it was supposed to. I told Tom when we began that 98 days was extremely aggressive but here I am having finished in 90 days!

At the time of this writing three weeks have passed since I finished the TA. I am proud of myself for having walked (or paddled) every kilometre and didn't skip any sections. Would I recommend hiking the TA in this manner to future hikers? Not at all.

The Te Araroa is a young trail still trying to figure out what kind of adventure it wishes to present to walkers. From my experience, I think it is best hiked in sections and not in its entirety. In hind sight I would have rather hitched the road sections but now I am one of the very few who can actually say I tramped 3000km across New Zealand! No cheating. But as we hikers like to say, hike your own hike!

How to die in the hills, or Search and Rescue's nightly prayer: Seek no wisdom, leave no word, common sense is too absurd. Take no extra food or gear, you'll not need them, never fear. Do not fret if you've no skill, birds like you are hard to kill. We beg of you, before you die, pick a place that's not too high.



Longdrop's **PACK TALK MAY 2020**

If you can't dazzle them with brilliance, baffle them with bull. — WC Fields

Congratulations to Barbara Francis who observed a significant birthday in April.

Covid-19 certainly put the planet in a tizz. As someone wise once said, "If you want to make God laugh, make plans." Our weekend tramps for March-April were in disarray but we hope to reschedule those which had to be canned.

More Covid-19 ... An anxious phone call came from Rangiora Holiday Park, asking if "Jacky and her group from Wanganui *Trampolining Club*" were going to show up that night, as expected. Trampolining in the hills could be fun – and we have a trailer to carry the trampoline.

On reaching Rangiora on that 10-day tramp to Mt Cook, Sandy found to her horror that she had left her suitcase in her car in Whanganui. However, with contributions from fellow trampers she was fully clothed.

Sometimes it's convenient to play the "Frail Elderly" card. Abandoning the remainder of their trip, the South Island trampoliners headed straight for home and managed to talk their way into the priority queue for the Picton ferry. They arrived back in Wanganui just in time to restock pantries before the lockdown. Did nobody notice that "Wanganui Tramping Club" on the van?

More Covid-19 ... Mike and June Miller had to cancel the club's NSW tramp. But they did go to South Africa and got back home to self-isolate for 2 weeks ... and then they had to do the compulsory lockdown!

The lucky ones were Barbara Francis, Margie Campbell, Graham Sutcliffe and Alan Loader who managed to complete their Paparoa Great Walk tramps in the tiny three-week window the new track was fully open in March. Graham and Alan got out and home just before the lockdown.

Ross to Jan en route to Twizel: "You've only just got behind the wheel and there's a cop behind us!"

Ponder this one: We may mourn the lovely autumn tramping weather that went to waste, but we can be thankful for legs that can walk and legs that can pedal. More walkers were noticed and bikes seemed to outnumber vehicles on the back roads.

Birthday chocolates often feature, but on one Thursday tramp a bag of bright green Spearmint Leaves was handed round in recognition of Jim and Barbara's 55th 'Emerald' wedding anniversary. (No, she didn't get an emerald.)

Congratulations to RCP's Bouquet of the Week recipient Ostomy Nurse Nicky Bates. "Her dedication surpasses all expectations" was just one of the accolades.

Attempting to be unobtrusive riding through CBD on his big birthday, Don K tried hard to disappear from public view among fellow PREBs. And so would you, if your bike carried a helium balloon with "80" in large letters. Cars tooted and folks waved as the group headed to Brunswick for the birthday morning tea. And how's this for a cheeky birthday card: Turning 80 and thinking about what tattoo to get, Don? We think the best idea is your name and address!

Asked what could we do to help stave off dementia, the Good Doctor responded "There are three things you can do: EXERCISE, EXERCISE, and EXERCISE."

BOMBS, PREBS, how about FOPs – Fit Old People? (Or perhaps Fit LEAN Old People.) We have a number of fit and healthy octogenarians still climbing the hills, by foot and by pedal. You're all to be applauded - keep doing it.

The gender tables were turned when Dorothy found herself with eight male companions on the five-day Matemateaonga-Mangapurua trip. But - Oh no, Calamity Jane has Done it Again! In the wars once more, with a munted ankle. This time, a jet boat ride and the River Road postie replaced Dorothy's accustomed helicopter rescue.

Cafe stop at Kawakawa had four Twin Coasts cyclists thinking "that person looks familiar". It was Jim's WTC club shirt that launched dialogue between clubbies Kathy O'Donnell and Paddy and Jim and Barb Gordon.

Hooray! The new Upokongaro bridge was placed across the river in late March and several of the Bombs were there to see it happen including Ridgway on his new e-bike. It will be a while, however, before the bridge can be used.

Warden humour on the Paparoa Great Walk ... When checking his paperwork at a hut, the warden told Graham Sutcliffe he had the wrong day, quickly adding, "just joking." GS didn't appreciate the joke, saying he "felt sick."

Naked trampers in our club? Yes! When the three Amigos got to a chest-high pool in the Eastern Waiotauru (Snowy) River, they stripped off and went straight through with their packs. Photographic record? Sorry, it's only for private viewing.

A salute to Earle Turner who after many years of dedicated leadership of the Thursday tramping group has stepped aside and let others take over. Earle has built quite a dossier of tramping locations, complete with contact details that are available to view for tramping destinations. He is still happy to guide the leader over farms if he is participating in the walk on that particular day. Thanks, mate.

When Basil Hooper went out for a sunset shot in the Mangapurua Valley he unexpectedly ended up with images of red deer grazing. Bas also had a senior moment on that trip — he left his camera behind at McIntyre's Hut. Luckily it was spotted by another party member and brought on to him.

Shane Wilson's unexpected happening on the same trip occurred when he was doing surgery on a foot in his tent at Johnson's camp. He dropped the knife which punctured his airbed. So it was hard ground for the final two nights.

It was like something out of Lost and Found on TV. Via WTC website we received an inquiry from David Moore in Alaska looking to find Tim Clarke, a friend he had lost contact with some 25 years ago. He believed Tim or his wife were associated with our club. And, yes, it turned out that Tim was clubbie Linda Clarke's husband and Barbara Gordon was able to make the reconnect.

David Moore was very pleased for our help in locating Tim and added, "Alaska is a great and unspoiled part of our beautiful world, parts of it, anyway. If you ever have anyone coming here please feel free to give them my name as a contact. I would be glad to help them. I am a bush pilot here. If I am around I could show them some great areas to trek and could drop them off at points and pick them up at others." Wow what an offer!

Chuckles all around, especially from George Neil, when contact Victoria Kay advertised in a group email that the Wednesday team was heading for the Manawatu *George* Track.

Scroggin's tramping column also provided a blooper, informing *Midweek* readers that the Wanganui and Hutt Valley Tramping Clubs were combining for a *pin*-clearing weekend on Mt Ruapehu.

Should have gone to Spec Savers #1, Margret McKinnon ... after mistaking a shrivelled banana skin for a boot lace.

Should have gone to Spec Savers #2 Don Gordon ...the pine-pulling team requested him to make the white van accessible but on the day found their van was silver.

Should have gone to Spec Savers #3 Sue Haden ... be careful not to ask loudly "how long does it take to make a toasted sandwich?" when a cafe staff member is within earshot.

Loading 12 big packs, 12 day packs and sundry other gear into one van needs care and Shane Wilson is the man for that, earning the nickname of Pack Master Shane on the Doughty/Sixtus Golden Bay trip.

It's amazing what people talk about on the track!! On the recent trip in to Omaru Hut two trampers shared ablution experiences! One was in full squat only to be

almost dislodged as a stoat (or weasel) went fair between the legs of our intrepid tramper! I wonder if she was mid stream! Didn't like to ask!

As if that wasn't enough.... this time it was No 2's and a possum in full flight, claws extended came hurtling towards our trusty tramper! Some smart Alec from nearby was responsible! Such accuracy! Someone was heard to quip "that's what you call 'shitting on a possum'".

Bev Sinclair not only has an up-and-coming tramper in grandson Calum Sinclair, but he's also a maths brain and was in the Whanganui High School team which won the Year 10 Mathex Manawatu-Whanganui competition from 23 other teams. Pine-pulling debutant Calum also made his mark on the Mt Ruapehu slopes, scoring 129 trees on a weekend in which the combined WTC and Hutt Valley TC tally was 869.

Talking *Pinus contorta*, there's a rumour (Long Drop loves rumours!) that a regular pine-puller has a *P. contorta* in a pot at his home, maybe keeping it as a seed source when we run out of trees to eliminate in Tongariro National Park.

Editor Jeanette is a woman of many parts. Who would have believed one of them is Steam Punk? She was spotted in full kit at Vintage Weekend.

