



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

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May 2025

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A favourite treat on tramping trips but heck! Photo by Allan Wickens

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Tomtit photographed
by Jacqui Dick

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WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB

P. O. Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • www.wtc.org.nz

Free to members

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

BULLETIN No 873

May 2025

General Committee

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

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**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  |

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Ski Subcommittee

Ski email: waikatoski@gmail.com

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

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|                                     |                                                                    |             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Facebook:</b>                    | Jacqui Dick                                                        | 021 1375201 |
| <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  |

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

Club Night: Wednesday 4th June, 2025

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

Door opens at 6.30pm, and the meeting starts at 7.30pm. Please bring a plate of nibbles or dessert to share.

Join us to celebrate 75years of the clubs' existence, and 50 years of the current Waikato Hut. There will be a slide show, and an auction - if you have any items or services you would like to donate to the auction they would be most welcome. This will be a great opportunity to chat with past and present members, re-live some great experiences and celebrate our successes over the years. All proceeds from the evening will go towards Waikato Hut.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2025

3183	18 May	M	Rangitoto Is	Les Warren
3184	24/25 May	M	Waikawau – Leitch's hut	Julia Lile/ Judith Bogle
3185	31 May-2 Jun	M/F	Ruahines	Judith Bogle
	4 June		CLUB NIGHT	Allan & Jacqui
3186	8 June	E/M	Mokaihaha track	Selwyn June
3188	20-22 Jun	n/a	Matariki & 75 yrs	Allan Wickens
3189	29 Jun	E/M	Pirongia – Kahikatea	Miriam Bennett
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	Auckland coast to coast	John McArthur
3195	9/10 Aug	M/F	Snowcraft II	Allan Wickens/ Mike Peck
3196	16 or 17 Aug		OT navigation	Belinda Cooper

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

TIME and FITNESS GUIDELINES

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

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

Bookings and Cancellations: no later than the **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.

Trip Descriptions

Trip 3183

Rangitoto Is

18 May

NOTE: This trip is now a day trip. I am looking at doing a separate weekend trip to Motutapu Island, later in the year.

Ferry to Rangitoto Island

We will use Fullers360 Ferry. Individuals must **book their own ferry** return trip leaving the downtown terminal at 0915hrs, Pier 13 & 14 and returning from Rangitoto Island at 4pm. This will give us a good 5hrs on the Island. Departure time from Hamilton will be included in the group emails closer to the time.

Walks on Rangitoto Island

There are a few longer walks but, probably the main one we would do is the walk up to the Summit. There is a side walk to the Lava Caves we can include. There are also some shorter walks close to Rangitoto Wharf – Kowhai Grove and Kidney Fern Glen.

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: E/M

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Trip 3184

Waikawau to Leitch's clearing

24/25 May

We will travel to Waikawau leaving Hamilton early Saturday morning (approx. 1.40hr drive). We begin the trip following the Waikawau Track, a mix of 4WD

Transport: Senior Member \$65-75 Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

This trip is in the Ruahines between Traverse (A-Frame) Hut – Bottom point Longview/Makaretu Hut Tk - Longview Hut – Top point. If you are up for a surprise as to where you will be going this is the trip for you. I am getting the new leaders to formulate a trip in this area and the one they agree upon will be the route we take. It will be part of a training session of going where we have not done a recce in. Be aware that this trip will be in steep country and there is a high possibility of river crossings or walking up rivers. You will need to be prepared that it will be cold.

Grade: M

Email: *judith.bogle@outlook.com*

Transport: tba

8 Jun

This trip comprises three short walks in the Mamaku–Rotorua district. Passing Mamaku village we reach the Mokaihaha Ecological Area for a 1.5 hr walk in tall, unlogged podocarp forest. The track leads us past the small, ephemeral Lake Rotohokakoha. In this forest pest control is undertaken by volunteers and DoC. Not surprising it is home to kōkako and kākā, kererū, kārearea (falcon), kākārīki (yellow-crowned parakeet) and pōpokotea (whitehead) along with the more common native bush birds. A census of kōkako undertaken in May 2022 recorded 71 pairs and 10 territorial singles.

Next stop is Dansey Road Scenic Reserve where we do a short forest walk beneath the zipline run by Rotorua Canopy Tours.

