



*"Remote villages and mountains"*

*Photo: Bob & Alison Maysmor*

Please submit your **August 2022** H&V articles to the editor by **29<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

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**CLUB NIGHT PROGRAMME**  
Starts 7:30 pm promptly



**6 July : Paula Warren – Update on Baring Head Restoration**

Much has been achieved at Baring Head since the last time we had a presentation on the project, including a lot of work by club members. Paula will give us an overview of the park and the work, outline the progress made in restoration, and explain the changes in park rules and GWRC intentions that affect both restoration and recreation.

**13 July : Brian Dobbie – Hut Bagging**

Brian has not very secretly been bagging huts for over 25 years. His name appears in hut books from Cape Brett to Doughboy Bay. What motivates him to seek out and relentlessly bag huts in the most unlikely of places?



***Sales Table run by Graeme Lythgoe. Bring your cash and your saleable items.***

**20 July : Bob and Alison Maysmor – From the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea**

Bob and Alison travelled from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea through war torn Abkhazia then explored the remote villages and mountains of once-inaccessible republics of the Russian Federation. It was 'one of the most exciting journeys' the intrepid couple have undertaken.

**27 July : HVTC Annual General Meeting**

Come along and hear all about and have your say on the Club's activities for the last year and the outlook for the next. Election of officers will also be held.

**3 August: Andrew Robinson – EyeQ Test**

Test your powers of observation in another of Andrew's entertaining quizzes.



**TRIP CATEGORIES**

**Tramping**

- D Day walk or evening stroll
- T Overnight or longer tramp
-  Dog Friendly
-  Moonlight Walk

- Grade 1 Relaxed pace with plenty of rest stops. All terrain types may be encountered, occasionally off-track. Duration depends on the terrain and conditions, but is usually for no more than 6 hours per day.
- Grade 2 Steady walking pace with regular snack and drink breaks. Terrain may vary from flat river valleys to ridges above the bush line. Off-track travel may be involved. Up to 8 hours walking time per day, depending on conditions.
- Grade 3 Brisk pace with few drink and snack breaks. Terrain encountered is as for grade 2 trips but the distance travelled is usually much further. More than 8 hours walking time per day.
- Family Family trip. Very relaxed pace with plenty of rest stops. Suitable for small children.
- WP Working Party. Overnight or for a day. Voluntary work on HVTC Ruapehu Lodge or a conservation project.

**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.

## JULY

|                                  |   |  |                         |               |
|----------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------|---------------|
| tba                              |     | Hutt Valley biketrails & backstreets   | Leena                   | 027 672 1604  |
| <b>School holidays 9-24 July</b> |   |  |                         |               |
| 9 – 10                           |   | Visit from Wanganui TC                 |                         |               |
| Sat 9                            | D1  | Days Bay - Middle Ridge loop           | Murray McMillan         | 569 9019      |
| Sun 10                           | D1  | Hemi Matenga Loop                      | Nick McBride            | 021 410 551   |
| 10 – 16                          | Ski   | Ruapehu Lodge – school holidays week   | Contact Booking Officer | 027 451 2587  |
| Tues 12                          |    | Pauatahanui Inlet                      | Bob & Bernice           | 938 4685      |
| 16 – 17                          | T1  | Kiriwhakapapa–Cow Creek                | Tania Hatfield          | 022 053 5604  |
|                                  | T2  | Kime hut                               | John Evans              | 020 4166 4410 |
| Sun 17                           | D1  | Lees Grove to Eastbourne               | Marina Skinner          | 021 792 260   |
| 17 – 23                          | Ski   | Ruapehu Lodge – school holidays week 2 | Contact Booking Officer | 027 451 2587  |
| Sun 24                           | D1  | Wainuiomata water catchment area       | Nick McBride            | 021 410 551   |
| Wed 27                           |   | <b>Annual General Meeting</b>          |                         |               |
| 30 or 31                         | D1  | Seals at Turakirae Head                | Anja van Kesteren       | 564 8851      |
| <b>August</b>                    |   |  |                         |               |
| tba                              |    | Wairarapa round-about                  | Dennis Page             | 021 229 9901  |
| 1 – 5                            | Ski   | Ruapehu Lodge – Club week 1            | Contact Booking Officer | 027 451 2587  |
| Sun 7                            | D1  | Trip required                          |                         |               |
| Tue 9                            |  | Pt Howard to Lowry Bay                 | Michele Lythgoe         | 027 359 1377  |

