



Evaluating Japan's Natural World Heritage



Part 1, 1993 - 2005

Les Molloy talk to
HVTC, 10/5/2023

Please submit your **June 2023** H&V articles to the editor by **2nd June 2023**

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Treasurer: Jim Cousins

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CLUB NIGHT PROGRAMME Starts 7:30 pm promptly



3 May : Robert Tristram – Tramping Adventures.

After bad weather got even worse and prevented continuing the TA south of John Tait Hut in Nelson Lakes, the team of 2 and some extras headed south, walking north from Round Hill.

10 May : Les Molloy – Evaluating Japan's Natural World Heritage

Les made about 10 visits to wild natural areas in Japan over the 25-year period from 1993 to 2018. Most of these trips were to evaluate Japan's nominations for natural World Heritage, or to advise the Japanese authorities on suitable WH candidates.

In all, 9 natural locations were visited and are described in two talks:

Part 1 (from 1993 to 2005) deals with Shirakami-Sanchi (a beech forest wilderness in NW Honshu); Yakushima (a heavily forested island south of Kagoshima, centred on the highest mountain in southern Japan); four sites in the cold northern-most main island, Hokkaido, including the interesting mountainous Shiretoko Peninsula, with its unique relationship with the winter sea ice which surrounds it.

17 May : Beth Wood – Highlights from a month walking in Iceland and Southern Greenland

In 2006 Beth and John Wood spent a month walking in Iceland and Southern Greenland. Both countries have extensive hiking paths and routes. Beth will share highlights from two unforgettable journeys on foot in Iceland including the famous multi-day Laugavegurinn trek in the highlands of Southern Iceland. She will describe day trips from Narsarsuaq and Qassiarsuk, villages in the fiords in the South of Greenland. This is in the area inhabited by Norse people between about the 10th to 14th Centuries. It is a surprisingly green area (in summer) with small numbers of inhabitants and large numbers of icebergs and glaciers.



24 May : Andrew Robinson – Map Digitisation

Between about 2011 and 2021 a joint project between the University of Auckland and the National Library of New Zealand resulted in the digitisation, description and archiving of around 20,000 maps originally published by the Department of Lands and Survey and related bodies. Andrew will talk about the description aspect of the project.

31 May : Shaun Barnett and David Barnes – Us Two on Trips Together



Shaun Barnett and David Barnes met over 20 years ago when both served on the executive of the Federated Mountain Clubs. They soon began a friendship that naturally included many regular tramping trips.

Shaun and David detail 8 of these trips, alternately telling stories in an illustrated talk. The trips range from the Tararua Range to Fiordland.

7 June : Bob and Alison Maysmor – North Korea

It was like visiting another planet! A fascinating but controlled insight to a dangerous rogue state. Fortunate to get in but so happy to get out again! Bob and Alison's time was spent in Pyongyang, a visit to the DMZ (De-militarised zone) and Kaesong, Mt Myohyang and a repeat performance of the remarkable Mass Games in the Mayday stadium.







FORTHCOMING TRIPS



NOTES

Where there is no leader given for a trip, please contact the Trip Coordinator to volunteer to lead a trip, either as shown or an alternative.

MAY

Sat or Sun Date tba		Wairarapa	Ann Hayman	021 880 097
6 – 7	T1	Jumbo Hut	Mel Stoneham	027 361 3423
Sun 7	D1	Hills above Hine Road	Anja & Maarten	564 8851
Sun 14	D1	Centenary walks to Belmont Trig/ Te Whiti Riser /Petone Beach	Bob Deller	021 994 854
Thu 18	D1	Pauatahanui Inlet	Bob & Bernice	021 994 854
20 – 21	T1	tba	Andrew Robinson	586 2438
Sun 21	D1	Cattle Ridge from Catchpool	Heather & Marilyn	021 108 8578
Sun 28	D1	Dobson's Loop	David Barnes	021 143 7281
Tue 30		Moonlight Walk tba	Andrew Robinson	586 2438

JUNE

3 – 5	KING'S BIRTHDAY			
	T2	tba Kawekas	Andrew Robinson	586 2438
Sun 4	WP	Ava Park environmental project	John Simes	027 464 1824
Sun 11	D1	Ecclesfield Reserve	Jackie West	528 4697

UPCOMING EVENTS

BAKING COMPETITION - 21 JUNE



Dust off your baking tools and blow the cobwebs off your recipe books. Julie and Vera are hosting a Tramping inspired Baking Competition.