Adrian Pike earned the nickname of Three Point Pike after an interesting manoeuvre in the club van. Then he earned more fame by talking himself onto the bridge of the inter-island ferry.

Another ferry triumph scored by Margie and Barbara, when they opted for a cabin they got the flash disabled cabin.

And Brian Sixtus was responsible for another interesting manoeuvre in the van but his passengers were soon demanding he desist from further doughnuts.

"There should be a ribbon marking this place," grumped Dee Ess, when the three Amigos were looking for their drop off spot onto a Tararua ridge. With that he struck a nearby tree with his walking pole, looked up — and there was a ribbon.

Well done to Bruce Thomas and Laurel Stowell for freeing a deer trapped in a fence at Mangamahu. The animal may have thought it was about to be tucker but the compassionate pair sent it on its way.

Is the multi-talented Phil Thomsen the poster boy for cycling in Whanganui? Well, he did feature big time in a *Chronicle* article about Te Tuwai (the spine) by another clubbie, Laurel Stowell. Then he popped up in *RCP* with gardening articles during the lockdown.

Many trampers do the Te Araroa Trail in stages and Mike Cole is doing that, biting

off chunks in the South Island this summer.

Graham Sutcliffe celebrated his 83rd birthday with an overnight trip to Lake Dive Hut, making him the oldest active trumper in the club. An example to us all.

“We are from the Home, out on an excursion,” Mike Miller explained to fast-moving young trampers encountered on the long climb up towards Fanthams Peak.

It was girls 2, boys 0 at the Ohau River. The two women in the Wednesday group took a quick dip while the seven men declined.

In a close encounter of a cattle kind Murray Laing came off second best, which explained his odd gait. Nasty, but could have been worse.

A real duh! moment for Dee Ess and Juliet Kojis. They went on a North Island tenting trip but when they got out the tent they found they had no poles and pegs. They were still in their garage.

Our club got a plug in the January issue of *Walking New Zealand* magazine. In an article on the track to Rangi Hut, a scribe from the Manawatu Tramping and Ski Club noted that both clubs met on this track on a Wednesday which brought to mind the famous line “the hills are alive with the sound of music ...” Except in this case it was the sound of trampers.

Long Drop humour ...

A boy asks his Dad one day, “Dad, why is my sister called Paris?”

Dad replies: “Because she was conceived in Paris.”

Boy: “Thanks, Dad.”

Dad: “You’re welcome, Backseat.”

Basil’s tramping boots not the only ones growing fungi over recent weeks, as we executed the soft-shoe shuffle on city pavements. Maintaining the momentum.

A Tui billboard in the making was Mike Miller’s question when the cards came out at Lake Dive Hut...

Does anyone here play Bridge? Yeah right!

Helpful hint: When travelling through supplejack, don’t fight the bush. Move slowly and deliberately.



TRAMPING TUCKER

BY UNCLE HAL

Ginger Nuts

Melt in saucepan 4 tabs golden syrup, 5 oz butter and 8 oz sugar. Stir well, cool a little and beat in 1 egg with a spoon. Add 1 lb flour, 1 tspn baking soda and 3 to 4 teaspoons ginger. Mix well. Roll into balls, flatten with hand. Bake 10-15 mins at 350deg. — *Wanganui Tramping Club Recipe Book*



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Alternative Tongariro Crossing



Pouaki Hut



Lunch beside the Ohau River



Tongariro Loop Walk



*Barbara on the Twin
Coast Cycle Trail*



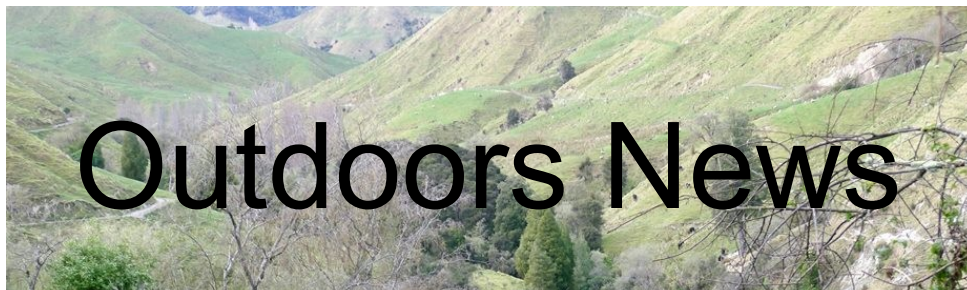
*Group at Asbestos Cottage -
Takaka trip*



Ball Hut Track - Mt Cook



Dusky Track



Outdoors News

Coronavirus clears bush

They say that if you want to make God laugh, make plans. Whanganui trampers planned to enjoy some great tramps in March and April but then along came coronavirus and everything changed. With all trips cancelled, we couldn't even go bush as DOC closed all huts and campsites and asked that no one used these until further notice.

DOC Director-General Lou Sanson said, "People should no longer stay at DOC huts and campsites as these are not suitable for use during alert levels 3 and 4. They should also avoid using facilities such as toilets as it will not be possible to service these facilities and hygiene will be compromised.

"For everyone's safety, at alert level 4 we strongly recommend that people should not head into the backcountry or remote areas, and we recommend they don't undertake outdoor activities (such as adventure sports or hunting) that would expose them to higher levels of risk."

Tararua endurance feat

Two young men recently ran twice around Mt Taranaki on the RTM track in 19 hours. That was a stunning performance, particularly as they were running in the dark over some of that rough terrain.

Now we learn of another perhaps even more compelling feat of endurance by a young woman, Maree Sandbrook, who traversed the Tararua Range from Kaitoke to Putara and then back again in less than 50 hours. To do this route, known as the S-K, one way within 24 hours puts you in the elite class, to do it even within 48 hours means you are very cool but Maree's roughly 150km journey has never been done before.



Tararua Range

Friends walked sections with her, but she carried all her own gear. When she finished she was so exhausted she couldn't hold a conversation with her parents on the drive home to Wellington.

Footnote: Ridgway Lythgoe has twice achieved the S-K within 48 hours.

Off-track hiker burned

A hiker sustained a significant burn injury on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing when he walked off track into a steam vent (fumarole) near Emerald Lakes. The hiker and his partner walked off the marked track and around the edge of the top Emerald Lake after spotting a steam vent near the lake which they decided to get closer to so they could take a photo.

About 2m from the top of the vent, one of the hiker's legs dropped through the surface crust, causing burns up to his knee. He was airlifted to Waikato Hospital and received treatment for second-degree burns.

Department of Conservation Senior Public Safety Ranger Theo Chapman says this is a serious reminder for hikers to stay on the marked track as there is geothermal activity around the TAC with a number of steam vents present, particularly around the Emerald Lakes area.

Big spend in Egmont National Park

Work on the first stage of the development Taranaki Crossing in Egmont National Park is under way. The Taranaki Crossing project will see the improvement of several tracks, including the popular Pouakai Crossing. DOC's Taranaki Operations Manager Gareth Hopkins says the first stage of the project will see more than 25km of track upgraded.

Initial investment will focus on core walking infrastructure between Dawson Falls to North Egmont and on to Mangorei Rd, including building a large new swing bridge. The work on the 800m section of track near Mangorei Rd will be completed this autumn and will resolve issues of a wet, boggy and uneven surface visitors have encountered. Pouakai Hut will be upgraded.

Total project cost is \$19.13 million. Up to 30 short-term jobs will be created and it is expected there will

be approximately 12 jobs created in the long term as a result of the project.



DOC nabs illegal drone

A drone has been seized after it was flown above the Tongariro Alpine Crossing illegally. Drones are prohibited in Tongariro National Park and the operator ignored 'no drone' signs.

Footage from the drone reviewed by DOC staff showed the drone flew near Mt Ngauruhoe and close to Emerald Lakes on Mt Tongariro. It also passed over dozens of hikers who threw stones at it shortly before it crash-landed. A DOC ranger located the drone near Emerald Lakes and waited for the operator, however, nobody came forward. The following day the drone operator inquired at the Whakapapa Visitor Centre before leaving the country.

Tongariro Operations Manager Connie Norgate says that with helicopter operations taking place almost daily, drone use puts these aircraft and their pilots at risk. The incident also showed how they disturb other people's privacy and quiet enjoyment of the outdoors.

Loo campaign in Abel Tasman

DOC encouraged visitors to the Abel Tasman National Park last summer to 'poo in a loo' in a campaign aimed to reduce toileting in the bush to protect the environment and avoid unsightly human waste and toilet paper by tracks.

The initiative was part of DOC's summer 'Love this Place' campaign that informed visitors on how to do the right things in nature, including not littering, using toilets, giving wildlife space, keeping safe in the outdoors and using drones responsibly. New signage was trialled on Abel Tasman Coast Track sections where there are longer gaps between toilets.

