



# THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

**WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)**

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

June 2025



Round and round the brain Photo by Lynette Morris

# WAIKATO HUT

Your lodge on Mt Ruapehu  
Tongariro National Park



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Dominie Biv  
by Les Warren

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WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB

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Free to members

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

BULLETIN No 874

June 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>Website:</b>	Kat Rowe	<a href="mailto:wtcwebmanager@gmail.com">wtcwebmanager@gmail.com</a>
<b>Facebook:</b>	Lynette Morris	<a href="mailto:waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com">waikatotrampingclub@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 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2025**

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

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

**It's a double billing night this time.**

**Sherpa Wangda** is a Nepali guide and former drug addict who overcame addiction and successfully climbed Mount Everest. He now leads expeditions for others recovering from addiction and aims to climb the seven highest peaks of seven continents.

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.

**Social report:** On May 23<sup>rd</sup> Andrea & Graham Haines hosted another film evening to the delight of all of those 15 or so people present. After a lovely main course we sat back and enjoyed a short film about the birds to be seen along the Birdsville track. Just amazing. Some birds can also be seen elsewhere in Australia. Intermission saw us devouring a yummy dessert, tea or coffee, and cake. Then it was back for more film- this time about the mailman delivering goods along the Birdsville track back in 1954. With drought, flooding, big loads, sand and all the station residents along the way keeping track of his progress along the route we certainly learnt a lot about travelling in central Oz. This film was produced as a promo for the Royal Flying Doctor Service although there was very little mention of it when it came to action along the way.

And then we got to the June club night. This was the first celebration of the clubs' 75 years in existence, and 50 years of Waikato Hut in its' present form. If you weren't there you missed a great evening. Top marks to Allan Wickens for pulling it all together so well, and to Russell Lamb for assisting with getting the display boards sorted. There were some old and new photos, old & new stories and lots of laughter. After the usual trip descriptions were told it was on to a photo history from the huge collection Russell has of the club from its inauguration in May 1950, up to the tramp the previous weekend. A few longer term members told of their experiences with the club and the most memorable one for me was Nigels' story about taking the wrong tubers from a newspaper-wrapped packet in his garage for his tramp, only to find when he got home that he had taken dahlia bulbs and not the expected kumara. He declares they were still edible and tasty. Christine may have been a few flowers short in her garden the following season. Intermission this time saw us devour a superb array of baking, mulled wine and tea & coffee. Thanks to Jacqui & Roger for getting it laid out so nicely.

After supper we got going on another popular activity – an auction. Mike Peck made an excellent job as auctioneer and Dianne recorded the debts – er bids I mean. This time they worked well together and all but a couple of items and services were sold. See the snippets section for a nice pair of boots still available.

Total sum raised for Waikato Hut was \$522 and a \$5 donation also promised. Our treasurer now has a list of who owes how much. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to the fun of the evening. The party will continue at Waikato Hut over the Matariki weekend on June 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup>.



June club night by Allan Wickens

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2025

3187	14/15 Jun	E/M	Waihaha Hut & Waihora lagoon	Les Warren
3188	20-22 Jun	n/a	Matariki & 75 yrs	Allan Wickens
3189	29 Jun	E/M	Pirongia – Kahikatea	Miriam Bennett
	2 Jul		CLUB NIGHT	
3190	6 July		Mystery trip	Allan Wickens
3191	12-13 Jul	M/F	Snowcraft I	Allan Wickens/ Mike Peck
3192	20 July		Wharamaramara	Julia Lile
3193	27 July	M	Hotwater Beach	Sarah McLeay
3194	3 Aug	E/M	Coast to coast	John McArthur
	6 Aug		CLUB NIGHT	
3195	9/10 Aug	M/F	Snowcraft II	Allan Wickens/ Mike Peck
3196	16 or 17 Aug		OT navigation	Belinda Cooper
3197	23/24 Aug		tba	
3198	31 Aug		tba	
	3 Sept		Club night photo comp	Nicola Guy
3199	6/7 Sept		Winter tramp	Mike Peck
3200	14 Sept		Karioi	John McArthur
3201	20/21 Sept		Hauhangaroa track	Cathy Dickson

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 = Easy.</b>	Up to 4 hours per day, pace slower than E/M.
<b>E/M = Easy/Medium.</b>	Up to 5-6 hours/day, pace slower than M.
<b>M = Medium.</b>	Up to 6-7 hours/day, at standard walking pace.
<b>M/F = Medium/Fit.</b>	Up to 7-8 hours/day, pace faster than M.
<b>F = 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 3187**                      **Waihaha Hut & Waihora lagoon**                      **14/15 Jun**

Saturday we'll walk to Waihaha Hut (3hrs) for the night. Hut has only 10 bunks so tents will be needed. Could explore close to the Hut in the afternoon.