There are four categories and all items must be home made. All entries are to be prepared at home, as there will be no baking in the hall.

1. Easy High Energy Snacks -eg muesli bars, scroggin, bliss balls
2. A Savory Lunch Item - eg crackers, savory loaf, muffin
3. Hut Friendly Dessert - ingredients easily prepared and cooked in a hut - eg billy baked cake, creek chilled dessert, fruit crumble and custard
4. An Old Favourite - Tararua Biscuits with a Twist - add your own special ingredients - spice, dried fruit

Categories 1,2 & 4 need to be pocket sized and practical to carry. Label your entries if they meet any specific dietary needs - gluten free, vegan.

Please enter a minimum of 6 pieces for judging. Leftovers can be sampled at supper!

Judges' decisions are final.

Prize for each category and a Special Award for the most imaginative presentation.

Be creative, with recipes, ingredients and presentation. Start practicing NOW.

While our judges are doing their bit, we will have an open session for anyone to share their tramping adventures and food related stories from when they first started tramping.

Julie and Vera

ADVANCE NOTICE - HVTC PHOTO COMPETITION



This is an early warning: entries into the 2023 competition from amongst all the photographers in the Club will be displayed, with the judge's commentary, on Wednesday 6th September. The closing date for accepting entries will be Sunday 6th August. All the information about the categories, preferred image requirements etc remains as in recent years and will be published in the June edition of Hills and Valleys - but start searching out your best/favourite images now. Please do not leave offering your entries until the last minutes!

The Rewards: fame - a trophy/trophies in the Club Competition - entries into the national FMC Photographic Competition!

Murray Preslard

(HVTC Photo Comp Co-ordinator, 2023)

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FROM THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

GIVE BACK TO YOUR CLUB BY JOINING A COMMITTEE

Can you lend a hand to one of the three committees that help our club run smoothly?

We're especially keen to find a new Trip Coordinator and Secretary to join the General Committee because Chris McMillan and Phaedra Upton are standing down from these roles, after serving our club so well.

And we welcome new people to join our General Committee, Ruapehu Committee and Social Committee. No special skills or time commitments are required – you only need to have a helpful attitude, a willingness to give back to your club and the ability to attend monthly meetings.

At our AGM on 26 July we'll elect new members for all three committees.

Please contact us for more information about what's involved:

- Marina Skinner, General Committee president@hvtc.org.nz

- Kate Brownsword, Ruapehu Committee the.brownswords@xtra.co.nz
- Cathy Priest, Social Committee cathy.priest@xtra.co.nz

Marina Skinner

President

TRIP COORDINATOR ROLE FEEDBACK

Thank you to everyone who sent me really useful ideas about the trip coordinator role and the way we organise our trips.

The General Committee is reviewing the suggestions, which will guide us and our new trip coordinator from July. We will update you in the next two months.

We received some offers to be part of a group supporting the trip coordinator but no volunteers to take on the leadership role.

If you're interested in becoming the trip coordinator, please contact me or our current trip coordinator, Chris McMillan, for more information at president@hvtc.org.nz or tripcoordinator@hvtc.org.nz

Marina Skinner

President

SUBSCRIPTION INCREASE FOR 2023/24 FINANCIAL YEAR

At its April meeting the General Committee decided that it was necessary to increase the member subscription rates for the coming year, along with some user charges. The reason for the increase is the large escalation in costs since the current subscription rates and user charges were set five years ago. The new subscription rates, and annual increase in postage of FMC bulletins are as follows:

Membership Category	Conditions	Current Subscription	Discount	New Subscription
General		\$50.00	na	\$55
Veteran	more than 21 years	\$43.75	12.5%	\$48
Senior Veteran	more than 50 years	\$37.50	25.0%	\$41
Ultra Veteran	more than 60 years	\$15.00	FMC levy only	\$18
Student	tertiary	\$31.25	37.5%	\$34
Student	secondary	\$0.00	na	\$0
Absentee	not local	\$22.50	55.0%	\$25

Postage of FMC Bulletins: will increase from \$9 per year to \$16 per year.