The park and its coast track was chosen for this pilot project because of its high visitor numbers of about 300,000 a year and because toileting in the bush is the main visitor behavioural problem in the park. The campaign is being evaluated to assess whether it influenced visitors' behaviour.



Condolences



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

Janice Handley on the death of her mother Beryl.
Suzanne Roberts on the death of her father Reg.
We apologise if we have overlooked any deaths.

TT2 Report


Feb 6 (Barb Gordon) - Tour Guide John Newton led us from Peat St through the wetlands and along the gully that runs north of Virginia Rd. A lovely sunny Waitangi Day and a good turnout. Morning tea on John and Lauren's verandah, a great spot with good views.

Feb 20 (Leonie Symes) - A walk for 31 along the cliff tops to Bruce and Annette Cave's property, enjoying a tour through their beautiful home before returning to Seafeld Rd.


Mar 5 (Victoria and John Kay) – From the Kays' home 22 walked through their orchard and on to Bryan Christie's olive grove, then on to the end of Cameron Rd East, returning to the Kays for morning tea.

Mar 19 (Carolyn Shingleton) - From Kowhai Park 23 walked up Georgetti Rd and down the zigzag to Ikitara Rd. Then through the streets of Wanganui East with morning tea at Williams Park, returning to Kowhai Park along the river pathway.

Mar 26 and onwards - We all stayed home keeping safe, making the history books, and stopping the spread of Covid-19. (Just in case you missed the news.)



AGM



Wanganui Tramping Club

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday. 7.30pm 03 June 2020

Deerstalkers Hall : Peat St. Wanganui

| | |
|----------------|--|
| AGENDA: | <i>Normal monthly Club Business</i> |
| | <i>Apologies</i> |
| | <i>Minutes of previous AGM to be circulated prior</i> |
| | <i>Matters arising from those Minutes</i> |
| | Presidents Report |
| | Financial Report |
| | Club Reports |
| | General Business - Subscriptions, Awards. |
| | Election of Officers. President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee. |

Join us for supper at the meetings conclusion

We look forward to a great turnout

TRAMPER'S "SPOOKY" COVID-19 EXPERIENCE

The Routeburn Track is hugely popular, with visitor quotas permanently full. So when British trumper James Johnston emerged from the bush after five days solo tramping on the off-piste Five Passes route, a prickly feeling ran up his spine when he found an abandoned Routeburn shelter.

"I saw the whole place was deserted which was weird. The fact that this incredibly popular spot in a popular month of the year was empty – it was a bit spooky," Johnston says. He had entered the bush when there were still only a handful of coronavirus cases and the newly-introduced alert system was at two.

Solo tramping on a remote mountain range seemed the ideal way to reduce contact, Johnston thought, and headed off, largely unconcerned. Over his five days tramping he didn't see a soul and his phone had no reception. When he descended the Sugarloaf track on the first day of nationwide lockdown he was tired, and ready for some creature comforts.

Finding the Routeburn shelter deserted, Johnston says an 'eerie' feeling began creeping over him, as he sat down to eat his lunch and plan the next move. There being no cars around to give him a ride back to Queenstown, some 70km away.

Suddenly, three people emerged through the heavy downpour, dressed in high-vis and wearing face masks. "They were surprised to see me, and I was very surprised to see them as well," says Johnston. "I asked if they could give me a ride, and they said 'absolutely not – we're not allowed to take anyone in the car.'"

In a rush, the story unfolded. The country had been placed in level four lockdown. He told the trio – tasked with clearing the back-country for civil defence – that he needed to get back to Wellington. He was told he'd have to lockdown in Queenstown instead, probably in a tent, at a remote campsite 'for a month, or more'.

"I was reeling," Johnston says. The trio decided they couldn't leave Johnston to walk back to Queenstown and decided to take the risk of taking him in the car – directly to the airport for a flight out — after the government announced a short grace period to allow people to get home.

"As soon as I had signal on my phone I had 200 messages from people saying 'you need to get out, right now, because the country is going into lockdown' - I hadn't received any of them," says Johnston. "We start bombing along the road. There were no cars except police cars. There were no people anywhere. It was very spooky."

Still covered in mud and sweat from his hike, he caught his flight with just six other passengers and went into self-isolation with four flatmates in Wellington. "I had sort of wondered, out of curiosity, what will the world look like when I come back?" Johnston says. "I didn't imagine anything as unusual as this."

Footnote: Johnston later found out one of his rescuers was infected with coronavirus.





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WTC Trip Reports

Zekes Hut – Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary

Sun 19 Jan 2020

Scribe: *Adrian Pike*

In questionable weather eight trampers set off to cross the stream swing bridge in the paddock and up the hill to the forest boundary fence and entry point into the Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary. On entering the forest it soon became apparent that this track sees very little use. The track was very overgrown, difficult to follow in places and the orange track markers were either missing or non-existent for much of the track. This track requires urgent maintenance. Lovely clear fantastic views of Waiouru and Mt Ruapehu provided a perfect backdrop from the trig point (1116m) whilst we enjoyed our smoko.

Down the steep tussock stepped gully we went, following the vague remains of a track, through the last bit of native forest and arrived at Zekes Hut which overlooks the Kaitapu Stream. The hut is modern, the internal walls are panelled, it has four bunk beds and a wood-fired burner. There is also a long drop in close proximity. We were all very surprised by the appointment of this hut. A beautiful spot with panoramic views of the surrounding lush bush.

After lunch a three hour tramp saw us back at the club van by 4pm, having completed an 18 km round trip walk in approximately seven hours. Following a much needed refreshment stop in Taihape we were all back in Wanganui by 6pm.

A lovely day enjoyed by trampers - Linda Hart, Kathy O'Donnell, Mike Cole, Barbara Francis, Veerle Geens, Kim Whyte, Tracy Collins and Adrian Pike.

Whanganui River Journey

Tues-Fri 28-31 Jan 2020

Scribe: *Sue Gibbison*

Barrels packed and canoes stacked, we set out for Whakahoro well-briefed by Whanganui River Canoes' safety video. At the riverside we received some final tips, zipped up our lifejackets and we were off!

The shallow Retaruke provided a chance to practise paddle strokes before we glided out onto the wide, smooth flow of the Whanganui. Overcast skies and gentle drizzle added to the ambience as we drifted along to a late lunch and leg-stretch at Mangapapa. A high grassy terrace provided a fine view of the river's 'V', the spot to aim for in the coming section of faster water. Everyone remained upright and a few hours later we were pulling into the eddy at a shingly swimming beach below Ohauora, our first camping spot.

Day 2 saw us paddling merrily downstream between the river's green banks for lunch on John Coull's sunny deck. Afternoon rain set in and we called it a day at Mangawaiiti, lugging our barrels up the stairs to the Tolkienesque campsite. We spread ourselves out to camp, blissfully alone but for the occasional morepork and goat.

Day 3 brought us to Mangapurua Landing and the pilgrimage to Bridge to Nowhere. Pinetrees, jet boats and daytrippers reminded us that civilisation was not too far away. After lunch we enjoyed a peaceful paddle through the river's green gorges to Tieke Kainga, closely observed by karearea, the native falcon, soaring overhead.

Sunny and relaxed, our final day offered caves and waterfalls, thrilling rapids and a refreshing dip in the awa before our rendezvous with the shuttle at Pipiriki.

The Whanganui Journey is a Great Walk and part of Te Araroa Trail. Right on our doorstep, the awa is best experienced by canoe or kayak.

Leader: Esther Williams. Nine paddlers in four double Canadian canoes plus one sit-on kayak

Stanfield Hut

Wed 29 Jan 2020

Scribe: *Dave Scoullar*

With a dodgy forecast in the west, the Wednesday crew headed over the Saddle Rd to the eastern Ruahine with Stanfield Hut in our sights. The first obstacle, the Tamaki River west branch, was so low we passed over dry shod. Then it was up a brief climb to the Holmes Ridge Track, later descending to the river and crossing over to the hut.

After lunch there it was back along the same route. A good day out and an introduction to an old style Forest Service hut to which some had not been before.

On trip: Juliet Kojis, George Neil, Laurel Stowell, Pam McDonald, Shane Wilson, Helen Atkinson, Graham Sutcliffe, David Howard, Bruce Thomas, David Taylor, Victoria Kay and Dave Scoullar.

Pouakai Hut Trip

Sat-Sun 1-2 Feb 2020

Scribe: *Margie Campbell*

Only three takers: Merilea Wainhouse, Barbara Francis and Margie Campbell. With only three punters Merilea drove us in her vehicle. Left town at 8.00am, stopping in Stratford for loo stop and coffee, then onwards to Mangorei Road carpark. Donned our packs and off we went. The track climbs steadily up many steps to the 16-bunk hut. Very pleasant walking up through the bush, but as we neared the top where the tree growth is significantly shorter, we were exposed to the heat of the day but not far to our destination. Quite a large number of day trippers to-ing and fro-ing.

