



# THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

**WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)**

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

July 2025



Upwards to the sky photo by Allan Wickens

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

# WAIKATO HUT

Your lodge on Mt Ruapehu  
Tongariro National Park



[www.wtc.org.nz](http://www.wtc.org.nz)



Astelia stems on the Hakarimatas  
Photo by Stephen Prendergast

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**WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB**  
**P. O. Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • [www.wtc.org.nz](http://www.wtc.org.nz)**

**Free to members**

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

**BULLETIN No 875**

**July 2025**

### **General Committee**

<b>President:</b>	Rupert Craggs	027 6811926
<b>Past President:</b>		
<b>Secretary:</b>	Dorothy Cawdron	027 7424222
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Guy Domett	027 2483008
<b>Members:</b>	Judith Bogle (VP Tramp) Ashley Hoskin (VP Ski) Allan Wickens Selwyn June Les Warren	

### **Tramping Subcommittee**

**Tramping email:** [waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com](mailto:waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com)

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Judith Bogle	027 3810283
<b>Club Captain:</b>	Mike Peck	021 369256
<b>Membership:</b>	Jocelyn Widmer	027 8664795
<b>Member:</b>	Selwyn June	027 4978151
<b>Transport:</b>	Allan Wickens	027 9509546
<b>Social convenor:</b>	David Totman	021 868720

### **Ski Subcommittee**

**Ski email:** [waikatoski@gmail.com](mailto:waikatoski@gmail.com)

<b>Chairperson:</b>	Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545
<b>Ski VP:</b>	Stephen Phillips	021 1031436
<b>Bookings:</b>	Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545
<b>Finance officer:</b>	Michael Barker	021 2463500
<b>Members:</b>		

<b>Facebook:</b>	Jacqui Dick	021 1375201
<b>Facebook:</b>	Lynette Morris	<a href="mailto:waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com">waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com</a>
<b>Website:</b>	Kat Rowe	<a href="mailto:wtcwebmanager@gmail.com">wtcwebmanager@gmail.com</a>
<b>Bulletin:</b>	Lesley Kuggeleijn	027 4942414
<b>Editor &amp; Club Librarian:</b>	Dianne June	<a href="mailto:djune@xtra.co.nz">djune@xtra.co.nz</a> 07 8433066

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



## Club Night: Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2025

We meet at St. Peter's Cathedral in Victoria St.

Door opens at 7.00pm, and the meeting starts at 7.30pm.

Finally, we will get to hear about **Jocelyn's** walk along the Camino trail in northern Spain that she undertook a wee while ago. This will be a trip along memory lane for many of us, and an inspiration for others to consider doing it.

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2025

<b>3191</b>	<b>12-13 Jul</b>	<b>M/F</b>	<b>Snowcraft I</b>	<b>Allan Wickens/ Mike Peck</b>
<b>3192</b>	<b>20 July</b>	<b>E/M</b>	<b>Wharamaramara</b>	<b>Julia Lile</b>
<b>3193</b>	<b>27 July</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Hotwater Beach</b>	<b>Sarah McLeay</b>
<b>3194</b>	<b>3 Aug</b>	<b>E/M</b>	<b>Coast to coast</b>	<b>John McArthur</b>
	<b>6 Aug</b>		<b>CLUB NIGHT</b>	
<b>3195</b>	<b>9/10 Aug</b>	<b>M/F</b>	<b>Snowcraft II</b>	<b>Allan Wickens/ Mike Peck</b>
<b>3196</b>	<b>17 Aug</b>		<b>tba</b>	<b>Club captain</b>
<b>3197</b>	<b>23/24 Aug</b>		<b>tba</b>	<b>Club captain</b>
<b>3198</b>	<b>31 Aug</b>	<b>M/F</b>	<b>Karioi</b>	<b>John McArthur</b>
	<b>3 Sept</b>		<b>Club night /photo comp</b>	<b>Nicola Guy</b>
<b>3199</b>	<b>6/7 Sept</b>	<b>M/F</b>	<b>Winter tramp</b>	<b>Mike Peck</b>
<b>3200</b>	<b>13/14 Sept</b>	<b>E/M</b>	<b>Okahukura baiting</b>	<b>Dianne &amp; Selwyn June</b>
<b>3201</b>	<b>20/21 Sept</b>		<b>Hauhangaroa track</b>	<b>Cathy Dickson</b>

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

### TIME and FITNESS GUIDELINES

<b>E</b>	<b>= Easy.</b>	Up to 4 hours per day, pace slower than E/M.
<b>E/M</b>	<b>= Easy/Medium.</b>	Up to 5-6 hours/day, pace slower than M.
<b>M</b>	<b>= Medium.</b>	Up to 6-7 hours/day, at standard walking pace.
<b>M/F</b>	<b>= Medium/Fit.</b>	Up to 7-8 hours/day, pace faster than M.
<b>F</b>	<b>= Fit.</b>	Over 8 hours/day, pace faster than M/F.

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

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

**Departure Point:** Weekend trips depart from the Gate 1 at Waikato University. Park closer to other vehicles as this area is security monitored. Leave on Friday nights at

7pm sharp unless otherwise stated. **Day** trips depart from London St at the river end-park on the roadside. Leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp.

If someone is concerned because a trip is **late back**, contact:

1) Club Captain; 2) President; 3) a committee member.

### **Minimum equipment required:**

**Day Trips:** A thermal layer (polypropylene, polyester etc or wool), an insulating layer of fleece (polartec etc) or wool and a water & wind-proof parka outer shell. Shorts or long-johns/over-trousers in cool or wet weather. Torch and sunscreen. Boots or strong shoes. Lunch, snacks and water bottle. First aid kit.

**Weekend Trips:** The above, plus pack with plastic liner bag, sleeping bag, tent, sleeping mat, cooker, billy, plate or bowl, spoon, food, spare dry clothes for evening, towel, toilet gear, light camp shoes. A water purifier can be useful. Plus, in extreme weather or country: additional warm top, over-trousers or woollen/ fleece trousers, warm outdoor mittens or gloves, over-mitts, warm hat or balaclava, sunglasses. Ice axe and crampons for snow.

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## **Trip Descriptions**

### **Trip 3191**

#### **Snowcraft Course One (basic)**

**12-13 Jul**

Once again, we will be holding a number of snowcraft-related events in 2025. First up, is one of the most popular trips we run each year and that is Snowcraft One/Basic. Aimed at introducing you to the alpine environment, you will learn valuable skills to safely enjoy that experience.