The annual subscription covers things like operation of the hall (power, insurance, land lease, maintenance and cleaning), social activities (suppers, socials and awards), printing, postage and stationery, the FMC levy, and miscellaneous expenses. Not included are the major user-funded activities of the Club, Transport, Trips and Gear, and the Ruapehu Lodge.

The big increases in annual costs over the last five years have been in insurance for the hall (close to \$3000) and the FMC Levy (\$870). Two other categories (general expenses & promotion, and social activities) have shown increases of \$500 - \$600, and maintenance of the hall has been well above the preceding five-year average.

Note that only routine activities are covered in the above discussion. NOT INCLUDED are centenary expenses that are over and above user funded items (like the dinner), and which may be as high as \$10,000. In the interim these will be covered from general term deposits and gradually recouped in future years.

While the Club has healthy reserves in term deposits, most are earmarked for particular purposes and are not available for routine general account spending. They are the Fanny Bayliss and Natusch bequests (a total of \$48,005), the van replacement fund (\$57,737) and Ruapehu Lodge reserves (\$60,000).

If you have any queries feel free to contact Jim Cousins, Treasurer, at a club night, by phone 0220128136, or by email at treasurer@hvtc.org.nz

Jim Cousins

Treasurer

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RUAPEHU ROUNDUP

MT RUAPEHU/RUAPEHU ALPINE LIFTS UPDATE - AS AT 26 APRIL 2023

In October 2022 Ruapehu Alpine Lifts (RAL) went into voluntary administration. This was due to two seasons of covid interruptions, last year's poor snow coverage, large development debt and other issues. RAL was unable to raise sufficient funds and faced the prospect of insolvency. PWC was appointed as the administrator.

PWC has continued to trade the business while looking to determine the most appropriate way forward to maximise recoveries for creditors. A creditors' committee was established including representatives of life pass holders. The Government via MBIE provided additional funding to PWC to allow RAL to trade until the start of the 2023 season and to provide time for a long-term plan to be formulated. MBIE is also heavily involved in looking for a solution.

A 26 April RNZ interview with PWC Administrator John Fisk highlighted the continuing uncertainty around the upcoming winter season, including the watershed meeting potentially being delayed (originally scheduled for 9 May 2023) where all creditors will vote on a plan. To date no actual plan has been put forward or discussed with any creditors or stakeholders. An option could be to put RAL into liquidation. PWC/RAL information can be found at

<https://www.pwc.co.nz/services/business-restructuring/voluntary-administration/ruapehu-alpine-lifts-limited.html>

RAL have been preparing for the upcoming winter season including announcing season pass details. However, passes have yet to go on sale <https://www.mtruapehu.com/passes/ski-and-snowboard>

Four groups have expressed interest in the future of the Ruapehu skifields.

The Save Mt Ruapehu group was established to coordinate the interests of stakeholders (public, Ruapehu region, local businesses, Iwi, clubs, life pass holders, shareholders etc). This group has now formed the Ruapehu Skifields Stakeholders Association (RSSA), a not-for-profit incorporated society. Peter Hillary is the Founding Patron.

RSSA has submitted a plan to retain both Turoa and Whakapapa under the same company ownership where profits are reinvested in the skifields and not paid out in dividends. This includes a mixed government and community model “Crown and Community”. This to be financed through creditors writing down debt, converting debt to shares and Crown & crowd funding. Various surveys have indicated there is stakeholder and greater community support willing to donate/invest in the future of the skifields. Details including how to join (\$10 membership fee) can be found at <https://www.savemtruapehu.org.nz/>

Turoa Alpine Limited, led by John Sanford an ex RAL director, involving a local consortium of Ohakune and wider stakeholders. Their plan is to purchase Turoa and run it as a standalone (separate from Whakapapa) public company.