Demolished our lunch on arrival at the hut then set off to explore. Just up beyond the hut enjoyed the view of the mountain and walked in the direction of the trig but a bit late to be heading to the top. Pretty windy up there but enjoyed the expansive views in all directions. Pleased there were only three of us in the group; if any more of you had come you would have been sleeping on the floor!!

Our evening meal was take-a-ways at the tarn washed down with a can of wine (thanks Countdown). Very pleasant with the tarn in the foreground and the

mountain backdrop. Watched the sun setting and the lights twinkling in New Plymouth down below us. A very pleasant way to spend an evening and with great company!

The next day started with a leisurely breakfast then it was pack up, do our bit towards the hut clean and head back down the 3,700-odd steps. A coffee stop in Hawera and home. A great trip!

Six Disks Track, Tararua

Wed 5 Feb 2020

Scribe: *Esther Williams*

A night of wild wind, gloomy sky and lowered temperature enticed nine clubbies south to Poad Road, east of Levin. After the driver recognised the turn-off over an antiquated bridge just in time, our van, wider than former ones, left just millimetres to spare at very low speed. At the car park, the map was scrutinised by those new to the area. We met a man with a shovel and clippers. His mission was Waiopahu Hut, formerly one of the coldest in the Tararua. Underfloor insulation has now brought the temperature up. Two paddocks brought us to the punga track and the direction pole which still doesn't advertise the Six Disks as a circular tramp. Moist underfoot, the track passed regenerating forest with giant rimu, pukatea and tawa. Throughout the day we heard fantail, whitehead and long tailed cuckoo. A swim for one and a paddle for another at the picnic place, we returned through boggy patches, clearing

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the track from nikau leaf debris. Maybe in the future we can arm ourselves with secateurs as did Harry Stimpson to enhance the way.
Esther and Shane W (leaders), Juliet, David S, Jiri, Bruce, George, Adrian, Mike M.

Lake Dive Hut

Mon-Tue 10-11 Feb 2020

Scribe: *Dave Scoullar*

The hastily-organised overnighter to Egmont National Park struck the jackpot — fine, clear weather, dry tracks and a near-empty Lake Dive Hut. The six-strong team cruised into the hut on the top track in 5hr 30min after frequent stops, admiring the energy of those thrusting on to Fanthams Peak.

The highlight of the evening was singing happy birthday to Graham Sutcliffe. Royce Johnson was particularly pleased with the photo opportunities the location provided. We shared the hut with a Japanese man and a couple from the Netherlands who arrived just before dark.

The bottom track which we remembered as rough and overgrown was in surprisingly good nick for the 4hr stroll back to Dawson Falls where the good coffee at the cafe was appreciated.

On trip: Graham Sutcliffe, Royce Johnson, Diane Harries, Mike Miller, Allan Loader and Dave Scoullar.

McIntyres' Hut

Wed 12 Feb 2020

Scribe: *Sue Haden*

The plan was for our Wednesday group of nine to meet up with Brian Doughty's group of eight (previously nine, but Dorothy rolled her ankle) coming off the Matemateonga and Mangapurua Tracks after a five day expedition. It was an easy open 2½ hr walk up and 2 hrs down. Sadly, we encountered TRAFFIC on our travels along the road, YES ROAD!! - three big bee truck and trailer units, two quad bikes and trailers and numerous helicopters overhead. However, when we reached the hut the walk was worth it. It was built and is maintained by the McIntyre family on the original site of the family home. They farmed the area in the early 1900s and moved out in the early 1930s. The family still own the land and have built and maintained the gorgeous little hut and garden to a very high standard, to their credit. It is a great must-do destination as it is surrounded by beautiful bush and fauna, and even has a viewing platform with magnificent views out to Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro. Both groups of eight got their well-deserved ice-cream at Raetihi then silence reigned! All asleep on the Parapara and oh the peace! At least in the white van.

Wednesday group of nine: Margret (driver), Sue H (driver with Learner plates) ably assisted by Bruce (pilot), Juliet, Trish S, George, Sue G, Marilyn M and visitor David Johnson from Vancouver (past member of club from the 1950s).

Pohangina Valley

Thur 13 Feb 2020

Scribe: *Anne Condon*

Two van loads embarked earlier than the usual 9am as we were heading further afield, to Pohangina Valley beyond Ashhurst. Jacky Evans and Don Gordon set us down at the Fern Walk with beautiful native bush and the added bonus of no wind after a couple of very windy weeks. Birdsong, quiet greenery, dry underfoot - what more can a tramper ask for? After an early lunch we completed the Pettifar/Gilchrist Loop tracks – ripe blackberries were another bonus.

Returning home, we noticed a plume of smoke a short distance away. Total fire bans were in place, but in no time several fire trucks and water tankers came speeding towards us – a grass fire, and close to native and exotic forest.

An ice-cream stop at Ashhurst was refreshing and sustained us for the final leg home. All in all a wonderful day out, with a good leg-stretch and pleasant company. Thank you Jacky and Don for driving and leading.

Three Amigos Go Bush

Fri-Sun 14-16 Feb 2020

Scribe: *Dave Scoullar*

On trip: Mark Sutherland, Jiri Krivanek and Dave Scoullar. Plus Brent from Otaki Gorge.

Someone murmured the film title “this is no country for old men” — probably the old man of the group — as we bash and crash our way through Tararua Forest Park. But it sums up this three-day trip pretty well considering how much grunty off-track tramping is involved.

Day 1: The Three Amigos drive to Otaki Forks and walk a sweaty two hours to Waiotauru Forks where we lunch. Then it is into the Eastern Waiotauru (Snowy) River which is quite low for a three-hour-plus rock hop to Snowy Hut.

There is a lot of criss-crossing and the highlight is going through a chest-high pool which can't be sidled. So we strip off and go down the middle. The pool has a sandy bottom and it is a pleasant if unusual experience. The hut (very basic, five mattresses, no toilet), is nearby on a pleasant terrace and we sit out in the sun feeling satisfied to be in a new location.

Day 2: Now the hard work begins. First we have to get onto a ridge which involves bashing directly behind the hut straight up the side for about 50 minutes. It is a relief to get there. This ridge rises steadily up to Renata Ridge over point 666 and is apparently quite well used as a route as it is well-padded and has ribbons all the way. But with the sometimes steep terrain and many windfalls it is slow going.

It takes some five hours to climb the 3.5km to finally pop out on a DOC track about 10 minutes from Elder Hut, a snug four-bunk retreat. We have just settled in when Brent arrives. He has come around the tops from Otaki Forks and pitches his tent nearby.

Day 3: The wind gets up in the night and we wonder what we face. But it isn't a worry as we head off at 7am down the DOC track for 2km to point 925 where our

biggest challenge begins — a 5km route down the ridge to Waiotauru Forks. Brent joins us and our first task is to ensure that we go the right way when the ridge splits in two after 1km.

Ribbons are few and far between and the going is very rough but with the help of a Back Country app we stay on course and proceed on to point 708 for morning tea. Thence to point 687 for lunch.

After that there are many ribbons and the track is well-padded and as we hit old logging roads we make good progress. Our final problem is to get down to the DOC track at the forks as the sides from the ridge are near vertical. After doubling back along a logging track we make a very steep descent to reach the track about 300m from the forks. Ridge travel has taken some 5.5 hours.

After that it is a case of keeping weary legs moving for the two hours back to Otaki Forks to complete a nine-hour-plus day. We all put red lines on our maps and felt satisfied with our loop trip completed in fine weather.

Pine Clearing

Sat-Sun 29 Feb-1 Mar 2020

Scribe: *Calum Sinclair*

We left early on Saturday for the annual trip to clear *Pinus contorta* from the slopes of Mount Ruapehu. Making good time, the six of us met up with nine from the Hutt Valley Tramping Club and made our way to our campsite, a small patch of native bush not yet claimed for pine planting. We set up camp, then donned hi-vis vests and grabbed hand saws. In hindsight, the hand saws should have been the first warning that the pine trees might not be the little seedlings I expected. A short walk up above the bushline, and we began. This particular area hadn't been cleared recently, and so we had a very successful first day. We spent roughly seven hours sweeping back and forth, and that first day, pulled a staggering total of 537 pines! Everyone slept well that night.

We set out at 9:00 on Sunday, with much discussion over everything from what the best type of plate or bowl for hiking is, to who had won that week's lottery. The area we covered on Sunday was less inundated with pines, but we still managed to pull 332, bringing our overall total to 869! Unfortunately, Esther suffered an injury, but apart from this, the trip went smoothly. The weather was near perfect, with only some misty showers that stopped as soon as you took out your rain jacket. Overall, an excellent trip, and I look forward to next year.