The group will meet up at Whakapapa on Friday night and the basics of snowcraft will be taught the following day and Sunday. Trainees will be taught how to use crampons and ice axe, self-arrest, how to walk on icy slopes, navigation tips, basic avalanche awareness plus what to wear etc. This instruction will be done in areas close to the Club Hut, but we will spend most of the day out weather permitting. A full assessment will be done by the instructors of those learning the skills that are taught. If anyone is having difficulty, extra training will be given the next day where necessary. If the weather is too bad on Saturday, we will do instruction in our cosy lounge as far as practical. On Saturday evening, there will be a sumptuous meal in our large dining room.

Sunday's instruction depends on how much we managed to cover on Saturday. If all went well, we have a chance to try out our new-found skills by climbing to the crater or as far as the Alpine Club Hut, the highest inhabited building on the maunga. We plan on being out for most of the day, returning to our Hut by about 2pm at the latest to clean up and get back to Hamilton at a reasonable time.

Given good weather, by the end of the weekend you will understand the principles behind the rather complex concept of "Snowcraft". It takes a lot of practice and genuine understanding of what is real and perceived danger when entering the snow and ice heights of Ruapehu. Our leaders have been doing this sort of thing for years and yet they never fail to be fascinated by the world of snow and ice. On satisfying

our instructors that you have completed this Course with competence, you may attend our follow-up Snowcraft Two which will be held over the weekend of 9-10 August. The third event is our Winter Tramp (date to be determined). The departure time will be early Friday evening 11 July. Most will go in vans from our weekend departure point at Waikato University Gate One carpark. We can pick up others enroute (main highway only via Te Awamutu and Te Kuiti please) and will be based in our large and comfortable Hut Friday and Saturday nights. All meals will be provided.

A full list of gear will be provided on registration (get in early as you may miss out). Crampons and ice axes can be hired from the Club or Bivouac. Mike, who is the Manager of Bivouac in Hamilton, can answer any queries you may have pre-course.

Please Note: To participate in this Course, you must be a member of the Waikato Tramping Club. Application details are on the Club website. Spaces for this course are limited, and a deposit is required to confirm your booking. You must also attend a Gear Evening prior to the Course. Held at Bivouac on a date to be determined this gives you a good chance to sort out your gear needs, especially footwear. Light-weight boots/shoes are a problem when it comes to wearing crampons for example.

**Leaders:** Allan Wickens Co-Ordinator/Instructor **Ph:** 027 9509546 **Grade:** M/F  
Mike Peck: Principal Instructor **Ph:** 021 369 256

**Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com* or *mikeypeck@yahoo.com*

**Cost:** TBA. Includes transport, food and Hut fees plus gear hire where applicable. (Note: our course cost per trainee represents excellent value when compared to identical courses both commercial and through other Clubs).

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### **Trip 3192**

### **Wharamaramara**

**20 Jul**

This will be a nice winter day walk in the southern Kaimai Range.

We will plan to leave London St at 7:30am and travel approximately 1hr 45mins via the Kaimais, to Bethlehem and onto SH2, then Whakamarama Road.

Leyland O'Brien Tramline Track is in the south of the Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park. It starts at the end of Whakamarama Road, just north of Tauranga off SH2.

This track links Whakamarama Road with the North-South Track, following the old Leyland O'Brien tramline. From the end of Whakamarama Road, we will walk down the Pā Kereru Track for 100 m until we reach a junction. Take the left track, which runs beside the headwaters of the Ngamuwahine River. This first section is flat.

After about 1 hr 30 min, the track crosses the river, and the tramline climbs towards the junction with the Ngamuwahine Track. From here there are two options 1) The track continues southeast for a further 30 min to meet up with the North-South Track. 2) At the Ngamuwahine junction it is 1 hr 30 min to the end of Ngamuwahine Road. We will see how the time is going and how everyone is feeling as to which of these two routes we take.

Once we have had enough, we will return along the Leyland O'Brien Track to the carpark at the end of Whakamarama Road and journey home.

**Leader:** Julia Lile

**Ph:** 027 4789989

**Grade:** E/M

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

**Transport:** Senior member \$20 – 25

Non-member: senior rate + \$10

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**Trip 3193**

**Tarawera Hotwater beach**

**27 July**

This day trip will **leave Hamilton from the University carpark at 6.30am** We will take the water taxi to Hot water beach and walk back along the Tarawera Trail to the vehicles.. The walk is 15km and will take 5-6 hours. There will be a share of travel to Rotorua and back. I will book the water taxi.

**Leader:** Sarah McLeay

**Ph:** 020 40896364

**Grade:** M

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

**Transport:** Senior member \$20-25

Non-member: senior rate +\$10

**Water Taxi:** \$35 pp

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**Trip 3194**

**Auckland Coast to Coast**

**3 Aug**

The Coast to Coast walk is a 16 km hike across Auckland, from the Waitemata Harbour to the Manukau. We will pass through landscapes shaped by 600 years of settlement and get panoramic views stretching across Auckland city. The route starts at the Ferry Terminal and passes through Albert Park, the Auckland Domain, Mt Eden, One Tree Hill and on to the shore at Onehunga. Two peaks to climb, both about 200m elevation. There are cafe's along the way but you can only look and smell the coffee... mmmmm.

**Leader:** John McArthur

**Ph:** 021 2889641

**Grade:** E

**Email:** [mcarthur@outlook.co.nz](mailto:mcarthur@outlook.co.nz)

**Transport:** Senior member \$20 – 25

Non-member: senior rate+\$10

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**Trip 3195**

**Snowcraft II**

**9/10 Aug**

Snowcraft II will take place over the weekend 8th-10th Aug based at the Waikato ski lodge at Whakapapa. To Attend this course it is a requirement that you've completed a snowcraft I course. The emphasis of Snow II is to refresh and extend the skills learnt in snow I with an emphasis on route planning and navigation. On the Saturday we will complete a full traverse of Ruapehu , Whakapapa to Turoa, with the crux of the trip being a summit of Paretaitonga. On Sunday, we take the pinnacle ridge to summit Te Heuheu and Tukino. We will be driving down Friday night to the club hut and departing mid afternoon on Sunday. This trip is self-catered with full access to the club kitchen. (Note: our Course cost per trainee represents excellent value when compared to identical course both commercial and through other Clubs).