Another entity, Pure Turoa, is also rumoured to be interested in Turoa. There are no public details regarding the fourth entity.

Facebook has two sites containing information and discussion on developments. Save Mt Ruapehu <https://www.facebook.com/groups/savemtruapehu> , Mt Ruapehu Shareholders and Life pass holders <https://www.facebook.com/groups/886946374773636>

Your HVTC Ruapehu committee is keeping informed on these developments. We will be attending the watershed meeting when it happens, and we are also attending the next Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association meeting on May 13. Work parties have occurred maintaining and preparing our Whakapapa lodge, however we will not provision/food stock for the winter season until we have certainty regarding the running of the lifts. We are also be seeking expressions of interest for lodge custodian – see the advert below.

Kate Brownsword and David Biegel

for the Ruapehu Committee

RUAPEHU LODGE CUSTODIAN

Do you fancy a season on the mountain?

HVTC's Ruapehu Lodge is now taking expressions of interest from club members who would like to be our volunteer custodian from July to October this year.

- The custodian is expected to be at the lodge from at least the start of the July school holidays to the end of the October school holidays.
- The custodian will be a club member.
- The role is unpaid.
- The custodian will be familiar with the running of the lodge.
- The custodian will liaise with all occupants, including internal and external groups, to ensure their time in the lodge is enjoyable and safe.
- The custodian will take on a health and safety role, including ensuring lodge occupants are healthy, and giving the fire and emergency talk to each group. The custodian needs to have the confidence to ask unwell lodge visitors to return home.
- The custodian will ensure the lodge is clean and tidy throughout the winter season.
- The custodian will liaise with the booking officer to ensure lodge occupancy is correctly recorded.
- The custodian will liaise with the food officer to ensure lodge food stocks are appropriately maintained.
- The custodian will be responsible for updating the lodge Facebook page.

The roles and expectations of the custodian will be detailed in a Memorandum of Understanding to be agreed between the custodian and the HVTC Ruapehu Committee.

To express your interest, or if you have further questions, please contact Kate Brownsword on the.brownswords@xtra.co.nz

If you are interested in the role, please send your expression of interest, with a summary of what you have to offer to the custodian role, to Kate by 15 May. Applications will be considered by the committee before 23 May.

Please note – the custodian role will only be available if there is to be a ski season at Whakapapa.

Kate

for Ruapehu Committee

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CLUB CENTENARY



REGISTER FOR OUR CENTENARY EVENTS

Remember to register soon for our centenary events in November. There's a [link to the registration form](#) on our home page or please contact 100th@hvtc.org.nz.

We've already had more than 100 registrations for the events on the weekend of 3-5 November. Numbers are restricted for some events, and we'll need to start waiting lists if maximum numbers are reached.

And please contact any former HVTC members you know about the centenary celebrations. We're looking forward to seeing members and former members in November.

Many thanks

Marina

HVTC CENTENARY WALKS SUN 14TH MAY 2023

May Update

Unfortunately, the regional council has closed the tracks near the foot bridge just below the upper Korokoro dam. The closure is to replace the bridge and realign the track at one end. Consequently, two of our walks (A & C) will be changed (details below).

The meeting place and time for the photograph are the same as previously notified.

Around 60 people have indicated they will do one of the walks or attend for the photograph.

The photograph below is of the HVTC Sunday trip to Belmont Trig in May 1930. The lady at the front-right is Sandra Pearce's mother. Anyone who wishes to attend the welcome and photograph, without participating in a walk, is welcome to do so.



Details

We will meet at 9.00 am at the regional park entrance at Oakleigh Street, Maungaraki, Lower Hutt for an official welcome and a group photograph.