Our trampers were: Esther Williams, Sue Gibbison, Shane Wilson, Mark Sutherland, Dave Scoullar (leader), and Calum Sinclair.

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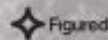
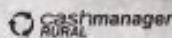
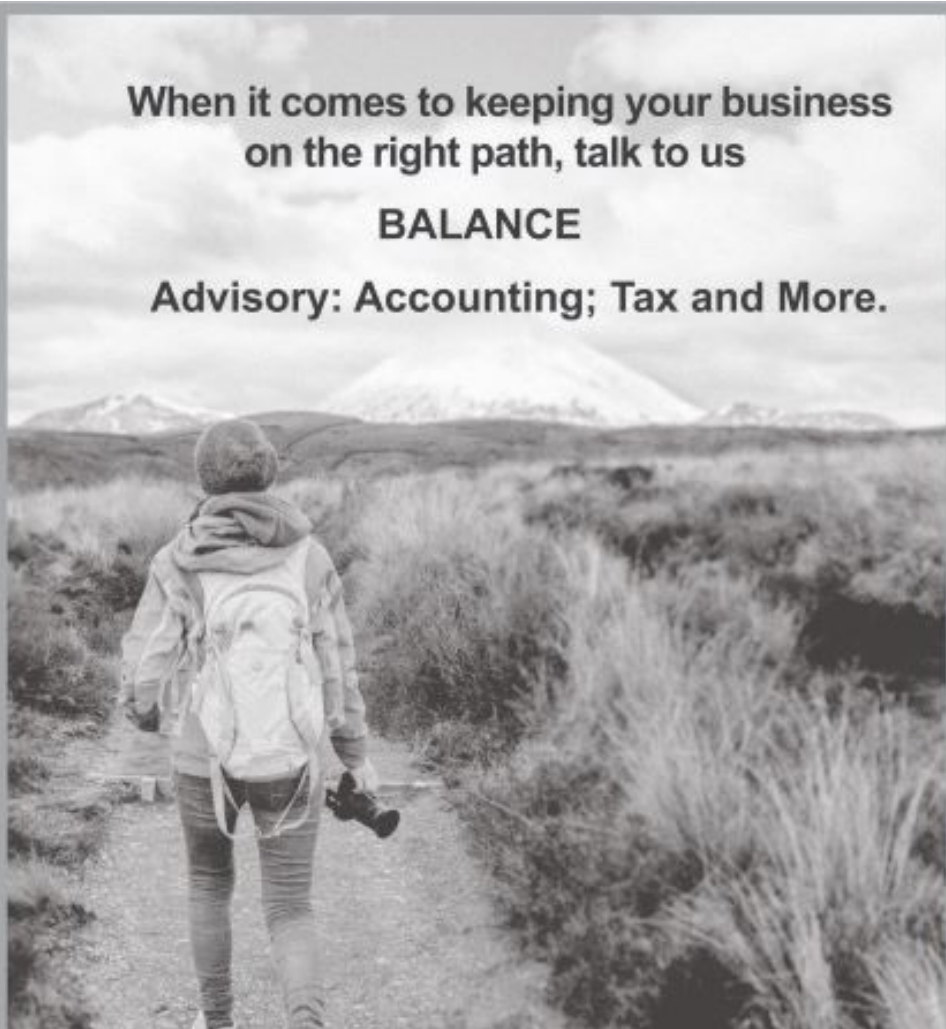
Scribe: *Adrian Pike*

March 5 – Seven trampers (Brian Doughty – trip leader, Bruce Thomas, Shane Wilson, Helen Atkinson, Sue Haden and myself), left the Blind Centre at 12.00

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noon and drove to the Waterloo Backpackers in Wellington which is directly opposite the Bluebridge Ferry Terminal. The van was parked in the overnight car park in front of the ferry terminal entrance gates. The rest of the day was spent settling into the Waterloo Backpackers and strolling around Wellington in the cold wind which was not very pleasant. We had dinner at the backpackers and then all headed to bed. There were four of us in our “not bad” backpackers room which had an ensuite bath/shower.

March 6 - After breakfast we headed for the van, joined the long queue of mobile homes and were soon on board. We sailed at 8.00am and had a very pleasant trip across the Cook Strait to Picton Harbour arriving at 11.30am. We had a quick bite to eat in Picton after which Bruce took the wheel and we headed for Havelock, Rai Valley, Nelson, Richmond, Motueka and then turned off onto a metal road at Uruwhenua to Brian Sixtus's house. Major repairs were underway on the Takaka Hill highway following recent major flood damage. This is a very twisty road, which even without repair work being done, should be driven with extreme care. The view from Harwoods Lookout on a clear day would be spectacular, but unfortunately it was a bit cloudy so we did not stop.

On arrival at Brian Sixtus's house we met Barbara Francis and Margie Campbell who had arrived the night before. Brian S. has a lovely house on Uruwhenua Road. I was allocated the back room and slept next to the deep freezer. No problems there though – the freezer was very quiet! That night we preloaded the van at Brian's house before heading to the club at the intersection of Aaron Creek Road and Takaka Hill Highway for dinner. I had a large 20mm thick, juicy steak, potato and veg meal which for \$20 was pretty good value. Then we went home and off to bed.

March 7 – We packed the van with all our last minute gear (day packs and overnight packs) and Brian S. drove us to the Cobb Dam House, detailing and describing various features along the journey. On the way we picked up the other trampers - Dave Scouller, Juliet Kojis, Shane Wilson and Sue Haden who were staying at the Navara Motel in Takaka. There are two large houses on site left over from the time the Cobb Dam wall and intake tower were constructed in the early 1950s. We occupied house No 1. We left our gear in the house and drove down the Cobb Dam Road to the car park from where we started the 6 km walk to Asbestos Cottage in the Kahurangi National Park. The track meanders along some beautiful native bush and passes an abandoned asbestos mine site. The remains of broken mining equipment can be seen adjacent to the track. The mine area is open and appears as a grey/white scar on the landscape. The track rises steadily before the final climb to the cottage. The cottage is over 100 years old and was restored by DOC in 1997. A number of books have been written about this interesting cottage. A nearby mountain stream provides the cottage with fresh water. Vestiges of the original vegetable and flower gardens can still be seen dotted around the cottage. We all enjoyed lunch in and around the old gardens. A two and a half hour walk saw us back at the van and back to the Cobb Dam Cottage we went. Upon returning to the



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cottage Margaret, Helen and Dave decided fairly late in the afternoon to take a fast walk through the beech forest to Sylvester Hut. They were back in under three hours. I decided not to go and busied myself at the house till meal time. We were all in bed by about 9 pm.

March 8 - After a good breakfast, Shane once again packed the van with our overnight packs. In overcast coldish weather and with Brian S. driving once again, we headed off on the unsealed Cobb Reservoir Road for about an hour before arriving at the car park near Trilobite Hut. Trilobite Hut is 60kms from Takaka. Two tracks start from Trilobite Hut, one to Peel Dam, Ballon Hut and Porta Hut and beyond. We took the track which starts at Trilobite Hut and climbs gently through open grass land between the Cobb River and Peel Range. Our first stop was at the restored historic Chaffey Hut. This is a real back woods hut with only three bunks. All materials were hand axed from local timber other than fixing nails, and door hinges etc. To complement this hut there is a nice fast flowing stream nearby. From here we continued our walk until we reached Camp Tent. Camp Tent was built by constructing an A frame pole structure over an existing tent. A tarpaulin is then stretched over the frame and fixed to the supporting structure. The tent below is now protected and permanently waterproof. The tent had an earth floor with the sleeping area slightly raised above ground level. Once again a lovely location with a fast flowing stream close by. There was also a long drop situated close by. A nice site in an open but forested area. After lunch we continued on to Cobb Hut. This four bed hut has recently been refurbished, and is a good solid structure with a large picnic table outside. From here we continued the steady but gentle climb through the beech forest and into an area of alpine rock, ground hugging succulents and small alpine flowering plants which was very pretty. Views from here down the Cobb Valley were spectacular. Tramping this rocky part of the Waingaro Peak Track required care and attention. A short while later we all arrived at Fenella Hut. This beautiful wood panelled 12 bed hut is surrounded by a magnificent beech forest. Bruce Thomas and I slept on the top two bunks. The hut has a very nice Miele gas stove and wood burner inside. There is a helicopter pad nearby for the delivery of gas bottles by DOC. Below the hut is the toilet, a long drop down which to you have to navigate a steep flight of rocky steps. The toilet door is patterned with coloured glass. Most people using this loo do so with the door open (the view is once again spectacular and the open air is much more pleasant!) There is also a makeshift wash hand basin fixed to the rock face with water running into it continuously. No reason not to wash your hands! Behind Fenella Hut is a lovely tarn where Juliet Kojis was brave enough to take a dip. She said it was warmer in the water than out! Brian S. took us for a short walk behind the tarn where we could see Cobb Lake, unfortunately it was overcast but we still had a fantastic view of the Cobb Valley below, surrounding stunning mountain scenery and a close up view of a native kea. Brian D. prepared and presented us with a lovely hot meal of mince and mashed potato for dinner. I think we had cake for dessert. Thankfully I did not snore that night but we did have a slight altercation with two women who arrived late in the

afternoon who said “hut etiquette entitled them to 50% of the hut, even though there were only two of them.” Disgruntled, they ended up sleeping next to Shane in the wood store room. Shane did an excellent job of entertaining them with stories of Everest Base Camp.