**Leaders:** Allan Wickens Co-Ordinator and Instructor **Ph:** 027 9509546

Mike Peck: Principal Instructor

**Ph:** 021 369256

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

**Grade:** M/F

[mikeypeck@yahoo.com](mailto:mikeypeck@yahoo.com)

**Cost:** Approx \$150... Includes transport and Lodge fees plus gear hire where applicable.

**16/17Aug**

To be advised. Contact the club captain if you are willing to lead a trip over this weekend – can be a day trip or a weekend one.

**Leader:** tba

**Grade:**

## Trip 3197

**.....and where shall we goes this weekend?**

**23/24 Aug**

Got a good suggestion for a day trip or weekend one? Check in with the club captain

**Leader:** tba

**Grade:**

## Trip 3198

## Karioi

## 31 Aug

We will gather in Hamilton, London Street at 8am and either car pool or use a van depending on numbers, and drive out to the Te Toto Gorge lookout car park on the coast road south of Raglan.

From there we climb about 500m elevation through a mix of open farm and mixed scrubby forest into proper forest. The effects of this windy coast make the trees all shaped to bend inland and their canopy shape is a well coifed wind resistant unity. We also get great sea vistas as we climb up through the bush to a peak at 706m. A small detour out to a lookout gives a view into a valley that may have been one of the major craters.

Then back to the main track and on up what becomes a bit of a tricky ridge, with some four-points-of-contact monkey work to get onto the final rise to the peak at 756m. Finally back the way we came and a possible stop for refreshments in Raglan. Great day out - good views, good exercise and fresh air.

**Leaders:** John McArthur

**Ph:** 021 2889641

**Grade: M/F**

**Email:** *mcarthur@outlook.co.nz*

**Transport:** Senior member \$20 – 25

Non-member: senior rate+\$10

## Trip 3199

## Winter tramp

**6/7 Sept**

The winter tramp is an exploration of the eastern slopes of Mount Taranaki. Departing Friday night for the drive to North Egmont to stay at the Camphouse. On Saturday we'll take the Curtis Falls track to East Egmont and the Waingongoro track to Dawson Falls. From Dawson Falls we'll head up to Kapuni Lodge for the night. Returning on Sunday via the Manganui Gorge track across to the Tahurangi Lodge and back down to the North Egmont visitor centre.

**Leader:** Mike Peck

**Ph:** 021 369256

**Grade:** M/F

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

**Transport:** Senior Member \$65-75

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

## Trip 3200

### Okahukura bait station filling

**13/14 Sept**

This is time to give back to the environment- again! The kokako breeding season will begin in Pureora about late October so we need to have the rat numbers as low as possible by that time – see the %age graph below for our success rate.

We can organise club transport or you can come in your own vehicle/carpool. Feel free to bring as many people as you would like. Juniors (>10yrs) are welcome but should have a parent or guardian with them.



Accommodation for the weekend will be at the Lions Lodge at the end of Gully road in North Pureora forest. The lodge sleeps 50 people but you can also pitch a tent on the adjacent grassed area, or even bring your campervan and park it there too. There is a large reasonably well-equipped kitchen (not a lot of microwave equipment though) and hot & cold showers.

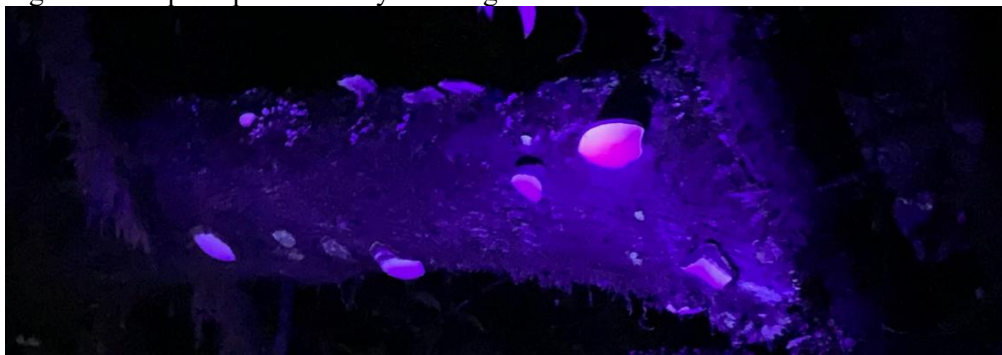
You will need to bring all the food & refreshments you would need for the weekend, water bottle, tramping boots, raincoat (but of course it won't do that!), weekend pack, gardening gloves if you have some. This is not tough work so you'll be able to enjoy a lovely day in a beautiful forest.

Your hosts, the Pirongia Restoration Society will supply tea, coffee, milk, milo & sugar, as well as some treats for you at the end of your field work. To earn the opportunity to have some treats you will be asked to carry 5-8kg of bait and distribute it to bait stations along 2-3 baitlines for which you will be given a map, a teammate who has done this kind of work in the past, a hi-vis vest, with a PLB, compass, & first aid kit/team as well as disposable gloves and masks should you wish to use them.

We will travel a further 14km from the Lodge to the starting point so will need to be ready to move out by 7.30am on Saturday morning. There are 42 lines/958 bait stations to visit. With lots of people we can complete the task in a single day but any leftover lines will be visited on Sunday morning. You will be asked to be back at the base (where the treats will be) by 3.30pm so it shouldn't be a long day. If you get back too early you might get that 3<sup>rd</sup> line assigned to you.

And why help out? Think of a beautiful forest, wonderful bird sounds from parakeets, kokako, kaka, tui, whiteheads, falcon, tomtits, grey warblers, chaffinches, and the chance to just wander along looking and listening.

There is the beautiful Waipapa loop walk which begins beside the lodge and takes about an hour to walk. Many a good photo has been taken on this track. It can be walked (or run) when you return to the lodge at the end of Saturday's work or at night-time or perhaps on Sunday morning.



Lichen glowing at night – picture taken with a UV light

photo by Helen Kuck

We will give the Lodge a good clean before we leave. The Pirongia Society will cover the cost of the accommodation.