Sunday walk out same way and visit the Waihora Lagoon on the way home. More details tba.

**Leader:** Les Warren

**Ph:** 027 8644937

**Grade:** E/M

**Email:** warrenlb2017@outlook.com

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

Non-member: senior rate +\$10

## Trip 3188

## Matariki & WTC 75 yrs on

20-22 Jun

Over this long weekend, we will have three different celebrations combined, to make for an interesting and active 3 days.

Matariki, Friday 20 June this year, is a significant day of celebration in Maori culture, as Matariki is the Pleiades star cluster which rises in late June or early July. The rising marks the beginning of the new year in the Maori lunar calendar. Hopefully, this night will be clear so we can observe the seven stars in this cluster. We will have a special Matariki dinner on this day.

Waikato Tramping Club is 75 years old!

Yet another milestone has been achieved in our Club history. In 2021 we (belatedly due to Covid) had our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary a year later than planned. We did manage to have a rewarding get together at Pirongia Lodge, but many could not attend at that time. The 75<sup>th</sup> will be less involved but we will have walks based at our Ruapehu accommodation this time. Those unable to attend the 2021 event now have an opportunity to come and tramp or stroll with both old-time members and those new to the Club. (As an aside, for those unable to attend this event, we will hold a special Club Night at our usual meeting place in Hamilton on Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of June. We'll have old photos, memorabilia etc for those interested in catching up with past Club events and people).

Our Hut/Lodge had its major additions 50 years ago!

This is another important milestone. There are just a few members with us today, who helped with the major refit and gave our hut/lodge, the shape and size it is today. Thanks to the dedicated members we have a wonderful amenity that we can all share and of course there have been other significant upgrades up to now.

The programme:

There will be 3 nights of accommodation at our Lodge (Thursday-Friday-Saturday). On each of the 3 days, we plan to do several walks of different levels. If it snows, we may even have a chance to get to the crater using snowcraft skills. Otherwise, you can have a leisurely weekend based at the lodge. On Sunday, we leave earlier than normal and travel to Taumarunui where we will have lunch at a café and enjoy a talk from a local Maori woman well versed in the significance of Matariki to her people.

**Co-ordinator:** Allan Wickens

**Ph:** 027 950 9546

**Grade:** Sloth to fit

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

**Accommodation:** \$25 members and \$30 non-members. Book early to have a bunk in our hut. Late bookings will mean being allocated to a nearby hut.

**Food:** there will be a catered meal on Saturday night with mulled wine so a small cost will be involved – approx \$30pp.

**Transport:** Vans will be available (approx. \$60-member, \$70 non-member), otherwise private cars

**Food:** BYO dinner for Thursday night, a contribution to a potluck on Friday night, your own breakfasts, lunches/snacks, and alcoholic refreshments. Gear list and more info in follow-up group emails after registration

**Trip 3189****Pirongia Kahikatea Tree****29 June**

Our planned route is following the Nikau walk past the Kaniwhaniwha campsite, and up the Bell Track along the Blue Bull Stream.

A turn off just before a swing bridge will lead us to the notable 66.5 m Kahikatea tree. We may be able to cross the stream to get to the base of the tree before returning the same way.

We will detour to the caves on the return leg for a bit of an extra adventure, and pass the campsite again on the way out. Expect an undulating walk, with a bit of elevation change, and most likely some mud. DoC is making improvements around the Nikau walk track and the Kaniwhaniwha campsite in May so it will be a good chance to check out what has changed. Approx 12 km and 6 hours return.