March 9 - After breakfast and cleaning up Fenella Hut we set off at about 9.00 am for Trilobite Hut car park in drizzly conditions. By the time we reached the car park the weather had improved and we now had visions of a clear blue sky. Into the van we climbed and went back to the Cobb Reservoir House to clean up and get our day packs. On the way back to Brian Sixtus's house we visited the Cobb Reservoir stone traps and pipe arch. It was very interesting to see how the loose stones carried by the water were collected through the use of stone traps, before the water enters the turbines etc. We also got to view the pipe portal. Once home to Brian S's, it didn't take long to fall into a nightly routine: sleeping bag laid out, coffee, shower and bed for us all.

March 10 – We left the Sixtus home and headed for Takaka picking up David, Juliet, Sue, Helen and Shane from Navara Motel and headed for the Kahurangi National Park, passing Collingwood and turning left onto Pakawau Bush road. At the car park we met four trampers from Takaka who joined us for a short time whilst we tramped the old logging road to the clearing on the Kaituna Track where a DOC sign indicated we take a left turn up to Knuckle Hill. It took us about 30 minutes



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with granite rock under foot to reach the trig point which had a 506m elevation. A very cold wind met us at the top so it was not long before we started to cool down fast. We had lunch there whilst enjoying the excellent views of the Whanganui and Westhaven Inlets, and huge marine estuary below. We could not see Farewell Spit though as it was too hazy. Back to the van we went and continued our journey on a dirt road, crossing several tidal streams before arriving at the picturesque Anator River mouth. We wandered about this lovely spot with a few of us trying to skim river stones across the flowing water. We passed Knuckle Hill on the return journey stopping for a cup of coffee and meal en route back to Brian S's house.

March 11 - Located in the Kahurangi National Park, is the Kaituna Track. This is an old packhorse route which starts at the car park end of Carters Road some 15kms from Collingwood on the Collingwood – Bainham Road. The track starts by going over an old foot bridge and into natural native forest and soon passes a track leading to the remains of old gold mining operations. En route there are magnificent specimens of Northern Rata and Nikau palms. We also saw quite a few South Island Robins. Recent flooding has caused considerable damage to the track in a number of places. Brian S. has repaired this track in many places, but there is still a lot of work to be done. The Kaituna Track goes through beautiful natural forest with many stands of Nikau Palms, making things look very tropical. Where the track forks there is a large pond in the river where eels can be seen. With a little coaxing and old chicken bones thrown into the water by Brian S, it was not long before one very large and 2 smaller eels appeared. Eels can smell in water! On the way back to the car park Brian S. stopped at his tea spot and made us all a very nice cup of tea. Nearby was a camp site complete with camp table and chairs, shelves, and wash area. Around the corner from this spot was a toilet also under canvas which had no smell whatsoever. It was all so unexpected! What a strange place - so perfectly set up in the middle of nowhere, and so perfectly suited for ones' refreshment! It poured on the way back and we were all sodden. Following a very fast change of clothes under the Kaituna sign board shelter we all jumped smartly into the van. After dinner we dropped the others off at Navara Motel and headed for Brian's home to hang out wet clothes, have a beer, tell tall stories and discuss politics. A good laugh was had by all!!

March 12 - Once again the van was packed very nicely by Shane and sad goodbyes were said. Bruce took the wheel and we departed for Picton at about 12.30pm. A very pleasant journey with plenty of sunshine saw us back in Picton at about 4.30/5.00 ish. We booked into the Fat Cod Backpackers and then went in search of somewhere to have dinner. We finally settled on Oxley's Restaurant where we had very nice meals and some wonderful refreshments!

March 13 - We were all up by 6.00am, washed, showered and ready to go. We headed for the van and were onto the Ferry by 7.20am. The Bluebridge Ferry was not fully laden. We departed Picton on time at 8.00am. We bought our breakfast on

board which was nice but pricey. I took the opportunity and asked a crew member if it was possible to visit the bridge. After a bit of to-ing and fro-ing, I was soon ushered on the bridge. The deputy captain (named Andrew) welcomed me onto the bridge. What a view and how very clean and spacious it is up there! There was plenty of room with 360 degree views. All systems were operating and I learned that the ship has three backup systems in case one fails. We were cruising at 14.3kph. Andrew was busy writing stuff in the log book, checking instruments and on his cell phone. He also knew the name and exact position of all the other ships in the Cook Strait. The sea was as flat as a pancake which made the voyage very enjoyable. They still have radar with large circular screens presenting a lot of information regarding shipping in the area, including the position of the 12 undersea cables running between the North and South Islands. The crew of 38 live on the ferry for two weeks at a time. Everything looks quite different from up there and I certainly enjoyed the opportunity to see things from a unique perspective!

I drove the van off the ferry and we were back at the Deerstalkers by 4.30pm. This was a thoroughly good trip made more enjoyable by the addition of 11 excellent tramping companions. Brian Doughty, Bruce Thomas, Shane Wilson, Helen Atkinson, Sue Haden, Barbara Francis, Margie Campbell, Brian Sixtus, Margret McKinnon, Dave Scoullar and Juliet Kojis. I will certainly do this trip again should the opportunity arise, and I certainly recommend it to all!



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Pukeatua Trig from Otaki Forks

Wed 11 Mar 2020

Scribe: *John Baxter*

Eight of us left Wanganui on a quite temperamental day heading for Otaki after a little confusion brought about by the new road works. We finally arrived to tramp by 9.15am and headed upwards. The track was quite damp, but with no rain or wind the walk was very enjoyable. The views were superb and the bush was not only beautiful but really interesting. The spot at which we stopped for lunch had a view of large trees entirely covered in lichen and moss, more than I have ever seen. Truly a scene from *The Lord of the Rings*. We were entertained at lunch by a rendition of poetry by George that was quite an epistle.

On the way out some of the track was quite muddy and Marilyn in front lost the bottom end of her walking pole without noticing it at the time, but luckily it was recovered by mid walker Victoria on the way through. We returned to the van about 4.15 p.m.

The whole day, weather-wise and enjoyable-wise, was excellent for everyone.

On the trip were Graham Sutcliffe, John Baxter, Allan Loader, George Neil, Marilyn McGlone, Laurel Stowell, Cherry Channon and Victoria Kay.

Paparoa Track

Fri 13-Wed18 Mar 2020

Scribe: *Margie Campbell*

Mar 13th: Barbara Francis and I left Takaka at 10.30am, arriving Blackball at 4.30pm via Tapawera and Murchison. There's a good cafe just south of Tapawera at a junction – it's an older two-storey structure on your left which you can't miss as you drive a wee way out of this very small town.

14th: We walked around Blackball village and chatted to various locals. Had coffee at Blackball Inn – nice peeps and nice accommodation; slightly cheaper than The Blackball Hilton. Colin Luff, at the Kereru Gallery, was very pleasant and had a Wanganui connection.

We drove through to Greymouth, 25km away, to top up our supplies for the trip. There is a 'Store' at Blackball BUT not a lot of stuff and wouldn't rely on it to have what you want. It reminded me of that 'Store' in Raetihi actually. I do, however, recommend the Blackball Salami from shop of the same name across the street from 'The Store'. We bought a pack of slices for \$9 – two packs actually but only used one – probably about 24 slices in it I think. Was certainly enough for the two of us with our other food supplies. Anyway the 'Original' flavour salami is yummy and will continue to purchase online! Another local product that we enjoyed was Kawatiri coffee, freshly ground and roasted on the West Coast and also available to purchase online. This is served at The Blackball Inn & Cafe.

15th: Departure day! Paparoa Shuttles departed 8.45am from right next door to The Blackball Hilton (the driver also had a Wanganui connection!). It was a half hour drive up to the start of the track, Smoke-ho Car Park. It is a metal, winding road which appears to have been widened, with the top portion still to be done. Mmmmm.... not sure about Tramping Club vans tackling it but, well.....