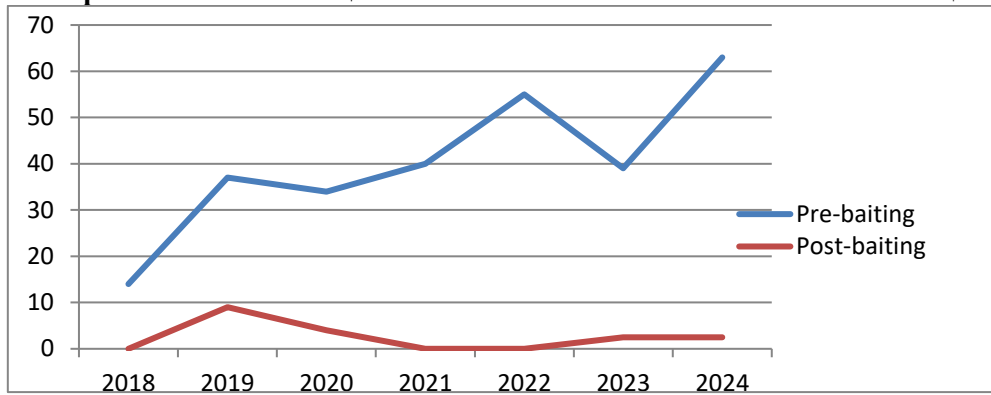
**Leaders:** Dianne & Selwyn June **Ph:** 07 843066 or 0274978151

**Grade:** E/M

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

**Transport:** Senior Member \$65-75

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10



### *Editorial*

A wonderful turnout for Sherpa Wangda's talk at club night – we could hear a pin drop while he was finding his way around the computer. Just goes to show you're an attentive lot. And it was neat to see members from other clubs along to hear his story. The lengths he has gone to to establish an income for his extended family sure makes one appreciate the good life we have here in NZ.

I have enjoyed reading about the 'Love our huts' campaign in the latest Backcountry magazine – there is that 'good life' coming to the fore again. I am not able to do much on that front at present but I am thankful some of you can and do. I will be sitting on your shoulder while you beaver away on my behalf so thank you for the ride.

And to make our new club captain's task easier how about thinking up some ideas of where to go in future and, even better, come up with the suggestion of a leader – maybe yourself. The club archives have records of many trips the club has not been to for a long time so a wee browse through the records may pique your interest in going there again. These are a resource not often referred to but even I enjoy reading them. And nothing is nicer than being at Waikato Hut when the sun is shining and watching the gently fall of snowflakes go past the window. You need to be there when it happens.

Dianne

### *Presidential blog*

Hello trampers, scroggin enthusiasts, and people who thought that this is a disco inferno dance club! Saturday's "easy" tramp turned into a front-page saga when a rogue wild goat mistook my fluorescent raincoat for a rival. I'm happy to report that no presidents were harmed—just mildly humiliated. The goat chased me for 300 metres uphill towards a cliff edge, which earned me the club's newly-minted "Cardio

Badge”—awarded for unplanned sprinting while screaming. Thank you, Sue, for live-streaming it (and for the viral hashtag #GoatGotRupert). We lost three muesli bars, one tramping pole, and most of my dignity.

Next week's tramp will take place somewhere with fewer horns and a lower chance of being headbutted into a bush. So remember—always yield to nature, especially when it has horns and anger issues. *(Ed comment: go Rupert! I'm still laughing)*

Awkwardly and breathlessly yours,

Many thanks, Rupert

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## *Ski club report*

We are now in July and have seen small snow falls followed by warmer northerly storms leading to rain. What we really need is several Antarctic lows to come storming up both islands with a large dump of snow so there is enough snow to open the upper mountain runs.

We have been seeing new members signing up so that is good news for the club. Remember the lodge is available to all Ski and tramping members across the whole year now at the members rates, please plan and enjoy a winter visit.

We are on target for increased bed nights this year. Some of the weekends are booking up with groups. So if you are thinking of coming down and know your dates go ahead and make a booking. We have flexibility to move a booking if needed.

There have been a number of club working parties over the summer to prepare us for the new season. Thanks to everyone who helped out. The Hut is now looking really good. With a fresh coat of paint in many areas and a refurbished entrance.

We also have new aerial maps to help you prepare for your next adventure on the mountain. I encourage you to come and use the lodge-like facilities.

We will be running this season without a custodian and senior members will cover this role as a cost saving measure. I also want to acknowledge the generous donation from Colin at Trek and Travel. He gifted some money for the Hut which we can use for maintenance at the lodge. I would like to acknowledge the Ski committee who help keep the Hut running; Mary, Stephen, Michael, Nicola, Dorothy and David.

Thanks to everyone who attended the clubs 75th Birthday celebration at the Lodge in Ruapehu. Another successful event supporting the club.

Ashley

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## **Trip Reports**

### **Trip 3171**

### **Kawekas**

**27 Feb/2 Mar**

This trip was comprised of two options - a medium/hard trip led by Steve D up over the tops of the Kaweka Range and an easy option of walking in to the Mangatainoka Hot Pools. I led the easy option and was accompanied by Ron D, Peter A and Jim S. After a hair-raising van ride up a very steep gravel road to drop the fit group off to climb Kaweka J we drove around to the end of the road and carpark to start our walk into the hot pools. It is a beautiful walk in, follows the Makino River with some lovely scenic lookouts and swimming holes. We passed Te Puia Lodge and walked

on for another 45mins to the picturesque campsite beside the hot pools. These were comprised of 3 hot tubs set on decking with on/off taps to allow for fresh water to be added or let out. We set up camp, had dinner and a soak then bed early listening to the sounds of the nearby river.

We had quite a lot of nice food with us including lamb, sausages and venison so were a bit concerned about the local possums sniffing it out. However Steve told us (more specifically the guys) to mark our territory around the tent so Ron was required to do that job and it worked!! *(Ed comment: and how was that 'marking' done I wonder?)*

The next day we had a chill day at the campsite and explored the area a bit plus got the fire going ready for the fit group and our gourmet dinner. Plus we saw the local Whio.

Dinner was thanks to Steve. He cooked us up venison back strap that melted in your mouth, divine sausages and a lamb curry to die for. What a meal! Made even better by the location, company, fire, weather and not having to eat dehydrated food!

The next day we walked out to the van and drove back to Hamilton.

Watch this space for next year's gourmet trip. Not to be missed!!



Hard at work.....

Photo by Jacqui Dick

### **Trip 3173**

### **Te Rereatukahia Hut**

**8 Feb**

Lynley M, Dale H, Jim S and Sarah McL took the Tuahu Track to Te Rereatukahia Hut. It took 4 hours, a bit of step to get to the ridge top but very manageable. The hut was almost full and there were several groups tenting. Book early for this hut. On

Sunday we set off at 7.30 am and took the Old North South Track to the junction with Pylon Peak track and then down from there to Waiorongomai Road.



We had been told the Old North South Track (route) would be tough but found it relatively easy going with short ups and downs along the tops. It was also well marked contrary to reports. It took 7 hours from the Hut to the junction and 2 hours down Pylon Peak. The weather was perfect and the views to die for. Would recommend to others noting that the Old North South and Pylon Peak have no easily accessible water.