The final walk is up Mt Ngongotaha for views over Rotorua. The first part of the track follows an easy grade through unlogged native bush which features a large rata tree (40 m tall with a 1.8 m girth) with a viewing platform. It continues on the *Mt Ngongotaha Nature Loop Track*. Once the Jubilee Track is reached the walk becomes moderately steep until near the summit. 2.4 km return.

And here we are close to the food and drink outlets of the city!

Leader: Selwyn June

Ph: 0274 978151

Grade: E

Email: selwynjune@xtra.co.nz

Transport: Senior member \$20 – 25 Senior non-member +\$10

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

Senior 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 70th 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 75th 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 4th 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* (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.

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

Food: 2 dinners (potluck FRIDAY NIGHT) plus 3 breakfasts. Details later and you may have to bring your own lunch/walking food (tba). 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 Bill 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 Senior non-member +\$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).

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

Transport: Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

Water Taxi: \$35 pp

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## *Editorial*

In spite of what seemed like low numbers of attendees at the AGM, the enthusiasm for running the club and then going out into the countryside has not waned. What a great state for the club to be in after 75 years of existence. I have every bulletin we have ever produced and the minutes from those early days and they make great reading. If you wish to read them too, please get in touch. The celebration for our 70<sup>th</sup> reunion was somewhat stymied by Covid in 2020 so we had a 71<sup>st</sup> in 2021 instead but many were unable to attend. At the next club night in June we will endeavour to have a wee party to make up for it – especially for those who couldn't attend back then. I will be sending out this bulletin to everyone who was on the list of past and present members at that time. Part of the celebrations at the club night will be displays of photos, particularly Waikato Hut, and an auction. The auction we had in November last year was such disorganised fun that Allan feels we should repeat it and I agree. So come along with good intentions, any items or services you can offer you would like to donate to the auction, and a plate of nibbles to share. It is bound to be a fun evening so we thought we should open the doors at 6.30pm at the Cathedral, if this proves possible. Contacts can be myself or Allan Wickens whose contact details are on the frontispiece of this bulletin.

I am endeavouring to catch up on ensuring all trips get a report in the bulletin and below are the first few I have received. Reading them is always useful to future leaders but also those who were on the trip at the time. If you were delegated to write a report please do so. It doesn't need to be a long epistle- even a paragraph can describe the trip. Photos help build the atmosphere.

Dianne

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Presidential blog

After another successful AGM, it is fitting to recognise the tremendous work of our General Committee and Tramping and Ski Sub-Committees in keeping our club operating smoothly. And of course, to all of you for being club members and sharing our passion for exploring the incredible New Zealand outdoors. Special thanks to all our trip leaders both old and new who have had the vision for their trips and were willing to share that experience with others.

Many thanks to the general committee members, Dorothy Cawdron (Secretary), Guy Domett (Treasurer), John McArthur (VP Tramp), Les Warren, Allan Wickens

and Selwyn June (Tramp Representatives) and Steven Phillips, Ashley Hoskin (Ski Representatives), and Judith Bogle (Past President)

Thanks to the other members of the Tramping sub-committee: Jocelyn Widmer (membership), David Totman (Social), and the Ski sub-committee: Mary Reed, Michael Barker, and David MacDonald.

A very special mention for John McArthur who has stepped down as Vice President Tramping after 15 years on the committee. And to Les Warren who has stepped down as Tramping Club Captain after three years.

And finally, congratulations to our new Ski Vice President (Ashley Hoskin), Tramping Vice President (Judith Bogle) and Tramping Club Captain (Mike Peck).

Rupert

Ski club report

We recently saw some significant progress for the 2025 ski season.

On April 30th DoC granted a new 10-year concession to Whakapapa holdings.

We now have a new operator to manage the Ski field operations, With season pass sales starting May 12th. This provides new energy, fresh direction and some certainly for the future.

To coincide with this, Waikato Ski has announced a low membership rate of \$50 for senior ski members. This matches the tramping club rate and so tramping club members will be able to stay at the Hut at the members' rates. This is intended to encourage use by all our members. We need increased bed nights at the Hut this season to cover our increasing costs, for example the hut insurance and other expenses. The current committee endorsed the lower rates without changing the 1 night rate to keep us competitive with others on the mountain.

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 Hut. Summer booking rates apply until June.

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'n Travel. He gifted some money for the Hut which we can use for maintenance.