We were on the track by 9.15am and in perfect tramping conditions. The track climbs steadily to Ces Clark Hut (16 bunks) which is 4-5 hours away; and a total of 10.3km. The track passes through podocarp and beech forest and moss-covered trees, although little birdsong was heard. The first section of the track is the historic Croesus Track. The track varies in condition – rocky in places and smoother on other sections. It follows high above Blackball Creek with several one-person swing bridges to cross. It took us five hours including morning tea and lunch stops plus a side trip to Garden Gully – worth a visit. Leave your pack on the track at the sign. There is a miner's hut here from the 1930s. This would be a nice spot for lunch/morning tea, or perhaps at the lovely little stream nearby. There is a loo here. You could also visit a sawmill battery in this area but we didn't.

Arrival at the hut was, of course, a delight! A nice little hut sleeping 16 peeps but only seven of us in the 'house' for the night. This is an older hut; originally serving the original Croesus Track. The hut has been upgraded to Great Walks standard so is double-glazed with solar lighting and gas. The solar lighting extended to the front entrance (like a boot room) and scared the living daylight out of me as I quietly tried to get to the ablution block in the middle of the night – opened the door and a sensor light came on – wasn't expecting that!! A further surprise was the meeting of the biggest possum I've ever seen on my way back from ablutions. Have to say it was a beauty, a real Coaster! It was a beautiful rich deep red/brown colour, huge. Wish I had my gun – LOL - reckon I could have got a nice hat and scarf out of it.

Lovely views from the deck and we spent a beautiful afternoon with blue skies and sunshine. As we supped our soup and munched our crackers we looked out over the Grey River Valley and Lake Brunner. We could also see the Alps, Mt Cook, Mt Rolleston and Mt Alexander, whilst wekas moved cheekily around us. The DOC ranger visited during the afternoon (from Moonlight Tops Hut) but no ranger in residence at Ces Clark Hut.

16th: Ces Clark to Moonlight Tops Hut (20 bunks) which in the blurb they say is three hours/9.7km away. Left at 10am in misty conditions - looked very much like we were headed for rain so donned our wet weather gear. We walked through alpine scrub and tussock the whole way so a lovely contrast from bush of the previous day and managed to get glimpses of the Grey River Valley to the east and out to Barrytown and the Tasman Sea to the west. Underfoot loose roughly cut rock but undulating terrain with steady ups and downs, however, not as steep as the previous day. And it didn't rain; quite cold though.

Arrived Moonlight Tops Hut at 1.30pm so it took us 3.5 hours. But of course it was not a race for us – we had nice food stops and took lots of photos and just enjoyed our surroundings. Unlike Ces Clark, the DOC ranger was in residence – walking around with sanitizer and using it. A helicopter flew in and dropped off some workers and they had to sleep outside on the deck – weren't even allowed to sleep in the common area. Crikey, there'd be many a person out there that would grumble at those sorts of conditions! Wouldn't blame them actually - it was 3°C the next morning. A group of very rowdy bikers were in residence but all were very pleasant.

BUT, my super-powered ear plugs reduced their noise to an undulating hum!
Ranger talk at this hut in the evening.

17th: Moonlight Tops Hut to Pororari Hut. Again as per the blurb this is 5-7 hours and 19.1km. Whew, big day! Left the hut at 8.45am in very windy and cold conditions – 3°C the workers told us and we believed them! We started the day walking through mountain tussock – undulating terrain. Other than the wind it was fine with clear blue skies so marvellous views. This was ‘escarpment’ day which we were very excited about. And walking the escarpment wasn’t anywhere near as scary as we thought it might have been. Magnificent views from both sides of the escarpment. We also saw evidence of the coal seams in the rock faces along this portion of the track and as I understand it the same as the Pike River coal. We descended gradually into lower bush. DOC were working on this portion of the track and there was much evidence of the recent storm and slip damage, with safety fences along some of the bluffs. Absolutely essential for bikers! We had a couple of good food stops. Chatted to the workers and a couple of bikers stopped for a chinwag. Lovely bush and more birdlife as we descended. We were pleased to reach our destination – a few character-building ‘ups’ to the Pororari Hut, which is located in the perfect spot for the beautiful sunset we experienced that evening. Stunning!

18th: Woohoo! 16k downhill to the carpark at Punakaiki they say. Four or five hours they say. Yeah well, mostly downhill with a few *little* ups (of course). We chugged along leaving Pororari at 9.30am and arriving at the carpark at 2.30pm, so yep five hours for us but that of course includes the usual: decent food stops and time of course to take the pics and admire our surroundings. More alpine tussock and then into the bush of beech, rata, matai, rimu etc. We also started to see ferns and orchids and fungi plus moss-covered trees, logs, rocks – very enchanting and quite different to the first day in the bush. A few bridges to cross over rocky rivers/streams and we came across some enormous rocks/boulders and of course as we descended we started to see limestone cliffs etc as we followed the upper Pororari River. A delightful waterfall along the way – sun in just the right place to make it sparkle. We started to notice more birdlife and even saw a black fantail. This is where you’ll see the damage caused by Gita (2018), Ita (2014) and Fehi (2018). And the nikaus made their presence felt. Easy walking but still a long day. The bikers exit on a different track. Walkers exit on the Pororari River Loop Track, which is beautiful.

Now, you’re at the carpark where, if you are using the Paparoa shuttle, is where you will be picked up. And if you’re like us you’ll get there early (shuttle pick up was 4pm for us) and so you’ll have time to go to the Punakaiki Tavern (which I would guesstimate is about 200m from the carpark). Here you can purchase the mandatory ice cream, take a loo stop and perhaps purchase a beer if you’re that way inclined. The lady there was very pleasant and didn’t mind that we were just using the loo and buying an ice cream.

It's about an hour's drive back to Blackball (we went via Greymouth to drop off a biker), with only three of us in the shuttle.

All in all a fab four days. The diversity of the landscape makes for a very interesting tramp – each day provides its own charm and beauty. And we certainly feel blessed to have been able to do this Great Walk in the three weeks window between opening on 1st March and the closure due to the Corona Virus

Other info/observations re our trip that may be useful:

- **Blackball Salami** has some container type units at \$140 per night (brand new), located at the back of the shop. She indicated to us that perhaps the price was a bit high and that they might reduce.
- **The Blackball Inn** - \$45.00 pp twin. Spoke to the people here and saw the rooms – the rooms are very nice and the owners are very pleasant. Understand they used to own The Formerly Blackball Hilton. Menu looks good with a reasonable choice. We had Bangers (from Blackball Salami shop) & Mash which was very tasty, however, a few too many onions for our taste buds.
- **The Formerly Blackball Hilton** – we stayed here - found our room a bit small but were able to change. The tariff includes continental breakfast and their evening menu was very good and reasonably priced. We were there on our return and it was *Steak Special Night at \$15*.
- There is also a place called **Jailhouse B&B**. We didn't go and look at this and don't know the prices.
- A little shop near the **Blackball Salami shop** does food (among other things) and does what appear to be nice 'takeaway' meals for \$10. It's called **ENJOY** – find on Facebook.
- **On the track:** care needs to be taken as you walk. This track is designed for biking too, so given that it was still very new at the time of our trip, one needs to watch the roughly cut rockiness underfoot on a lot of it. It would be easy to roll an ankle or fall if not paying attention to foot placement.
- **Watch out for bikers**..... and bikers did outnumber trampers whilst we were on the track. It is also two-way traffic. With just the two of us we'd be walking in silence most of the time (believe it or not!) just enjoying the peacefulness and ambience and getting lost in our own thoughts when all of a sudden you'd hear 'something' behind you – no call out, no bell. Wasn't

really a big deal except that I'd just about jump out of my skin and that's not easy with a pack on your back. So just be conscious of this if you're in a bigger group and there's lots of chatter. The track itself is narrow so it's single file really.

- Overall not a difficult tramp – us two old biddies certainly had the strength, stamina and fitness. My only comment would be that due to the terrain being newly formed it is a bit hard on the feet if you've got any quirky foot issues. Otherwise 'almost easy peasy'.

Old Coach Road Tramp, Ohakune

Wed 18 Mar 2020

Scribe: *Adrian Pike*

Our walk started in glorious weather at the Marshall Road car park. Over the Dodge Bridge we went and then onto the remains of the cobblestoned Old Coach Road. The original road was built out of stone quarried from local sources nearby, and after a lovely walk, our group of seven soon entered the Hapuawhenua Tunnel which is blocked at one end by a purpose-made galvanised fence.