**Leader:** Miriam Bennett**Ph:** 021 46420**Grade:** E/M**Email:** *miriamlbennett@gmail.com***Transport:** Senior member \$20 – 25

Non-member: senior rate +\$10

**Trip 3190****Mystery trip****9 Jul**

Where shall we go? This is truly going to be a mystery trip and you won't find out until the day where the trip leader plans to take you.

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

Non-member: senior rate +\$10

**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 and Instructor **Ph:** 027 9509546

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**

My trip will be on 27 July (day trip only) and will involve walking the Tarawera Trail from Hot Water beach. It is 15km and will take 5-6 hours. We will water taxi to the end of the track and walk back. There will be a share of travel to Rotorua and back. All details including how to book the water taxi closer to the date.

**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**

Our Snowcraft II course is for those who want to expand on the skills learnt on Snowcraft I. On the Saturday, we will traverse from Whakapapa to Turoa via the Mangaturuturu glacier. On the Sunday we will summit the peak of Te Heuheu. We'll stay at our club hut on the Friday and Saturday night. More details to be posted on the club website soon.

**Leaders:** Allan Wickens Co-Ordinator and Instructor

**Ph:** 027 9509546

Mike Peck: Principal Instructor

**Ph:** 021 369 256

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

**Grade:** M/F

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

**Transport:** Senior member \$tba

Non-member: senior rate+\$10

## *Editorial*

Every so often we look back at what we've done in our lives and use this introspection to change our opinion or even our behaviour. Judging by the photos shown at this last club night, we are still doing the same sorts of things, getting up to the same sort of mischief, and still liking the doing of it!. That certainly says something for the ethos of this club and how each member passes on some part of them to their successors. We never tire of hearing about funny things and tough experiences and new equipment and out of the way places to go do we? Nigels' kumaras (see the social column earlier in this bulletin) reminded me of the time I drove a 35-seater bus in to Pureora forest. There was a bit of a tight bend and a dip right in the middle of it. I decided not to drive that far but warned another driver on a subsequent visit not to do so either. He and another club member 'knew better' and went forward. Only to get the front and back ends of the bus stuck on the bend, unable to go backwards or forwards. Wish I had been there to laugh. A similar driving experience going to Fletcher Bay saw Margie Wilding being piggy-backed across a ford after all the passengers got out of the bus to enable the ford to be crossed without difficulty. We do have great times together don't we? And it is you who make it so. Thankyou to every for your camaraderie and sense of humour.

Dianne

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## *Presidential blog*

Thanks to Everyone for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration at our club night on Wednesday. It was great to learn more about the history of the club and to hear first-hand some anecdotes from some of our members who have made major contributions to the club's success.

In particular, I thought a comment from Graham Haines about how the average age of club members had slowly increased during his time in the club was worth investigating in the wider NZ context. So here is the result of a little dive into the topic including finding comments by John Wilson:

The golden age of tramping clubs lasted from the 1940s to the 1970s (Waikato Tramping Club started in 1950).

Most people joining during this period were in their teens or twenties.

By the 2000s many clubs had declining memberships and the average age of members increasing by the year.

Today, most New Zealand tramping clubs are dominated by the middle aged and older, and even new active members tend to be in their 40's or 50's.

One opinion is that clubs have made tramping appear boring, and club cultures are not as supportive as they could be of more youthful endeavours.

We can be proud that Waikato Tramping Club provides such a variety of trips for members that support and respect members of different abilities including offering ones with excitement and adventure.

However, we can always do better and would like to hear from our younger and more mature members on what more you would like from the club.

Many thanks, Rupert

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## *Ski club report*

Note that you have possibly missed the chance to get reduced price season tickets. The ski committee will be organising hut custodians this year so if you're keen to help out, please get in touch with Ashley. Rates for tramping club members will be the same as for ski club members so this is a great time to take advantage of snow conditions to practice your above the bushline skills and get some superb photos for the competition coming up in September – see the snippets section below.

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## Trip Reports

**Trip 3125**

**Kakepuku**

**26 May, 2024**



A wet wander in Yarndleys' bush

Photo by Lynette Morris

The weather forecast for showers didn't deter 8 keen trampers from participating in this trip. Transport was by carpooling and the group met at the carpark at the start of the track at 9.15am. The climb to the summit took us one hour 15 mins.