Anyone who wishes to attend the welcome and photograph, without participating in a walk, is welcome to do so.

Attendees are invited to dress in tramping clothing from the 1920's or the decade they started tramping.

Starting around 9.30 am, the following walks will take place:

- A. Oakleigh St Entrance to Belmont Trig via the Otonga track and the four- wheel drive track, then down to Baked Beans Bend **and continuing downstream to Cornish Street Entrance** (about 4 hours). Arrangements will be made to transport car drivers back to Oakleigh St. Leaders: Bob Deller, Jackie West.
- B. A return walk from Stratton St Entrance to Belmont Trgp via the four- wheel drive track (about 3 hours). Walkers will take private vehicles, ideally with car- pooling, from Oakleigh St. The starting location for the walk will be the car parking area at the end of Stratton St. Leaders: Doc Watson, Michele Lythgoe, Bernice Deller
- C. **Te Whiti Park - Riser Track return** (about 3 hours). Transport from Oakleigh St to Te Whiti Park will be by private vehicles. Leaders: Michael Grace, Sandra Pearce
- D. A gentle stroll along Petone Beach to Hikoikoi Reserve and return (1-2 hours flexible). Participants will use private vehicles to travel from Oakleigh St to the meeting place outside the **Heretaunga Boating Club, 138 The Esplanade, Petone**. There is public parking on each side of the building, as well as on The Esplanade. Walkers will head off eastwards along the beach or waterfront walkway. Non- walkers can enjoy morning tea near the beach or at a nearby café, e.g. the Seashore Cabaret, Flying Bean Coffee Shop or Shoreline Café (all within walking distance of the meeting place). *Note that this is Mothers Day, which could mean the cafes will be full. Also they do not take bookings.*

Participants are therefore advised to bring their own hot drinks and be prepared to picnic on the seafront. Leaders: Val Erhardt, Bruce Miller, Graeme McVerry

Transport to/from Oakleigh St entrance

Your transport options:

1. The #150 bus from Petone Railway Station departing 8.30 am. This bus travels up Dowse Drive and along Oakleigh St.
2. Club van from the clubrooms (12 people max.) departing 8.30 am
3. Car- pooling from the clubrooms departing 8.30 am
4. Private car from home directly to Oakleigh St

The Oakleigh St Entrance is well- used at weekends. Car parking inside may be limited, so walkers should park on Oakleigh Street outside the entrance.

If you want a ride from the clubrooms, or you can offer a ride to others from the clubrooms, please let me know by email to 100th@hvtc.org.nz

Health & safety

Each group will have at least two leaders for guidance and safety.

Walkers should carry food (snacks, morning tea, lunch, water, hot drink if desired), a waterproof jacket, a warm hat, extra warm clothing in case it is cold. Sun protection should be worn or carried too. The tracks are suitable for sports footwear or walking shoes (tramping boots are not necessary).

Alternative day or cancellation

Saturday 13th May will be the alternative day in case of a poor(er) weather forecast for Sunday.

Any change to the date will be advised by email to 'hvtc-all' on the evening of Thursday 11th May. We will directly contact any former members who have signed- up for a walk.

No email/contact = no change!

This event will be cancelled only if MetService issues a Severe Weather warning (Red or Orange) for both days

Event Registration

Please email 100th@hvtc.org.nz to express your interest in participating.

Put '**HVTC Centenary May Walks**' in the subject line and indicate which walk you would like to join.

Please do not use the web registration form to indicate participation in the May walk(s). The registration form on the Club's website is for the November weekend activities only, not for the May walks.

If you know of any past- members who might be interested, please tell them about the walks.

This notice will also be posted in the HVTC Centenary pages on the Club's website (www.hvtc.org.nz).

Contact

If you need to contact the organiser on the day, please phone or txt Bob Deller on 021 994 854.
Leave a voicemail message if no answer.