I would like to acknowledge the Ski committee who help keep the facility running; Mary, Stephen, Michael, Nicola, Dorothy and David. Thanks also to David and Allan who ran a very successful mountain festival.

You have been provided a report in the AGM bulletin.

A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.

Trip Reports

Trip 3106

Wilkin River and Lakes

27 Feb- 8 March, 2024

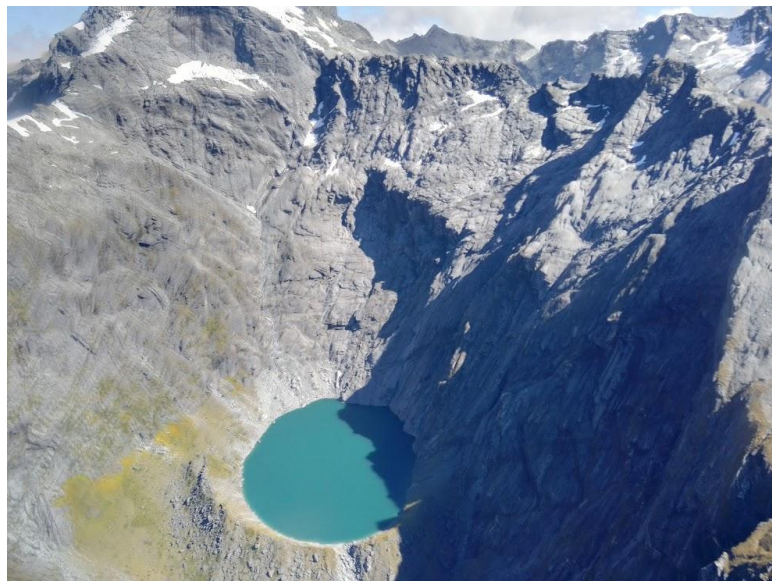
Flying into Jumboland gave us beautiful views of the mountains and rivers. A wonderful start to our tramp. The pilot said that it was best to avoid the hilly knob on the true left of the river and to cross over once passed the knob. I had been to river crossing training a few years ago but this was the real McCoy. After a leisurely 3 hours we unpacked and settled into Top Forks Hut. Still fresh and eager, we set off for Lake Diana which entailed a rather grunty steep climb. A couple of young trampers arrived at the hut who were also keen to see lake Diana and Lake Lucidus, so we were enticed to carry on to Lake Lucidus. What a spectacular sight!! So worth the effort.

Because we were told that the track to Lake Castalia was not maintained we were not keen to go over the same ground as the previous day. Three other trampers were planning on going over Rabbit Pass, so on day two we went exploring along that track. After one and half hours of steady uphill through beech forest the track came out into the open. However, this turned into an unpoled route along a very narrow overgrown ledge with a steep drop off. There were spectacular views of the mountains. After half an hour of struggling along this narrow route we decided it was too dangerous so after a break and sit down we decided to head back to the hut. We were up early the next day for the walk back to Kerin Forks Hut. In hindsight the decision to follow the official track and go over the Knob was a mistake.



Photographer unknown

This little knob is extremely steep both going up and down. I would advise trampers to avoid this, if possible. The rest of the track was littered with fallen trees and branches which made it very slow going.



Lake Crucible

Photo by Lois Rowell

We crossed the river three or four times linking together **and another few times** individually. By this time, I felt I had served my apprenticeship. At four o'clock we decided to camp for the night as

Kerin Forks Hut was several hours further on. After a wash in the stream we sat on rocks soaking up the afternoon sun. Idyllic.

Packing up our wet tents to a fine morning we set off for Kerin Forks Hut and Wilkin River Jet Boat. We arrived right on time at 12.30pm for the jet boat. Only to be told the predicted weather bomb would arrive on Monday and that the jet boat would not be able to take us out on Monday as planned. We took the sensible option of coming out to Makarora that day. The following morning was brilliant and sunny (the day we would have been walking to Lake Crucible).

Not to be thwarted, we managed to get a flight up to Siberia and then over Crucible Lake. We had this magnificent view of the lake, but not the way we expected. A thoroughly enjoyable trip meeting many interesting fellow trampers. Helen, Colin and Lois

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## Trip 3163

## Pirongia

12 Jan

The plan was simple; drive to the end of O'Shea Road at the back of Pirongia town, and climb the hill. It worked.