The mountain has a fine remnant of original forest and as we walked up the track, the sunlight filtered through the luxuriant foliage. Unfortunately, there was a chilly southwester at the lookout which wasn't conducive to enjoying the views or studying the information boards. However, the group photographs were taken and we retreated to a sheltered lookout down the track for morning tea. It was pleasant sitting in the sun with our Thermos flasks discussing where we may like to go for our social lunch. There was an interesting find as we walked down the mountain; a frog on the track. It was identified as a green and golden bell frog native to eastern Australia.



Golden Bell frog

Photo by Lynette Morris

The group decided to have lunch at Stallions, Te Awamutu. The meals were enjoyed by everyone and the 'roast of the day' is highly recommended. It was very tempting to settle in for the afternoon as the fire was going and there was plenty of interesting conversation. However, another walk beckoned and we finished the day with a walk through Yarndeleys Bush. This kahikatea swamp forest is like stepping back in time and is well worth a visit. This trip was a most enjoyable day out, with the exercise, fine food and good company benefitting everyone. Those on



the trip were: Lynette, Cathy, Mike, Julia, Jim, Judith, Ross. And me David (the trip scribe). A special thanks to Lynette for her leadership, and to the drivers; Lynette, Julia and Ross.

### **Trip 3170**

### **Tongariro by Night**

**22 Feb**

Lynette was initially down to lead this trip but, due to a skiing accident, I offered to lead this trip with the help of John McArthur. We ended up with 11 keen members keen to tackle something different. As we were primarily walking at night, it was decided to travel down to our start point at Mangatepopo Carpark in the afternoon, walk the Crossing, then travel back home. Before we set off, the leaders made the decision to walk as far as Crater Lake and return. This was due to a large group and the difficulty in arranging drivers for drop-off and pick-ups. In hindsight, this was a good decision as the further we walked and climbed the weather became cold and very windy.

After arriving at the carpark around 7.30pm, we started our walk around 8.15pm. Headlamps were not required until we got close to Soda springs. As we started climbing to the South Crater, the wind started coming in. We had a short toilet/snack break at the start of South Crater. We continued to walk along South Crater and climb up above Red Crater, the wind got stronger, and the weather cooled down a lot. At the high point of 1868m, due to the exposed conditions, we quickly started our return back to the carpark.

Here we changed into warm clothes and headed for home. By now it was about 2am and we hoped there was something open in Turangi for a hot breakfast but had no luck. Surely something in Taupo would be open. Again, no luck. I think, we just got something at the Service Station.

I recall we arrived back in Hamilton in time for our usual meeting time for a day trip. On the trip: Les (Co-leader & scribe), Allan W, Ian L, Gary Mc, David S, Kevin B, Weiwei, John Mc, Lynley M, Judith B and Atsuki.

### **Trip 3171**

### **Kawekas**

**27 Feb-2 Mar**



The first rest stop - during the ascent  
photo by Les Warren

Thursday night saw us camping near the Mohaka River, the fit group of six were dropped off at the Makahu Saddle carpark.

After some quick preparations and the traditional group photos, we were off for our long steep ascent to the Kaweka Range to Kaweka (1724m) and North Kaweka (1707m).

We took the track via Dominie Biv. It soon started clouding over the tops and become windy and cool. After a short break at the Dominie Biv we continued the slog up to the Range.



Another rest stop with a 'view'

photo by Les Warren

Reaching a saddle, and as the weather was not ideal, plus having to take longer than expected to reach the top, we decided our best option was to head to Ballard Hut for the night. We also decided not to take a side trip to Kaweka (1724m). Although we had to descend quite a bit to the Hut, it was at least in the right direction to Mangatainoka Hot Springs.

Travel along the Kaweka Range and past North Kaweka (1707m) was a bit easier going. After reaching the track junction to Ballard Hut, we dropped down to the Hut for a most welcome nights rest.

Next day, Saturday, the weather was much better. And so, began our ascent back to the track junction below Whetu (1650m) and follow the ridgeline until we came to the track junction to Makino Hut.



.... and a final rest stop at the Mangatainoka hot springs.