Bob

TRIP REPORTS

WAITEWAEWAE HUT AND TRACK WORK PARTY February 2023 Murray Presland

At the end of February I spent six days in the Tararua Range with a group of volunteers working at Waitewaewae Hut and re-cutting the Waitewaewae Track. Derrick Field, from the Greater Wellington Backcountry Network, organised the work party. The plan, for me, was to replace the woodshed floor and paint the shed; tidy peeling paint on the north-side of the hut; paint the flashing on the clearlight roof over the hut deck; check the efficacy of our attempt last year to clean mould/lichen/fungus from the deck; and spring-clean the dunny. The other guys – Derrick, Jeremy Collyns and Nic Blair - were to clear windfalls and overgrowth from the track out to Otaki Forks, working from Waitewaewae for 3 days and then transferring to Parawai Hut at Otaki Forks for 2-3 days. Derrick did all the logistics for the trip. He flew into Waitewaewae from the Wairarapa with a ton of equipment and food; we others drove up to the Otaki road end, with petrol for chain saws and the scrub bar plus timber and were flown to the hut from there – in just 4 minutes!

Nic is a builder so he replaced the shed floor, a task completed very efficiently. All of us spent a half-day removing excess vegetation from around the heli-pad and then dropping trees growing to the north and west of the hut. These guys on chainsaws don't do anything by halves, preferring not to have to return to the task for another 30 years! Derrick felled and sectioned a dead beech

tree to the north-east of the woodshed (a track to it branches from the track to the toilet) that will provide timber for the hut fire for several years and there is also plenty of felled trees lying behind the hut. The hut is much more open to sunshine and the view from the deck down to the Otaki river is much as it was when the hut was opened in 1990!

During the next 2 days Jeremy (on the chainsaws) and Derrick (on the scrub-bar) worked their way along the track from the hut to Arapito Stream, up Arapito Stream and across the Plateau. Several windfall trees, as much as a metre diameter, were



diced and removed and smaller trees plus vegetation along the margins of the track cut back, giving a much clearer track. Nic laboured mightily removing the debris and marking the track more clearly with orange triangles. I cleaned and painted the woodshed exterior, removed flaking paint at the rear of the hut and painted the bare timber, attempted to clean and paint the flashing on the clearlight roof – but abandoned that task as being too unsafe without much better protection, tried a new method of using “Spray and Walk-away” on the black mould/lichen/fungus that is making the deck unpleasant – although it had worked in some degree when we used it in 2022. My new method, used on the steps, is “Flood, Scrub-excessively and Walk-away” - we will see in a few months’ time if this is an effective treatment for removing the heavy black mould cover! Oh, and I gave the toilet a good clean – not a task I enjoy but it had remained in fairly good condition since Marti’s grand treatment in April 2022.

On the following day our hut gear was picked up by helicopter and transferred to Parawai Hut; I joined the others as a track labourer. We had a huge day dealing with tree falls and vegetation along the “new” track from the Plateau, traversing along the ridgeline and sidling down to the Tram Track, then out as far as the “new” slip that has cut the track – then we trudged out to Parawai, dined and fell asleep. Next day we returned to cut and mark a clear track over the top of the slip – this will be only temporary until DoC choose a stable route – and worked onwards along the sidle track above the Waitatapia Stream through quite heavy overgrowth, especially of Himalayan honeysuckle and kie-kie in the stream gullies. This part of the route is relatively new, built when the lower end of the Tram Track was cut by another slip, closer to Swamp Flat, about 40 years ago. The art of maintaining a track is to remove any vegetation overhanging the margins so that people are encouraged to walk along the stable part of the platform rather than being pushed towards its less firm edges. Nic and I spent these days adding OTs, carting petrol and removing felled trees and vegetation off the track. Derrick’s hay fork – with 3 long, curved tines – was ideal for raking-up and throwing the lighter debris off the track. (If you have one in your garden shed or know where other hay- or straw- forks might be available please let me know. Derrick has scoured second-hand stores through the Wairarapa – they are incredibly good implements for track-clearing!)



Jeremy dealing with windfall in Arapito Stream



The sidle track above Waitatapia Stream - before and after clearing.