Queen Victoria Head rock photo by Sarah McLeay

As well as starting out well-hydrated, we all took 2 litres each on the Sunday and needed them.



The troupers

Photo by Jim on Sarah's phone

## Trip 3187

## Waihaha Hut

14/15 June

On a warm Saturday morning, six people headed south for an overnight trip into the Waihaha Hut. With the walk into the Hut being around 3hrs, we left Hamilton at 8am. The track is well graded and sign-posted. We saw one person on our way to the 10-bunk Hut and arrived at the Hut around mid-afternoon. With the weather being fine, three of us opted to use our tents and take advantage of the nice weather. As the afternoon progressed, more people arrived at the Hut and by the early evening the Hut was full - lucky that three of our group opted to camp. Some arriving were a



bit surprised that the Hut was full at this time of the year but, this Hut has always been popular (not sure what it is like in the middle of the winter, tho). Sunday morning arrived fine and cool but, not too cold. After a hot breakfast and packing up we were on the track a bit after 0830. The walk out was in lovely clear skies.

After arriving back at the carpark and a quite snack, we headed home and included a side-trip to Waihora Lagoon. We stopped at Whakamaru for the usual trip food and drink splurge.

Leader & Scribe, Les W, others were Jim S, Jeanette D, Sarah McL, Rozz R, Alicia.

### **Trip 3188 Matariki & WTC 75 years & 50 years since the big rebuild 20/22 Jun**

On the eve of this long weekend celebration, the weather outlook was decidedly gloomy for the whole three days. No need for crampons then as we'll all be stuck in the hut! Well, as it turns out, we couldn't have been more wrong. It started a bit grim, with those who arrived early at our lodge hauling up part of the food on Thursday afternoon and getting soaking wet in the process. However, by the time the "Thursday nighters" turned up, things were already on the improve. Or so we thought. The next day (Matariki), the weather again socked in. Most of the day was spent in the lodge, setting up the large screen and sound system. Despite gloomy conditions, the amazing crowd that arrived at Whakapapa shows yet again that Matariki is a very popular holiday and may eventually become our main "national holiday". That evening, after the rest of the group had arrived, we celebrated Matariki with an excellent "potluck



dinner". Afterwards, we watched a very informative movie that covered all things "Matariki". Saturday morning dawned and to our surprise the whole maunga was clear. What to do? The two Mikes opted for a climb up to the crater rim, while a small group made their way to the abandoned hut at "Far West".

Matariki dinner

photo by Allan Wickens.



When there is a good snowfall.....

photo by Allan Wickens

A larger group managed to get up to the NZ Alpine Club hut “sans” crampons, but it required a fair bit of step cutting in the process. Others opted to stay at the lodge for the day. That evening we all enjoyed a sumptuous dinner prepared by Dianne, Anne-Marie and Isla. After dinner, everyone settled down and enjoyed a special presentation covering the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the major hut extension. Photos of the renovations were shown and then Russell King was presented with a special certificate from the Club, honouring the huge contribution made by him and his family over many decades.



More evening entertainment

photo by Allan Wickens

The award, presented by our very long-standing member John Wilson, was quite an emotional part of the evening. Following this, and thanks to modern technology, we managed to watch the Chiefs get beaten in a gruelling final of the rugby, against the almighty Crusaders. To cap the evening off, Allan showed an excellent film made by the “*Silent Hiker*”, covering his successful ascent of Mount Aconcagua, the highest mountain outside of the Himalayas. Allan didn’t quite make the summit when he tried in 2009.

On Sunday, we all awoke to an even better day! The well-worn phrase “a bluebird day” was very apt.



Ready to go and enjoy a bluebird day

photo by Allan Wickens

Some of the group left early while most enjoyed a pleasant sidle around to Hutt Flat. After inspecting an ice-encrusted Glacier Hut (circa 1923), we then had a look at the adjacent memorial hut. On the outside are two plaques placed in memory of two teenage skiers who died after an accident in 1993.

After the usual clean up, we all left the lodge, while Russell and Stacey stayed for another couple of days to soak up the Club hut’s atmosphere. All-in-all, it was a rewarding time, and we were all left with an impression of the hard work and dedication involved in making such a warm and cosy hut. Most of the materials had to be man-hauled up, with a “flying fox” and helicopter used as well. (Note: earlier in the week, the WTC held a special meeting in Hamilton, celebrating the 75 years in particular).

A total of 25 people attended this event over the long weekend.

*~~~~~*  
*What fire could ever equal the sunshine of a winter's day?"*



## *From the committee table:*

**New Members:** Welcome to Alicia Carthew & Peter Roberts, Lucas Willcock, Desma Barrie, Helen Baggaley, and Donna Southwick. We wish you many great experiences with our club.

**Resignations:** Nil

**Membership:** The club has 189 tramping members.



### **WTC Annual Photo Competition**

Our annual competition closes on 6th August 2025. Our dates align with the FMC photo competition so that winners from the WTC competition go onto the FMC competition, which is in September. Entries must be supplied before or on the closing date in digital form. The following categories are in alignment with those of FMC:

Above the bushline: 1. With human element; 2 without human element

Below bushline : 1. With human element; 2. without human element

Historic Native flora, fauna and fungi Long exposure

We also have 2 WTC categories which are ineligible for the FMC photo competition:

Club Character - features a humorous subject which has a club context, and International

Our photos will be judged and results presented at the September Club Night. Entries are to be emailed to Nicola Lye: [nicolahlye@gmail.com](mailto:nicolahlye@gmail.com) or given to Nicola on a USB stick before or on 6<sup>th</sup> August.

### **Rules:**

**A.** Definition of a "**human element**". The definition of a "human element" is flexible but the general intention is: Where the photo contains anything, other than as a very minor feature: people, a hut, a track sign/marker, bridge, ice axe and anything else that has been introduced by humans into the environment then we would define that as having "a Human element". But if a photo has what could be called a Human Element but that element is very small, inconsequential and not a feature in the photo then you could count it as "No Human Element".

**B.** The intention of the **long exposure** category is for photography of scenes that the naked eye cannot normally comprehend. These shots require a very long exposure and the use of a tripod. The category is intended for highly technical images of shots taken at night, (including star trails), or in extremely low light situations such as caves or canyons. The category is not intended for normal dusk/dawn photography, or images where a long exposure is used to 'blur' the image (such as flowing water, or movement of the subject).