We turned left when leaving the tunnel and saw an impressive giant rimu on the way to view both the original and replacement Hapuawhenua viaduct structures. Both constructions are a testament to human engineering, particularly the remains of the original old Hapuawhenua Viaduct. This is a steel structure worth looking at. Finished in 1908, it is a testament to the skill of structural engineer Peter Seton Hay. An impressive feat of engineering considering all materials (structural steel etc) were brought in by man and horse and fabricated on site. It is also worth noting that in order to get the original viaduct structure completed in a timely fashion, workers were required to complete night shifts by lamplight! The current 'new' viaduct was completed in 1987 and is built from reinforced and pre-stressed concrete, a more resilient alternative to the old steel viaduct. It is a graceful and quite striking piece of engineering.

The track meanders along under a cool canopy of trees with vegetation periodically punctuated by excellent views of the new rail track and Ohakune. In the distance the Raeithi-Ohakune Road can be seen against the flat-topped Otiranui mountain range on the skyline. In glorious sunshine we chatted whilst enjoying our lunch on the track before returning again to the Marshall Road car park. This tramp is worth doing again and again, and is particularly recommended for new trampers or those wanting an easier walk. Raetihi's Coach Cafe enjoyed the fruits of our customary ice cream stop. Trampers George Neil, Bruce Thomas, Sue Haden, Dick Mitchell, Marilyn McGlone, Esther Williams and Adrian Pike all had a thoroughly good tramp whilst enjoying the magnificent autumn weather.

Mt Cook Tramping

Sun 15–Wed 25 Mar 2020.

Scribes : *Sandra Rogers and John Baxter*

15 March. We had a nice uneventful drive to the Petone Top 10 motor camp at Hutt Park for our first night's adventure.

16 March. A lovely smooth ferry crossing in spite of the wind and predicted adverse weather. This time a night spent at the Rangiora Eco Holiday Campground. An adequate, but average stay.

17 March. A lovely walk along a long, winding, narrow metal road to Ryde Falls, via the Korimako Track, through stunning bush. A beautiful three-tier waterfall at the end. That night we were back at the Rangiora Eco Holiday Campground.

18 March. Off to Mt Cook Village. The flat land on the way seemed to stretch on forever. Stunning blue lakes with mountains in the background and the first covering of snow. Mt Cook looking pristine and sharp without a cloud in sight. Apparently first time in three weeks without a covering of cloud.

19 March. Hooker Valley tramp today. This had been on my bucket list for years. Four hours return on a nice flat walking track to start our Mt Cook adventure. This began from the end of the road and included three swing bridges, which took us to a lovely glacier-fed lake. Again, stunning scenery of mountains and lakes. Mt Cook had an amazing lenticular cloud over it. Clear skies, but cloud rolled in as we returned back to our accommodation. Later we did the Governors Walk, uphill through nice bush.

20 March. We walked the Bowen Walk and the Glenco Walk, both pleasant with good views. In the afternoon five went on the boat trip to the Tasman Glacier, sighting icebergs that had broken off the glacier, some blue and some clear. Three of us others did a lovely walk with lots of steps to a great view of the Tasman Lake and Glacier. Then onto the Blue Lake and a second lake, then onto a 4WD track running parallel to the lake, but with no lake view.

21 March. It rained. Off to do a walk at Twizel with the weather there looking decidedly better. No such luck. A browse around the shops and a coffee. Off to the salmon farm for a yummy chowder soup made from locally farmed salmon. After lunch we drove to the Clay Cliff, an amazing walk among towering shapes of all descriptions, some looking like gothic cathedrals. These reminded me of the Pinnacles near Ngawi.

22 March. Sealy Tarns was next on our list - 2200 steps up. Helen was the only one of our party that made it. We had wonderful valley and mountain views on the way up, then the weather clagged out. Some of us had a nice bush walk back to the village afterwards.

23 March. We kept hearing scary things about the coronavirus. Time to make a run for home, hoping we could change our ferry crossing before we were shut out. We

were booked in for Thursday, but Wednesday was the cut-off date. Left Mt Cook at 5.30 am and drove nine hours to Picton. We managed to change our ferry booking to 2.30 am. The ferries had been extended to Friday, this we found out after we had changed our booking, but all we wanted to do was to get home. They came around and gave us a large card to hang off our inside van mirror, saying we needed 'easy access' - probably because of our age. (This was a ploy we had used to 'jump the queue.') This was bright pink card showing a bent-over figure with a walking stick. They obviously didn't read the side of the van, saying Wanganui Tramping Club. We all had a good laugh over that, as we were probably the fittest on the boat.

24 March. An uneventful trip home, with no takeaways or coffee. All were closed, with the exception of petrol stations.

A fun trip that was enjoyed by all, with the usual amount of hilarity and banter. Thank you Jacky and Helen for a great trip. On the trip were Jacky Evans, Helen Atkinson, Sandra Rogers, John Baxter, Sandy Gibbard, June Wills, Jeanette Prier and Bev Sinclair.

Dusky Track

Sun-Tue 22-24 Mar 2020

Scribe: *Lyneke Onderwater*

The Dusky had been on my list for many years. Packed and ready to go in 2017 the weather forecast changed the plan to an eight-day trip in the Gillespie area. When my work conference was going to be in Invercargill this year, it was time to try again. Partner Adrie is not a super-experienced trumper, but strong and fit, so he came along on this trip.

We started the Dusky Track on Sunday 22 March, a day earlier than planned due to a wet forecast for the planned first day. The packs were heavy with 10 days' worth of food but we were excited to be on our way. I chatted to some hunters/divers/fishers on the Manapouri boat who were on an all-male-friends trip to Deep Cove (Doubtful Sound). They had chartered a bus just for themselves as they had loads of gear. Some friendly chats, some help and some begging resulted in a ride on the bus to the start of the Dusky.

There had been a lot of rain the day before and the track was very wet, sometimes to the point of needing the orange markers to know where it actually was. I felt that we were in swamp 90% of the time, which probably we weren't, but very wet it was! A lot of it was jumping from stump to stump holding onto trees, leaning on our poles and hoping that what we decided to land on was strong enough to support us. It wasn't always; Adrie went in deep once and I slowly fell sideways in the wet mud. The scenery was wild and spectacular. There were many big waterfalls and, in one of the many lakes-with-trees that the track ran through, a whio. We were excited to see the hut, except that the track wasn't going there! It was frustrating to find out that this 'hut' wasn't the one we were headed for. It was a long and hard day, but spirits were high as we finally did reach Upper Spey Hut, where we were welcomed by a black weka. We slept like babies and felt justified to stay in bed a bit longer when it rained in the morning.

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On Day 2 it rained and snowed to the point that it stayed on the ground. Firewood was non-existent, so hot drinks and dancing kept us warm. Four young people arrived around midday. They looked like drowned kittens, but were happy and cheerful. After some hot drinks and food they went on their merry way up to the next hut, through the rain and no doubt snow once they headed up to Centre Pass.

The next day was dry but not that clear. We were slow to get up, but as we were getting ready to eat breakfast, we heard a helicopter. Adrie went outside and put his thumb up to the pilot to say we were all good. To his surprise it turned around and landed. The short story was that the lockdown was announced and the chopper could take us back to Manapouri at a commercial rate. It would be irresponsible to say no to this offer and three hours later we were helicoptered out through rain and mist. And so ended our Dusky 2020. Third time lucky maybe?

Matemateonga Track

Wed 25 Mar 2020

Scribe: *Marilyn McGlone*

With an early start (dare I say 5am!) including many yawns we stumbled into the vans. Six of us were going no farther than Omaru Hut while a group of nine were continuing on.

The walk in to Omaru Hut was enjoyable as we meandered through beautiful bush, with lush ferns gently brushing apart as we moved along. I think all appreciated the cooler temperature of 19°C. We had morning tea at arrival and said

our goodbyes and take-cares to those who were tramping on to a five day adventure.

Our small group decided to bush-crash up to a ridge beside the hut which was to offer us a view towards Ruapehu (Baz had mentioned this little side trip to fill our time before lunch). We shared some giggles as we climbed through supplejack and over and under various obstacles. Unfortunately we were not rewarded with much as there was heavy cloud cover, but it was fun to go off track even if it included a slip and graze or two on the steep way down. I wonder who that was?

After lunch, we set a smart pace back to the van ably led by Terry with his long legs--- us gals taking two steps to his one.

Stopped in Stratford for the traditional icecreams and home just after 5pm. A GREAT DAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

On the trip were John Cook, Margret McKinnon, Barbara Francis, Margie Campbell, Marilyn McGlone and Terry Mullins.



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The next time you pop to the supermarket, walk the streets, pass a stranger, whatever... we hope you take these with you and do all you can to make yourself feel good, and make others feel even better.

1: *"Things done well and with care exempt themselves from fear"* – **William Shakespeare**

2: *"Human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the fibre of free people. A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough."* – **Franklin D. Roosevelt**

3: *"Today, give yourself permission to be outrageously kind, irrationally warm, improbably generous. I promise it will be a blast."* – **Sasha Dicter**

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