On the last day we finished clearing the track (well, nearly) out to the Otaki River bridge late towards evening as the overcast cloud gloomed in. Although it was only 14 km of track in all, it had taken 17 person-days of work to bring it into reasonable state. Try tramping it – it is much improved; Waitewaewae Hut is a great destination by the Otaki River; and the track leads on to some beautiful country in the Otaki River and up onto the Main Range! A wonderfully enthusiastic bloke, running Te Araroa from Cape Reinga back to his home in Invercargill, reckoned Waitewaewae Hut was the best on the trail and, following our work, this was definitely his favourite track!

Nic had left earlier; Jeremy and I loaded all of our gear into packs and trudged out to the Otaki road-end, arriving in complete darkness following the white centre-lines along the road because if we had stopped to find torches we might not have been able to stand up again; but Derrick had to wait overnight before the helicopter could get in to take him and gear back to Carterton.

During the past three months volunteers from the Greater Wellington Backcountry Network have repainted Te Matawai Hut, interior and exterior; dug a new long-drop and transferred the toilet at Te Matawai; planned to install a larger water tank at Nichols Hut (which, being along the Te Araroa trail, has often run dry); and planned a major renovation of Alpha Hut. In addition to re-cutting the tracks into and around Totara Flats in January, Derrick has been back in the Tararua Range re-cutting the track from Arete Forks up to the Waiohine Pinnacles. I guess it is a return to the time when club trampers and hunters pioneered routes in the hills, cut tracks and built and maintained huts. It is hard work but hugely rewarding – and helicopter transport of people and gear reduces the burden immensely. Please think about joining the Greater Wellington Backcountry Network of volunteers – you can do so via the website www.gwbn.org.nz; there is no cost; and you will be kept informed of opportunities to contribute your skills and/or labour to keeping tramping opportunities in the Tararua, Aorangi and Remutaka Ranges available for everyone – then act. You just need to offer some of your time to joining with other volunteers!

Murray

RANGITUHI (COLONIAL KNOB)

13 April

Bernice Deller

Murray Presland and Neil Hickman joined Bob and me on Thursday 13th April to explore some of the tracks around Rangituhi. We met at Spicer Park at 10am and took a track called The Doctor. Many of the tracks in the area are multi-purpose tracks, some have criteria such as “Biking uphill only, walking both ways”. From The Doctor we went onto the Rangituhi access road- a four wheel drive road. After a while of plodding uphill we decided to sit down and enjoy the sun. It was lovely munching away on hot cross buns and exchanging stories and laughs. Back to the walking we decided to take the Te Ara Utiwai track down to Elsdon Camp. This track takes a long and winding



route through regenerating bush only losing height very slowly. Bikers aren't allowed to go down this track so we had a very relaxing walk down. By this time we were starting to see a few more people – both walkers and bikers. The leaders had forgotten about having lunch but we were reminded upon finding a picnic table in a clearing not too far from the end of the track. It was now 1.30pm so a good time to stop and enjoy an even warmer spell in the sun, another cuppa and some more food. Back on our way again and it wasn't long before we had reached Elsdon Camp. Neil decided to wait there and enjoy a relax while

Bob, Murray and I took a track back towards the cars. The track petered out at one stage so we headed uphill for a short time and found a mountain bike track, The Spicer Link, which eventually led us back to the carpark. It had been an enjoyable walk with a fair bit of red line. Thanks to Murray and Neil for the company.

Bernice

MID-TURERE STOAT TRAP CHECK.

Sunday trip on 23 April.

Maarten Vink

Seven of us arrived at the top of Sunny Grove with the sun shining. Maybe the weather was going to be better than forecast. Unfortunately, the sky clouded over as we laboured up the track to the McKerrow-Whakanui track junction. This junction used to be “the dog-leash place”, as in years gone by lengths of rope were left tied around a tree there with a sign urging people to leash their dogs to keep the kiwi in the area safe. On the way we passed a spot where we usually stopped to enjoy views of Wainuiomata. All we could see this time was cloud.