The weather was beautiful, chatty atmosphere, the walk up through the farm was fine and the bush was beautiful, with a good bit of bird song. The gradient of the track through the bush starts off comfortable but gets steeper and more need for hand-holds and tricky mud-slippery step-ups as you get close to the top. We came



out to the peak of Wharauroa in sunshine and with a great view in front of us. Time for lunch on the rocky knoll looking out on the Waikato. Some of the team then took the short but gnarly trip up to Mahaukura before returning and off down the hill we went. That was that, just time to stop at Pirongia for an icecream and then home. Great company; Kevin, Miles, Lynley, John and Julie and another John.

## Trip 3166

## Waiorongomai

2 Feb

John Wilson, a long-time member of the Waikato Tramping Club, led this day trip to the Waiorongomai area on the southern flanks of Mount Te Aroha. He wanted to see what had happened to the site of the WTC hut that existed in the valley between 1954, and 1980 when it burnt down.

Fortunately, it was a brilliantly fine day, which made for a very pleasant walk over a few hours. On the way to the old hut site, John came across a kauri that he remembered from his walks in the area in the 1960's. A photo of him hugging this tree is featured on the cover of the February *Bulletin*. On arrival at the hut site, all that was evident was the remains of the fireplace, covered in vegetation. This fireplace was a remnant of the old gold mining days and formed the base for the hut's creation. There is little evidence of a track to and from the hut site and at one stage there was a little bit of "bush-bashing" to find the correct path. After lunch, the group split into two, with some taking on the Butlers Incline track while others opted for an easy walk out.



John Wilson pointing out the site

photo by Allan Wickens

The latter group enjoyed a pleasant swim in the shallows of Waiorongomai Stream before all headed home, having the obligatory ice cream in Te Aroha on the way. Thanks John, for a great day out, with lots of interesting stories about his travels in this area over the years. A total of 13 went on this trip.

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**Trip 3180      Kaiwhakauka track to the Bridge to Nowhere      25-27 Apr**

This trip was run on ANZAC weekend, starting from a night at National Park (Waimarino) we awoke to a brilliant ANZAC day and proceeded to Raetihi where we joined 'hundreds' of young folk preparing to kayak the Wanganui. Our shuttle took us to Whakahoro and the Blue Duck station - coffee of course.

Once everyone had had the mandatory coffee we set off along the Kaiwhakauka track which is a cycle / walking track so no technical challenge, just keep the legs going. We came across a sign down to a waterfall, the Blue Duck Falls and explored... finding not only a waterfall but a few kayaks and a steep sided ravine - more exploring. From that excitement, and back on the track we walked on another 6km or so to the Mosley camp where we pitched tents and enjoyed the shelter and toilet facilities. Jim got us all collecting firewood and we soon had a nice fire going to warm us (one side) before going off to bed.

(Kiwi calling in the night).



The chasm

photo by Allan Wickens

The following morning we compared notes on who snored, who could be heard miles away ... same culprits, and having settled that, and breakfast, we were on our way. The track is fairly boring along this section (from the waterfall) so it was interesting to see the activity in one farm (Cootes) where a large rock is inscribed to the memory of the farmers who worked the area. More surprises when we climbed up to the Mangapurua trig (4WD / Quad track) and found a very well presented ANZAC Memorial, complete with fresh wreaths and the flag flying.



Photo by Allan Wickens

The information board gave us the names of the 40 returned servicemen from WW1 who had worked the valley we were about to enter on our way down to the Bridge - and the memorial and fresh wreaths made the next two days much more poignant as an ANZAC weekend of remembrance.

We met a young Canadian woman doing the Te Araroa northbound and three cyclists at this point. Day two continued down the 'road' past many simple markers indicating the land various families attempted to farm.



Photo by Jim Scott



We had lunch at Johnson camp, where there is a mighty pear tree and rustic camping facilities (available to all), and continued on through dramatic country of cliffs cut by the river. All the more dramatic when you consider the men who cut the road as part of their contract with the Government.