**C.** Entries for the FMC aligned categories, apart from Historic, must be **taken after 1 Jan 2023**.

**D.** Definition of "**historic**": The intention for the historic category is for entrants to go back through club and individual archives to select "old photos" rather than "photos of old things". As an example, a recent photo of a hut built in the 1950's is not a 'historic' photo. However, a photo of the same hut taken in the 1960's certainly is a 'historic' photo. Photos for the historic category must be taken before 1 Jan 2022.

**E.** All photos, apart from the International Category, must be **taken within New Zealand**, which is defined as within our Exclusive Economic Zone. This includes the following islands: North, South, Stewart, Chatham, Kermadec, Sub-Antarctic.

**F.** Only **two entries per category** allowed.

**G. Size.** Photos must be between 1MB and 5MB (if they go into the FMC competition, this is the size they have stipulated).

**H. Removal or insertion** of features not in the original image is not allowed.

#### **Notes:**

Please update your file name to reflect the title or to indicate there is no title, plus the category name e.g. "In the Wild – Above bushline with human element" or "No Title – Long Exposure". It is advisable to title your photos as this adds to the interest of the photo.

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### *Snippets*

➤ **Hut etiquette in the Kaimais** - some people just aren't getting it.

Volunteers maintaining huts in the Kaimai Ranges say some users are burning through firewood and dodging hut fees, costing thousands and putting extra strain on efforts to keep backcountry huts open. The Kaimai Ridgeway Trust looks after seven huts and 160 kilometres of tracks in the region.

Keeping these huts stocked with firewood doesn't come cheap. "It costs us around \$4000 to \$5000 to fly a load of firewood in by helicopter," says Tony Walton, treasurer and secretary of the Trust. The Trust operates on a break-even basis, Tony explains, with any extra income spent on upgrades and emergency repairs. Hut fees bring in about \$35,000 a year, but thousands of volunteer hours are still needed to maintain tracks and huts. Despite signs explaining the cost and carbon footprint of firewood drops, misuse is common. To preserve limited supplies, the Trust has stopped stocking some huts with firewood during summer months.



One such hut is Te Whare Okioki (The Resting Place), a popular serviced 12-bunk hut built by volunteers, many from the local Deer Stalkers Association, on the site of the old Ngamuwahine shelter. Walton says the hut is booked out most weekends with tramping clubs or Duke of Edinburgh school groups.



Trampers outside Te Whare Okioki hut.

Kaimai Ridgeway Trust

The hut meets DoC serviced standards and features a covered deck, helipad, meat safe and dog kennels. DoC acknowledges most people pay hut fees, especially at bookable huts, but some don't. "For non-bookable huts, there can be a minority not paying," says DoC visitor advice manager Lynnell Greer. DoC carries out ranger spot checks and is moving more high-demand huts onto the booking system to improve compliance and can focus on conservation work and maintain these facilities," Greer says.

Rubbish is another problem. "Half the stuff we carry out is rubbish left behind," Walton says. DoC urges visitors to "remove all waste — there are no bins at huts" and to "leave huts better than you find them". The Trust looks after all Kaimai huts except Wairere Falls Hut, which is managed by DoC. "We've kept the place alive when DoC didn't have funding," Walton says.

Despite challenges like vandalism - "they locked themselves inside and caused mayhem trying to get out" - most visitors appreciate the work. "People really value what's been done. It's not just for diehard trampers and hunters," he says.

*Madeleine Powers, Waikato Times 19 June 2025*

➤ **The Hakarimata Restoration Trust**, established in 2001, is a dedicated community group committed to preserving the unique native forest and biodiversity of the Hakarimata Range in Waikato, New Zealand. Their mission is to restore and protect this precious environment for future generations, ensuring the mauri (life force) of Hakarimata thrives.

Predator Free Hakarimata is making a difference by removing over 5,000 pest animals and establishing extensive traplines, creating a safe haven for native species

to recover and flourish. This is more than conservation - it's a community movement, powered by passionate volunteers, local iwi, and supporters who believe in the power of collective action.

Joining Predator Free Hakekirimata means becoming part of a legacy. Every trap set, every pest removed, and every voice raised in support brings us closer to a predator-free future. Together, we can ensure that the Hakekirimata Range remains a vibrant, living taonga for generations to come. To get involved or learn more, contact the Hakekirimata Restoration Trust at [info@hakekirimata.org.nz](mailto:info@hakekirimata.org.nz) or visit <https://www.hakekirimata.com/> —your support matters now more than ever.

➤ **Blue Spring walkway re-opens after two years of repairs.** Putāruru's popular Blue Spring/Te Waihou Walkway is now fully open to the public. The popular walkway about 5km north of Putāruru was partly closed in June 2023 after a rockfall forced the council to close the main carpark entrance near Leslie Rd. Subsequent problems with people parking dangerously on a busy state highway forced the council to close it completely in November 2023. Apart from work to secure rockfall at the site, the project included strengthening boardwalks and diverting the walking track away from unstable cliffs.



The car park at the Leslie Road end has also been upgraded to triple its previous capacity, a key measure to increasing safety at that entry point of the track. The 4.7km-long walkway, well known for its pristine water which attracts 45,000 to 50,000 visitors a year, can now once again be accessed from two ends – Leslie Road and Whites Road. New walkways have also been installed on the popular walking track near Putāruru.

*From Waikato Times 1 July 2025*



A very nice pair of boots that will fit someone who wears size 7.5. They are in good condition. Any sum paid will go towards Waikato Hut. Contact Dianne 07 8433066

## ....from DoC.....

➤ Preparing for a **new generation of ‘underbirds’ on Rakiura**. This winter, with introduced predators hungry and lurking, critical action is being taken to help one of the world’s most endangered birds produce a new generation of chicks on Rakiura/Stewart Island.



Photo by Bradley Shields.

Pukunui/Southern New Zealand dotterel are critically threatened shore birds that nests on mountain tops. Pukunui used to be widespread throughout Te Waipounamu, even found in the Southern Alps, but stoats and feral cats have decimated their numbers and they now only nest on Rakiura mountain tops.

The DoC team call them ‘underbirds’ because they are only found at the bottom of New Zealand, and like many native species, they have a friendly, innocent manner, and are defenceless to introduced predators. The pukunui population has plummeted to 105 – down from 176 in 2020 and 300 in 2010.