Photo by Les Warren

From here, we turned left and descended a spur down to the Makino River where we followed a well-marked bait track to the Te Puia Track then onto the Mangatainoka Hot Springs and the famous curry meal for dinner. With a late arrival we were welcomed by our other group. After a good night's sleep, Sunday arrived and our walk out to the carpark and the journey back home. The fit group was - Steve D (Leader), Les W (scribe), John Mc, Dale H, Sarah Mc and Ian L

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**Trip 3174****Waitawheta****16 Mar**

We left Hamilton around 8am and travelled to the start of the Waitawheta Tramway Track on the way to Waihi. After a long period of closure due to Kauri dieback the track had been re-opened in early March. We had a party of 5 from Hamilton and then one other joined us at the start of the track. The tramway track is approx. 10km each way, is relatively flat and, for the most part, in good condition. However there was to be some maintenance scheduled to be carried out at the northern end in the week after we walked the track. We had morning tea beside the river sitting on some large old concrete blocks from past mining history. Along the way there was a replica logging bogie which shows how the kauri were transported along the tramline and down the valley. We chose to take the slightly shorter option not far from the hut and cross the river. This was an easy relatively dry boot crossing with the river levels low, however in rain the longer route might be a better option. Lunch at the Waitawheta hut, then we returned the same way. All up including our lunch stop the walk took 5 hours 45 minutes. This is a very good walk for those looking for a relatively easy day out. Group members: Julia, Judith, Kevin, Penny, Miriam and Wendy

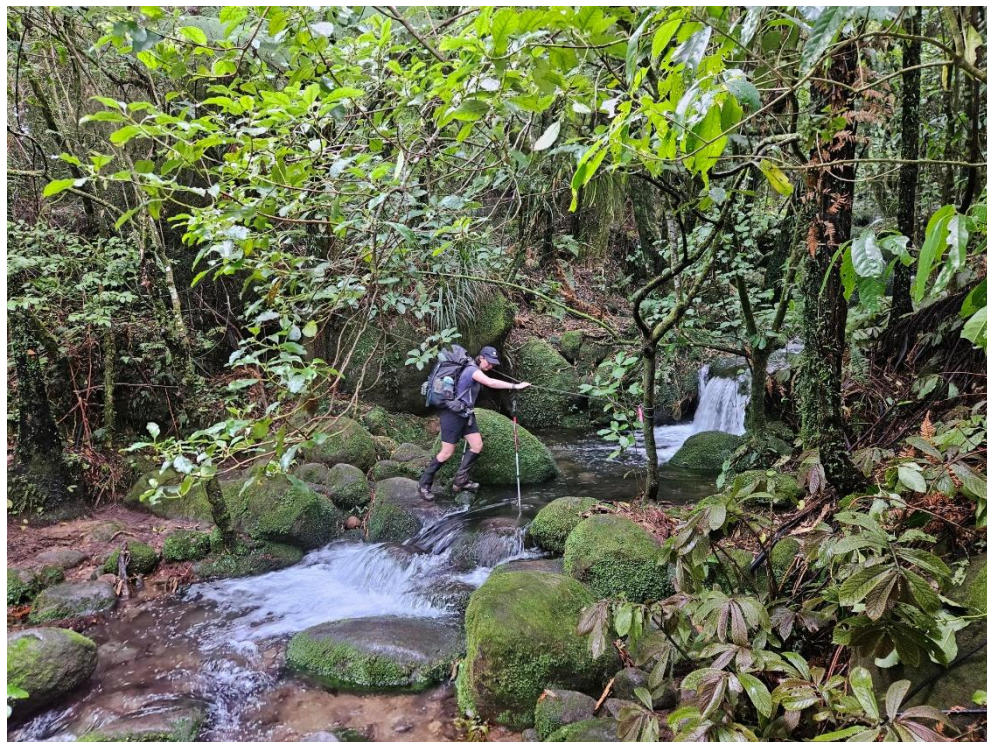
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**Trip 3182****Te Whare Okioki****10/11 May**