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SALES TABLE

13 July

Please bring along items that you wish to donate to this effort. Home baking and preserves are especially welcome. Garden produce is also popular so bring along all the excess from your vegetable garden. Everyone else bring some cash to purchase some goodies with.

| <b>RUAPEHU EVENTS 2022</b> |             |   |   |
|----------------------------|-------------|---|---|
| <i>In</i>                  | <i>Out</i>  | <i>Event</i>                            |   |
| Mon 11 July                | Fri 15 July | July School Holiday week 1              | Contact Booking Officer<br>027 451 2587 |
| Mon 18 July                | Fri 22 July | July School Holiday week 2              | Contact Booking Officer<br>027 451 2587 |
| Mon 01 Aug                 | Fri 05 Aug  | Club Week 1                             | Contact Booking Officer<br>027 451 2587 |
| Mon 22 Aug                 | Fri 26 Aug  | Club Week 2                             | Contact Booking Officer<br>027 451 2587 |
| Mon 29 Aug                 | Fri 02 Sept | Club Week 3 (Uni & young professionals) | Contact Booking Officer<br>027 451 2587 |
| Mon 05 Sept                | Fri 09 Sept | Club Week 4 (Vets and allcomers)        | Contact Russell Oliver<br>021 245 9596  |

|            |            |                               |   |
|------------|------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Mon 03 Oct | Fri 07 Oct | October School Holiday week 1 | Contact Booking Officer<br>027 451 2587 |
| Mon 10 Oct | Fri 14 Oct | October School Holiday week 2 | Contact Kate Brownsword<br>027 562 0177 |

This list doesn't mean that you have to go on an organised trip. There are plenty of other opportunities to use the lodge throughout the winter season for skiing, climbing, ski touring or just relaxing. Just pick a time, contact the booking officer (details listed above) then come on up.

## **REMINDER 2022 HVTC PHOTO COMPETITION** **ENTRIES CLOSE 24 JULY**

This year we have yet another excellent tramping photographer to judge the 2022 HVTC photo competition. There have been few entries to date. Please make the judge's time worthwhile and save the club embarrassment by providing your best shots by the close-off date for entries on Sunday 24 July. Don't be put off if you are not an experienced photographer – there is a novice category for those who have not entered a photo competition previously.

Full details of the categories and conditions of entry are given in the June Hills & Valleys. Remember placing first or second in an FMC category in the club competition is the only path for HVTC members to enter the nationwide FMC competition. There are also HVTC only categories. Except for the historic category, entries must have been taken since 1 January 2020. A difference this year is that the entries must satisfy the following filename format: Category Code (given below) Photographer Caption e.g. **ABN Graeme McVerry Crater Lake**. Please take the time to name your photo files and provide a text listing in the same format, either in your email or as an attachment, suitable to copy to a spreadsheet of entries. A few minutes of your time saves hours of work renaming and tabulating perhaps 100+ files.

You may enter up to 4 images in each category. The FMC competition requires file sizes between 1 MB and 5 MB, and this is a good guide for the HVTC categories too. Please submit as .JPG or .TIF files.

The images, and comments, will be presented by the Competition Judge on the club night of Wednesday 24 August 2022, with cups awarded to the winners in most categories.