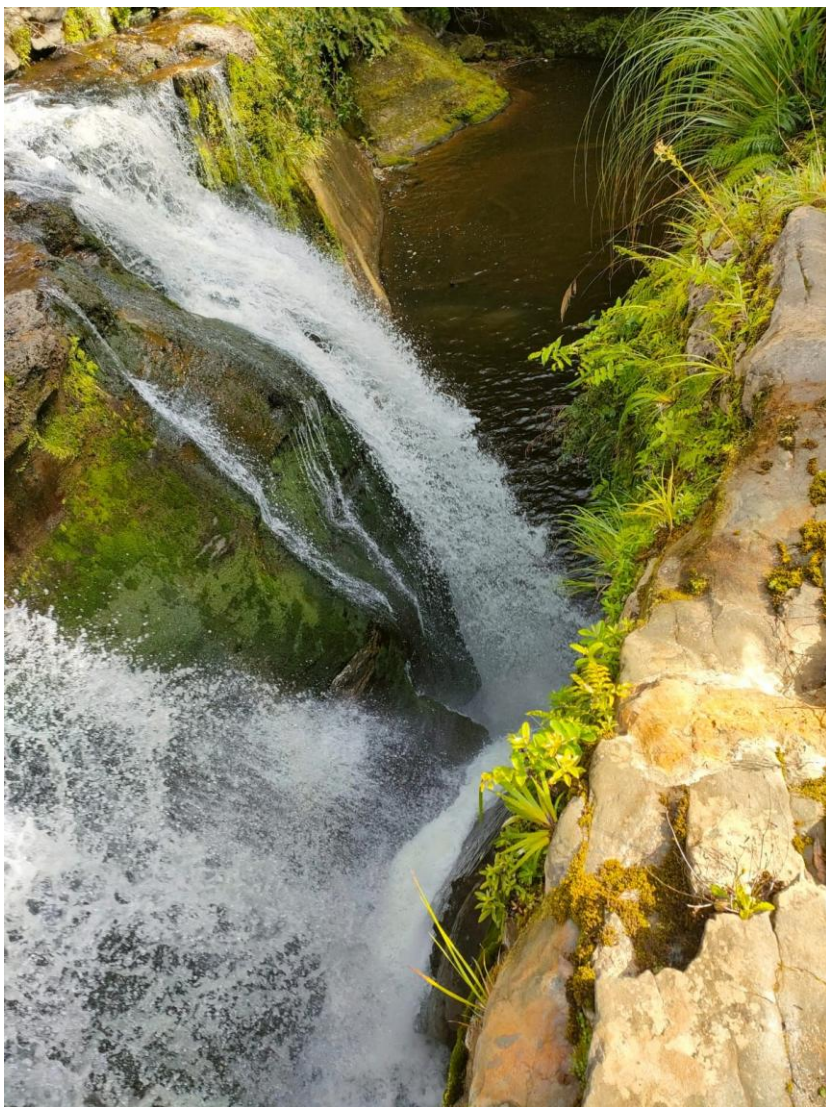


Photo by Gary

Next camp was to be Hellowell but there was no water so we moved on to a small flat with a creek and settled for the night there. Day three started with about 5km of similar track, with some more dramatic cliffs, to the Bridge to Nowhere where we watched fish/eels feeding on the bread / wrap

we dropped. It was a beautiful sunny day, with bush clad hills and a canyoned river under the bridge.



Photo by Allan Wickens

The jet boat driver gave us a very interesting talk on the history of the establishment of the valley, the lives of the men, women and families and the ultimate betrayal of their dreams by the Government.

We also learned that 50 or 60 cars had driven to the Ruatiti road end so the people could walk and Quad bike up to the ANZAC Memorial to pay their respects to these service men and the families. **LEST WE FORGET**