“Pukunui should live to at least 20-30 years old, but with the huge number of feral cats on the island as well as other predators, most pukunui only survive 4-5 years if they’re lucky. But there’s a new plan to reverse the decline, drawing on extra funding from Predator Free 2050 and expertise from DOC’s National Predator Control Programme and Zero Invasive Predators. Although there aren’t stoats on Rakiura, pukunui are up against another stealthy and ferocious carnivore – the feral cat. Feral cats were captured by a trail camera in May between Doughboy Bay and the Tin Range, close to pukunui breeding grounds. These rampant feral cats are apex predators which means nothing preys upon them. They can hunt high and low across thousands of hectares of forest and mountains, and they survive by preying upon any animal they can sink their teeth into, including birds, bats, lizards, and insects. In response, the first phase of an aerial 1080 operation to reduce the number of rats, feral cats and possums by more than 95% across more than 40,000 hectares of Rakiura National Park has begun. It will heavily reduce predator numbers so pukunui can have a safer, more successful breeding season. The aim is to increase the population to at least 300 birds by 2035 with predator control. However, if predators can be permanently removed through the Predator Free Rakiura project, this target could be well exceeded.

Dan Cocker, also known as Dotterel Dan, has been involved in protecting pukunui since 2017 as a teenager. Dan wants to see these birds become so abundant on Rakiura that they can return to shorelines and mountains throughout Te

Waipounamu when it's safe. This isn't just about pukunui – Rakiura should be bustling with native wildlife, but there's a deafening silence deep in the forest. Predator Free Rakiura aims to restore the health and abundance of the ecosystem and bring back native species that belong here.



Pukunui and the Deceit Peaks. Photo by Guy McDonald.

In 2023 the New Zealand Nature Fund launched a campaign in partnership with DOC to raise funds from donors to support DoC's Pukunui Recovery Team. It's early days but the pukunui team acknowledges the support of the New Zealand Nature Fund and everyone who has donated to this project. There is a reference to a documentary on the DoC website.

➤ DoC reveals surprising **toilet paper stats**. If there is one person who knows all about toilet paper, it's DoC ranger Daryl Sweeney. The North Canterbury ranger's job is to not only clean public toilets at DoC sites but also replace the toilet paper. Now DoC has revealed how much toilet paper was ordered by regional offices around Aotearoa for the 2024/2025 period, a whopping 15.5 million metres nationally. That's roughly 15,500 kilometres of paper which would stretch the length of New Zealand nearly ten times. The figures reveal across DoC's operational regions the most toilet paper was ordered by the Southern South Island which includes Fiordland and the Great Walks (3,103,037 metres), followed closely by the Northern South Island which includes Abel Tasman Great Walks and the iconic Tōtaranui campground (3,069,369) and in third place, Hauraki Waikato Taranaki (which includes the Coromandel) 2,727,160 metres.

Daryl Sweeney looks after DoC sites in Canterbury including the toilets at the hugely popular and culturally significant Kura Tāwhiti/Castle Hill on the highway to Arthurs Pass and the West Coast.

“What we do outdoors makes all the difference for New Zealand's unique nature. This includes toileting responsibly. How and where we go is key to ensuring we do no harm to our great outdoors. Visitors are encouraged to go to the toilet before they



start their trip and plan stops at toilets along the way. Those heading further into the backcountry need to know what to do when there's no toilet – you can find this advice on DoC's website. And it's not just about using the facilities provided, says Daryl Sweeney. "It's shocking how much toilet paper is used. Sometimes it's piled up beside the toilet in a mountain. The state some of the toilets are left in is also appalling to be honest," he says. "You wouldn't do this at home so why would you do it in public toilets. Everyone has a role to respect the natural environment and not leave rubbish in and around these places."

Daryl Sweeney says everyone has a part to play in looking after nature and says it would be a huge bonus for him if the toilets were left in a better state. "I'm answering other people's calls of nature," he jokes, "but it's about time people answered their own, and respected the amazing places they are visiting. I feel like if people had to do my job for a day, they'd understand. My message is use the toilets provided, use less toilet paper, put it in the toilet or the bin and leave the toilet in a tidy state. It's simple."

➤ DoC deals to over 1000 **wilding pines on Rangitoto**. To protect the Auckland icons unique nature, 1,012 wilding pines have been removed from the island in a five-week, ground control operation. State of the art drone mapping and laser rangefinders were used to identify and map the wilding pines. "Rangitoto is an ecosystem different from anywhere in the world, and wilding pines are one of the greatest threats to it," says Dr Leigh Joyce, DoC Senior Biodiversity Ranger. Wilding pines would eventually take over the island's native vegetation if left uncontrolled – as they have at many locations around New Zealand. Located in the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana, Rangitoto has the largest pōhutukawa and rātā dominated forest in the world and is home to many taonga bird and lizard species, says Leigh. It's also the only volcano in Auckland with an intact indigenous ecosystem. "The maps provided accurate GPS locations of the wilding pines which allowed ground crews to work at pace to remove the threat." The island has been predator free since 2011. It's home to a variety of native bird species, including kākārīki, korimako/bellbird, kākā, tūi, pīwakawaka/fantail, riroriro/grey warbler, and ruru/morepork, as well as five species of native lizards.

Unlike native New Zealand bush, where a wide variety of plant species exist together, wilding pines produce dense overgrowth which supports only other wilding pines. If wilding pine numbers increase, they will also have a significant visual impact. Control is needed to prevent them from becoming a dominant weed species on Rangitoto. Wilding pines currently affect more than 2 million ha of New Zealand. Without large scale funding and control, experts estimate that within thirty years, 25% of New Zealand could be covered with wilding pines.

The Rangitoto effort is part of the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme, led by Biosecurity New Zealand in partnership with DoC and many other organisations across the country. The programme has delivered control operations on more than 3



million ha, or just over 12% of New Zealand, preventing the spread into even more vulnerable land.

Funding to remove wilding pines on Rangitoto was announced by the Minister of Conservation in November 2024 as part of the International Visitor Levy (IVL).

Thanks to additional IVL funding, there is also weed control work underway or planned for several other conservation islands in the Hauraki Gulf.

As part of this funding, DoC and Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki will now carry out ground control weeding on Rangitoto and neighbouring Te Motutapu-a-Taiehu. This work will target moth plant, gorse, and rhamnus.

➤ **Poached gecko** seen alive in the wild. A previously poached West Coast green gecko has been seen alive and well in the wild more than a year after her release, thanks to the power of citizen science. The gecko was one of three females illegally taken and held in captivity until they were discovered during a DoC investigation in 2022. All three required life-saving surgery at Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University's Wildbase Hospital to remove stuck eggs, and after successful recuperation, the trio were returned to their alpine home in November 2023.