"You're the only one signed up" said John, "how keen are you to do this trip." Um mm, I really wanted to see if I can sleep in a tent in May" I replied. "Well, in that case, how about a slight change in plans. We can go to the Mangamuka hut, I'll sleep in the hut and you can go and test yourself in a tent." The plan was set. Off we went, a later start. A warm afternoon across farmland and we met our first stream to cross. "It's a bit more than last time" announced John as he borrowed a pole to cross. A solid grunt up the hill and we had reached the turn-off for the hut. "Uh oh, a boot print" said John, "I hope I don't have to sleep in my tent too." Across the plateau we went, crossing streams and following the boot print, questioning, is it fresh? How many people? Are they at the same hut? We wondered as we climbed around, over and under fallen trees. At last, we reached the hut. The door was open, a pair of crocs were inside... but with luck we were the only occupants. With my tent up, and John with his bed in the hut were both set for a pleasant night.

Scribe: Miriam





Crossing the last stream

photo by John McArthur

### **Trip 3184     Waikawau - Leitch's Clearing & Mahoenui Track     24/25 May**

The Waikawau track is listed on DoC signage and website as 7 hours from the Crawford Road end at Waikawau to Leitch's Hut. This is misleading - it took our experienced party closer to 10.5 hours to complete. The first section of the track has a blockage from a slip and you need to go down the 4WD track crossing the river a few times before heading back on the track itself into the bush. For around an hour this section, the track had been recently cleared, was relatively straight forward and well-marked. From where the track clearing ended was a lot more difficult with tree fall and locating the track, markers were very scarce. Approx. 6 hours later we got to the other end of the Waikawau track where clearing had been done so that sped things up. By then it was dark and we were using headlamps. We then got onto the Mangatoa track and on to Leitch's hut by 8:45pm, aside from a few river crossings this end of the walk was relatively straight forward. The hut is in excellent condition and fire working well to keep things warm. The next day heading out via Mahoenui Track was good. The track was easy to find and still in good condition with work that had been done by the club last year. The blackberry at the southern end of the track is getting bigger, which will be problematic in the future if not controlled. Overall the Mahoenui Track is getting enough use that it is well defined.

## *From the committee table:*

**New Members:** Welcome to Falcone Tseng, Richard & Ciele Everson, and Alexander Poole.

**Resignations:** Michael Webb

**Membership:** The club has 184 tramping members.

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## *Snippets*

➤ Upgrades for two popular Coromandel DoC sites. Work will begin soon to improve the **Pinnacles Hut and nearby Summit Track**, meaning the hut will be off-limits to the public until June 21. The 80-bunk Pinnacles Hut in the Kauaeranga Valley was built in 1994, and is one of DoC's busiest with 15,000 bed nights per year.

The Summit Track, which is accessed from the Pinnacles Hut, will also undergo work, including installing boardwalks and improving drainage to prevent the spread of kauri disease. The track will be closed to the public from 7am Monday to 3pm on Friday, but will be available for weekend walkers. The track upgrade project is expected to be completed by June 21. *From Stuff 7 May 2025*

➤ **Future of the Chateau Tongariro.** It has been sitting empty and derelict for the last two years, and there are still no concrete plans for its future. The 96-year-old building closed in 2023 after being deemed "very high risk" after a seismic assessment. Once it closed its doors, the hotel's operator, Malaysian-based company Kah Corporation Ltd, passed on the responsibility of the building to the Department of Conservation, which owns the land the building sits on. The Government has recently completed an Expressions of Interest process to determine whether there was any fresh market interest in the building. Maintenance currently costs taxpayers around \$2m per year. Demolition is another option that has been considered by government. However, Whakapapa Holdings, which runs and operates the Whakapapa Ski Field, is interested in running the building as a hotel again. In January, its director, Tom Elworthy, said that the Chateau was an integral part of the tourism offering around the Whakapapa Village and the national park area. "It's quite a material number of beds during the off season for the summer tourism operation both on the mountain but also the Tongariro Crossing and mountain biking," he said. *Source: Stuff 3 June 2025*

### ➤ **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:

1. Above bushline with no human element



2. Above bushline with a human element
3. Below bushline with no human element
4. Below bushline with a human element
5. Historic
6. Native flora, fauna and fungi
7. Long exposure

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

8. Club Character - features a humorous subject  
which has a club context
9. 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.