Thank you Judith for leading, Beatrix, Cathy, Jim, Gary and John.

~~~~~

Trip 3181

Mt William Walkway & Vivian Falls

4 May

On a perfect autumn day, a group of six, travelled to Puketutu Road, east of Pokeno, for the start of this popular short tramp. From there, it took about an hour of walking over undulating farmland, to the summit of Mount William (373 metres). There are two options on how to get to the summit. One is the way the group started, and the other is from McMillan Road, off SH2 (Pokeno to Coromandel Road). Both take about the same time. With clear views to a distant Sky Tower in downtown Auckland and a 360-panorama taking in the Hunua Range -Coromandel-north Waikato and Manukau Harbour, it made for a rewarding vista. Allan left the group at the summit and backtracked to the car we came in. Once at the McMillan Road entrance, he walked up through the bush and met up with the others.



Atop Mt. William

photo by Allan Wickens

After a morning tea break at Pokeno, followed shortly after by a lunch stop at the Waikato River, it was off to Tuakau and the nearby Vivian Falls. Set in the Harker Reserve near Onewhero, this is a short walk of about 20 minutes return to the falls itself, from Miller Road. However, the group did an extra 20 minutes each way by walking a loop track through some very delightful bush. Vivian Falls is known as *Te Wai Heke O Maoa* by Maori. From the Onewhero website *"The 12m high Te Wai Heke O Maoa (Vivian) Falls, were named after Maoa who in the 1700's would test the courage of his warriors by ordering them to dam the falls at the top and then lie in the stream below at the bottom. Once they were positioned, he would release the water to pour over them and if the warriors held their position, he took it as a sign they would be successful in battle"*.

On returning to Pokeno, the group enjoyed an ice cream at the two very popular shops that sit side-by-side, and which compete in offering the biggest such delight. No-one in the group was keen to take on more than a two-scooper, with up to 12-scoops on the one ice cream cone on offer! - see cover picture. John Wilson led this enjoyable day out, accompanied by Allan Wickens, Marion F, Peter A, Jeanette B and Kevin B.

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### ***From the committee table:***

**New Members:** Welcome to Chris Howell, Rebecca Brown, Brenda Crook.

**Resignations:** Bev & Andrew Hooegeveen, William Geoghegan.

**Membership:** The club has 188 tramping members.

~~~~~

Outdoor Training Courses

Bushcraft Course: Theory 21st May (7-9pm in person), Practical: Sat 24th May (8am - 3pm, Mangakaraa Nature Walk area, Pirongia, off Grey Road).

This course is designed to provide some fundamental knowledge, skills and confidence for people to be able to enjoy more safely a one-day or overnight hike and for those who might like to teach these skills in the future (e.g: Scout leaders, Duke of Ed volunteers, Outdoor Ed teachers etc). It briefly covers planning, weather, an introduction to basic map reading skills, location awareness, safety around water, personal and group safety, clothing and gear and what to do when things go wrong. For registration and further information contact Belinda & Shaun Cooper at : waikatoadmin@outdoortraining.nz

Other Courses: Depending on requests from those doing our Navigation courses, we can run a **Night Navigation Course** (usually a Saturday, 4-10pm in August/Sept; Pirongia, Kaniwhaniwha; no theory but pre-requisite is our day Navigation course)

Snippets

➤ **Banff Film Festival.** The festival will be screened at the Gallagher Performing Arts centre at Waikato University and presented by the NZ Alpine Club. The Thursday (May 15th) screening will focus on Ruapehu, and the Friday (May 16th) screening will focus on Tasman, The screenings begin at 6.30pm. Be moved. Be inspired. Don't miss out. Reserve your tickets today. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit banff.nz. Ticket prices are: General Admission \$25; NZAC member/Youth/Student \$20. Double screening deal - \$40 for both screenings (limited tickets available)

➤ 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*

....*from DoC*.....

➤ **KANIWHANIWHA TRACK UPGRADES – MAY 2025** We're getting in touch as you or your organisation has been identified as a stakeholder or neighbour with an interest in DOC's management of the Nikau Walk in Pirongia Forest Park.

The track follows the Kaniwhaniwha Stream and is a key entry point for those wanting to reach Pirongia summit, Kaniwhaniwha campsite and caves, and the Pahautea hut. DOC will temporarily close the Nikau Walk in May, to carry out a maintenance project which will improve the visitor experience and make it easier for DOC staff to undertake their work on the maunga. The Nikau Walk will be closed for up to three weeks so contractors working on behalf of DOC can improve the track condition and the access for authorised vehicles used to service the visitor facilities (rubbish bins and toilets) at the Kaniwhaniwha Campsite. The track is part of Te Araroa Trail, if you or anyone you are hosting is planning to use this section of Te Araroa, please check the DOC website or trail guides for the latest updates on closures. Alternative tracks to access the Pirongia summit and Pahautea hut include the Tirohanga track (Corcoran Rd), Mahaukura track (Grey Rd), Wharauaroa Route (O'Shea Rd) and Hihikiwi track (Pirongia West Rd). Signage will be placed at access points around the mountain to advise visitors of the closures, and alerts on the DOC website will be maintained until work is completed. We apologise for any disturbance the work will cause, but it is essential this project is undertaken. DOC will also publicise this project, and the resulting closures, from the week commencing 28 April. If you have any questions or concerns, please email Cara Hansen at: chansen@doc.govt.nz.