Recently, a nature watcher photographed a striking, bright green gecko on a tree in a West Coast conservation area and uploaded photos to iNaturalist NZ. The photo was spotted by the sharp-eyed New Zealand Herpetological Society president, Nick Harker, who recognised the unique markings along her back. A careful check with previous photos of the gecko confirmed her identity. It was amazing to see the gecko alive and apparently well after her ordeal, says Nick Harker.

➤ **Rare slab hut refurbishment** keeps traditional ways alive. A refurbishment of the West Coast's Slaty Creek Hut has served as a catalyst for rangers to learn about wood working methods used by pioneers.



➤ The historic Slaty Creek Hut, in the Grey Valley, was originally built as a winter project in 1952 by deer cullers. The hut was built with timber milled with hand tools using logs from the beech forest surrounding the site. It's now used by recreational

hunters, trampers and climbers. Slab huts are a surviving form of the slab houses which European settlers built in 19th century New Zealand to accommodate themselves in a practical and cost-effective way, using a material found readily in many areas – trees. Before the introduction of water and steam powered sawmills, trees were disassembled by splitting, sawing or hewing, and it is these techniques that were carried on into the 20th century in building slab huts for deer cullers, musterers and gold fossickers in rural areas of New Zealand. Because of the impermanence of wood due to rot, and that slab houses were only seen by settlers as temporary housing until something more permanent could be built when resources allowed, very few slab houses or buildings remain, making slab huts like Slaty Creek Hut a real link to the past. There are 12 slab huts on public conservation land in the South Island.

Because so few people still have the skills to hew timber from logs with hand tools, maintaining historic huts like Slaty Creek is becoming more difficult -which is why rangers spent time learning about the techniques.

The rangers spent a day breaking down beech logs and hewing these into hand shaped timber, which was used to replace boards and framing on Slaty Creek Hut. While the rangers were at Slaty Creek they also replaced the hearth of the fire, installed a new sub floor structure, dug drainage channels around the hut and gave it a good spruce up. Ranger Casey Rhodes, who has been on the team restoring the hut says, “We went in six months ago and scoped it out and worked out which boards needed to be replaced and made a list, so we’re only replacing the minimum to try and keep as much heritage factor as we can”. Mike Gillies, a Senior Heritage Advisor who is sharing his skills in these historic building methods, says it's important to maintain traditions of how huts and structures were built.

“We could use modern methods and materials on the hut, but you pretty soon lose authenticity, whereas doing it using the same tools and techniques ensures that craft and those traditions stay alive. So the guys are using axes and draw knives and wedges and mauls, the same way people have been building for hundreds of years. “It's the best feeling in the world, compared to a modern building site where there are lots of power tools and you are working with treated timber. It's very quiet, all you can hear are the axes and adzes hewing. It's a real privilege to be able to continue this tradition and this craft that's been passed down for a really long time.”

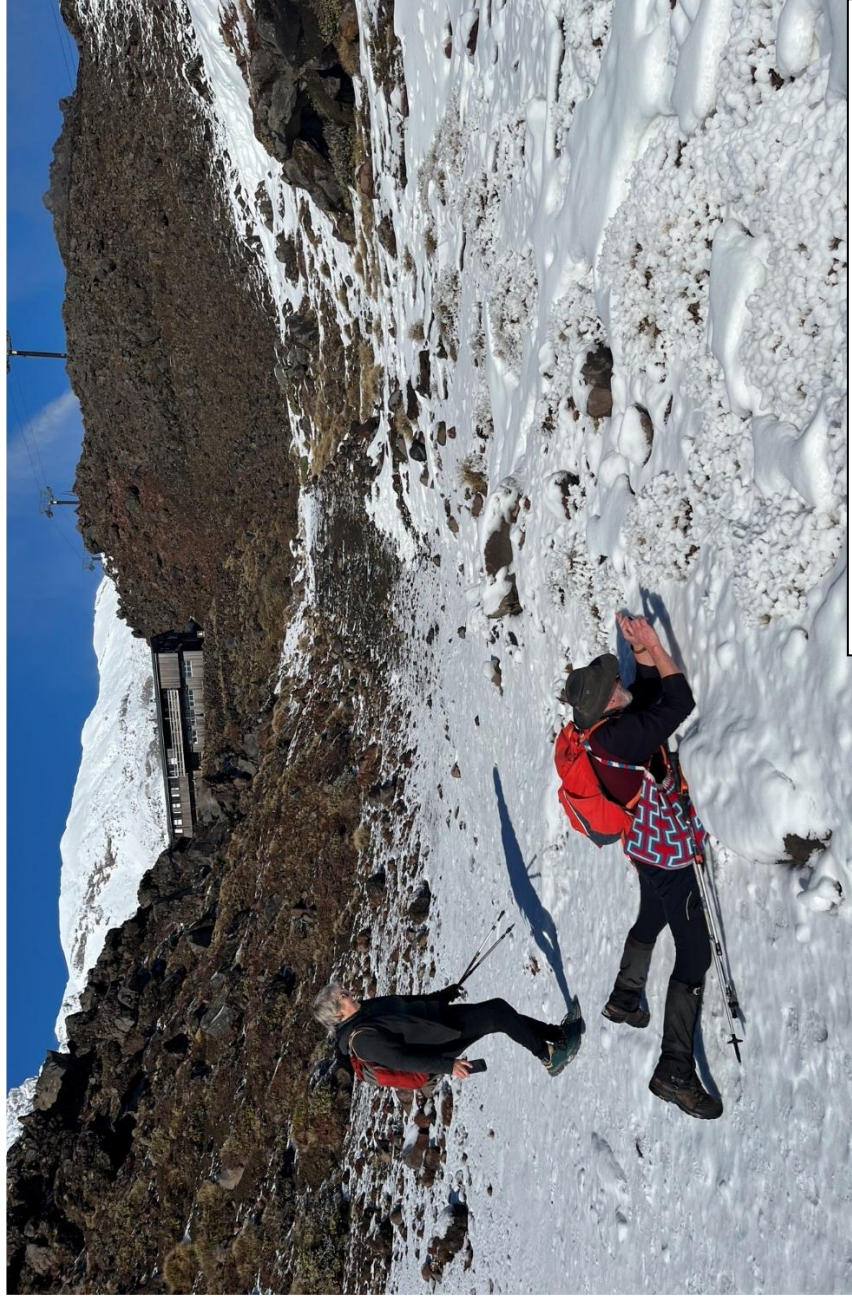


Layers of colours photo by Helen Mitchell



A sneaky kiss from Helen





Really getting down to it... photo by Allan Wickens

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