Heading along the Whakanui Track the ground was quite soggy with many puddles from yesterday's rain. Sometimes we were walking through a light mist. The forest was lush and green with an occasional splash of red from berries in horopito bushes. A good number of birds could be heard. We had not travelled far from home but there was a real feeling of remoteness up here.

We turned off onto Jacek's Spur, named after a young Polish man who lost his life in this area in 2008. We had passed a memorial cross for Jacek at the start of the tramp. Maarten checked and rebaited the traps on this spur, finding very fresh-looking rats in two of the six traps. The traps are here to catch stoats and weasels to protect kiwi chicks from predation. Mostly the traps catch rats, which are far more common than stoats and weasels.

The first 6 kiwis were released back into this area in 2006. Further releases brought the total to 32. The birds have been breeding well and the population is now estimated to be over 200. They have spread from the Turere valley in all directions, including crossing the Wainuiomata and Orongorongo rivers.



After a steep drop into the Turere Stream we stopped for lunch beside the stream. It was a bit damp with some light rain, so most put on parkas. At least it was not that cold. A patch of piripiri (bidibidi) provided some entertainment when the round seed heads got stuck to our clothing.

We headed upstream, regularly crossing from one side to the other. This is a small stream, mostly shallow but some deeper

pools. In places we were over knee deep in the water. Care was needed as there were slippery rocks. Two more rats were found in traps along the stream.

After about 1 km in the stream, we climbed up onto a spur on the true right and followed this up. It was a long climb up before a gentle meander along the ridgeline on the McKerrow Track, and then the descent back to Sunny Grove. This time there were views and even some sunshine. The weather forecast had been pretty accurate after all.

Those on the tramp; Maarten Vink (leader), Anja van Kesteren, Tony Jaegers, Heather Eskdale, Mel Stoneham, Shane Harrison and David McQueen.

Maarten

ANOTHER MEMORY OF GRAEME

Here is another club member's memories of Graeme Lythgoe, which did not arrive in time for last month's edition.

Felicity Maxwell

I've known Graeme for probably over 40 years, and he has always been a strong, dependable, cheerful presence in the club. I haven't done many trips with HVTC recently, but as it happened Graeme was on the last two day trips I was on, and I do remember our conversations on both those trips. He was characteristically interested, thoughtful and supportive. I thought I would share this final communication I had with him, soon before he died. I had been unaware of his condition.

As many of you will know, Graeme has been leading a trip down the lower Tauherenikau Gorge in the last weekend of January, for the past several years. Also over the last few years, I've been introducing my children to this delightful activity with the HVTC – so far we have done the Ruakokoputuna and Ohau gorges. I've kept an eye on Graeme's Tauherenikau trip in the syllabus, but disappointingly the timing has never been right, as we are always just returning from a trip down south. This year was no different, but my family were putting pressure on me - 'get the laundry done and repack in a day, Mum, so we can go anyway'. I emailed Graeme on 28 January to enquire. There had been a lot of rain so I thought it was likely he wouldn't be going. But if that was the case, I told him, I was hoping we might do it before this summer was over.

Graeme replied quickly, telling me the gorge trips had been cancelled a couple of weeks ago – and in his words 'just as well!' (because of all the rain). He told me he would not be running one later on (giving no reason), but encouraged me to organise: 'on a fine day it would be quite popular, I'm sure.' I went on to ask some advice about the route and Graeme told me everything I needed to know, including 'some big pools which are really great!'

I feel so sad to think of Graeme giving me all this advice, given he would have realised he didn't have long to live. But the message was one of make it happen, get out there, have fun, support each other! That was how he lived his life.

Graeme – I am really going to miss having you around.

Felicity



Cattle Ridge, May 2022.

Photo: John Tristram

A COUPLE OF IMAGES OF PEOPLE ON RECENT SUNDAY TRAMPS ON LOAN FROM FACEBOOK



A pause during the search for the giant rata, Karapoti.



McGhei's Bridge on the Birchville to Karapoti route.

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