For sale: a very nice pair of boots that will fit someone who wears size 7.5. They are in good condition. Price is negotiable with the \$\$ going towards Waikato Hut. Contact Dianne 07 8433066

.....*from FMC*.....

➤ Auckland Council has opened a consultation on a long-awaited Deed of Acknowledgement with local iwi Te Kawerau ā Maki and Ngāti Whātua for the **Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area**—an important step toward reopening tracks closed since 2018 due to kauri protection measures. While FMC supports the process, we’re urging all parties to streamline the next steps so the long-delayed Recreation and Track Plan can finally move forward. Check our website to learn more.

➤ We’ve also been advised by DoC that plans to **introduce charges for basic and bivvy huts** from 2025/26 are on hold, to first understand the implications of a review of the visitor network that is underway, including impacts on basic and bivvy huts.

➤ **NZ Mountain Film and Book Festival!** We are again excited to support this event, which will run in Wānaka from June 20 to 24 and in Queenstown from June 26 to 27. If you're unable to attend the festival, you can bring the films to your town and raise money for your club! The festival’s national tour shows in cinemas, club rooms and school halls right around the country, starting 1 August 2025. If you'd like to bring the tour to your town, see the instructions on the festival's website.

➤ Whitewater New Zealand, one of our member clubs, is leading opposition against Taheke 8C's fast-track application for a **hydro scheme on the Kaituna River**. International paddlers, NZ Olympians, iwi, and environmental groups have united to protect this world-class paddling destination in the Bay of Plenty.

The developers recently reapplied after previous rejection. The fast-track process severely limits public input with no full notification period. If the referral application succeeds (approximately 100 working days), an expert panel will make the final decision with limited stakeholder consultation. Whitewater NZ is coordinating opposition through multiple channels, working with local boards, government ministers, affected iwi groups, and downstream river users to weaken this referral application.

➤ Alongside other outdoor groups, we've been celebrating changes announced in early April to the **Health and Safety at Work Act 2015**, which clarifies that landowners won't be held responsible for injuries sustained by people engaging in outdoor activities on their land.

➤ FMC warmly congratulates the **Auckland Tramping Club** as they celebrate their **100th anniversary** this year. To mark the occasion, ATC has published *100 Years with Boots and Pack*—a beautifully compiled book that shares the club's rich history through photos, stories, and reflections. Official celebrations will take place in October—visit their [website](#) for details on how to join in.

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....from DoC.....

The Stakeholders Association has issued a press release expressing concern at irregularities in the process of issuing the concession. These irregularities may have lasting consequences for skiing on Mt Ruapehu.

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If the cap fits.... the test dummy demonstration photo by Allan Wickens

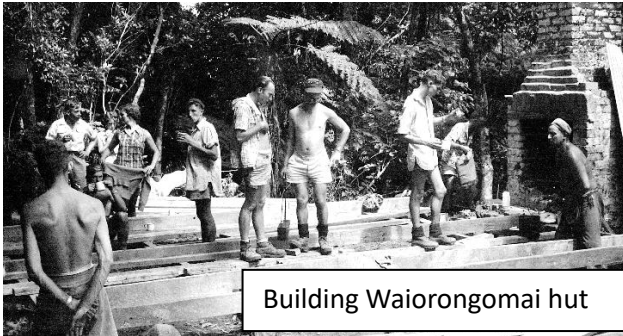


The lo(n)g walk

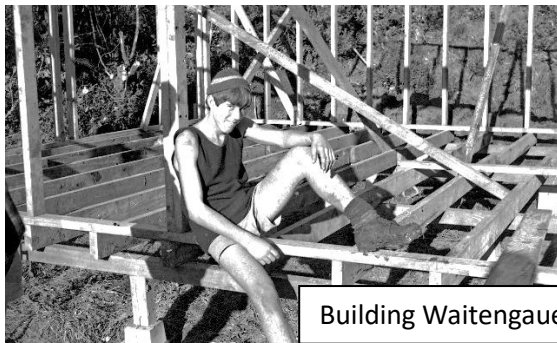
photo by John Wilson

Entry in the 2024 club photo competition – below the bushline with human element





Building Waiorongomai hut



Building Waitengaue hut



The original Waikato Hut



Waikato Hut in 2015