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:

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

➤ Changes to the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, announced by the government yesterday, provide clarity that **landowners will not be held responsible** if people get injured on their land while hunting, fishing, tramping, climbing, mountain biking, kayaking, free flying, and more. This is an absolutely positive step for outdoor enthusiasts, as it removes a major barrier that has previously hindered access to both private and public land for activities.

➤ 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.

➤ June is quickly approaching, and with it, another **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.

➤ Search for ***Seek*, the Land SAR dog mascot**. Throughout May, keep an eye out for Seek – the friendly fundraising dog mascot from Land Search and rescue. Spotting *Seek* is part of the annual *Searchlight* campaign, which celebrates and raises awareness of the vital work Land Search and Rescue does. As well as joining the fun in the hunt for *Seek*, you'll also have the chance to win *Searchlight* prizes by donating to Land SAR. The pool of prizes includes FMC pack liners. Find out more about the *Searchlight* campaign, and don't forget to stay on the lookout for *Seek*!

➤ Along with all other incorporated societies, FMC is required to create a Constitution that complies with the Incorporated Societies Act 2022, as part of re-registration. Last year, we sent out an email to member clubs outlining the key changes between our current Rules and our proposed new Constitution. In May, we'll invite our member clubs to vote on adopting our new Constitution. Voting will take place via email, opening on May 19 and closing on June 29. Keep an eye out for an email from us with an invitation and guidelines on how to vote.

Music on the mountain

The idea of a music festival at Waikato Hut really appealed to us as a novel use for the Club's valued asset on Mount Ruapehu. The select group who attended were treated to a polished performance as Jon Sanders introduced each tune he played and the instruments he played for us. We learned about his life and the range of influences on his music as he played his three

different instruments with great skill. The resultant music was varied and enjoyable and we were amazed how he could produce such different sounds and styles. It was an enriching experience which touched our souls and intrigued our minds.



Dinner time interlude

photo Jocelyn Widmer

Jon considered the acoustics of the hut to be excellent and was enthusiastic about both the venue and general environment. He will be back! We felt very fortunate to have had this experience in such a special place. Those unable to attend missed out on a real treat. (The food and the company were great too!) Jon is an accomplished musician and an interesting and personable character who was good to chat to. We enjoyed his music so much that we purchased two of his CDs.

Jean and John

The music began on Friday evening after the lounge had been set up to look like an intimate concert room. It certainly lived up to its' name – very intimate. Regretfully Opera singer Sarah Marlowe-Spence was unable to attend due to a family illness. But the main concert took place on Saturday evening and it was certainly worth waiting for. Jon described each of the 3 instruments he played – guitar, ukelele, and bouzouki guitar, Accompanied some of them with singing, and the history behind each piece of music. One rarely gets to hear this side of a concert. 'Connors' Pass' was the first piece and played on the bouzouki, followed by other pieces from the Ngon area of Mali, then another from Santa Cruz, and an eastern European polka. Next up was a bossa nova styled piece. John is truly a master at fingering and a variety of musical styles.

At 9pm we stopped for a coffee interlude and then continued for another 45 minutes. He entertained us with some original pieces on the guitar and ukelele, including one written when he saw the refugees at the Calais/Dover crossing in

France. Another piece entitled 'Ascension' was the penultimate piece and the evening ended with 'who knows s where the time goes' which Jon sang to also.

Dianne June

Thanks were extended to Jon from Allan and David MacDonald.



A versatile instrumentalist indeed

photo by Allan Wickens



Concertgoers

photos by Allan Wickens



taking the gear home again

photos by Allan Wickens



Sunset from Mt. Ruapehu

Photo by Ashley Hoskin



A magical day on Mt. Ruapehu Photo by Allan Wickens

Early April Lesley & Alan went for a walk up to Wairere Falls – and did it again 4 days later. Look at the differences in the following photos!!

Wairere Falls Wed 2nd April



Wairere Falls Sun 6th April



Wairere Stream



Wairere Stream



bivouac/outdoor

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