### **SCANNING OF SLIDES FOR HISTORIC CATEGORY**

Last year's judge John Rhodes expressed disappointment that there was only one entry in the Historic category. Be inspired by the historic photos in John's recent club night talk on the Holdsworth area and submit entries in the Historic category as part of the build-up towards the HVTC Centenary in 2023. To encourage entries, I am prepared to digitise transparencies submitted for this category. Please ensure that slides submitted are in good condition and have been cleaned to remove dust and submit them a week or more ahead of the closing date of 24 July to allow time for scanning before being passed on to the judge. For historic shots, please provide a brief background (two or three sentences, including naming the photographer if it was someone other than you), as well as a title.

### **FMC CATEGORIES**

There are 7 categories – see the definitions below from the FMC website for details

- ABN ABOVE BUSHLINE** (with no human element)
- ABW ABOVE BUSHLINE** (with a human element)
- BBN BELOW BUSHLINE** (with no human element)
- BBW BELOW BUSHLINE** (with a human element)
- HIS HISTORIC**
- NFF NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA**
- LE LONG EXPOSURE**

### **HVTC CATEGORIES**

- TOP TOPICAL** (tells a story)
- PER PERSONALITY** (illustrates a character)

**OVS OVERSEAS** (from your recent travels, since 1 January 2020)  
**NOV NOVICE** (for those who have not previously entered a photo competition)  
**PR PRINTS**

Please submit your digital images to Graeme McVerry ([graememcv2@xtra.co.nz](mailto:graememcv2@xtra.co.nz)) as email attachments or through Google Drive. Yes, there is a "2" in the email address. I'll also accept USB data sticks or historic slides for scanning at club nights. My laptop doesn't have a drive to read CDs or DVDs.

The deadline for entries is midnight Sunday 24 July (a week earlier for slides)– to allow time to collate entries, for the judge to deliberate and for cups to be engraved.

#### WINNERS OF CUPS LAST YEAR

Please return the cups to Carolyn Lyon or other members of the Social Committee by the end of July to allow time for cleaning and engraving.

Good luck for the competition.

Graeme McVerry  
Organiser 2022 HVTC Photo Competition

## FROM THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

July 2022

### Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 27 July, 2022

With this edition of Hills and Valleys you will receive the Notice for the Annual General Meeting of the Hutt Valley Tramping Club to be held on Wednesday 27 July, 2022 plus the Annual Report for the year 2021-22.

It will be very evident to you that the Club – your Club – needs new volunteers to ensure that the General and Ruapehu Committees function efficiently and wisely. Dennis, following his third stint as President!, has written in the Annual Report a glimpse of a dispiriting future for HVTC unless we all – and that includes you! – take up roles in the organisation to share tasks more equitably. Of course that means organising and leading trips, bike rides, training courses, ski trips – all the activities that we joined the Club to enjoy. But it also means sharing the tasks that support these activities and the organisation – not just hoping "someone else" will do so! Please read Dennis's essay in the Annual Report.

Forming the Committees that are essential to keeping the Club running is getting a bit desperate – **PLEASE OFFER your time, enthusiasm, knowledge and skills to help make a vibrant, enthusiastic club that we all want to belong to.** Talk to Dennis or any other member of the General and Ruapehu Committees about contributing before the Annual General Meeting!

### Packrafting 101

Dan Clearwater, then the Development Officer for FMC, gave a talk from Queenstown about Packrafting to the Club recently – following a day on which he had tramped onto Sugarloaf, paraglided down to the Dart River and packrafted down the river back to his vehicle at the Glenorchy-Routeburn road. He gave very practical advice about how best to get introduced to the necessary skills, benefits and adventures of packrafting. The first piece was to attend a basic course.

Packrafting Queenstown are coming to Wellington to deliver a Packrafting 101 course on the weekend 19-20 November. It will cover paddling, packraft handling and rescue skills. The course has been initiated by members of WTMC (a stronghold of the recreation in Wellington at present); there are 12 spots available;

you can find out more from Claire Pettigrew (mob 022 353 3747);

you can find out more, sign up and pay a deposit at

[https://packrafting-queenstown.rezdy.com/501157/wellington-packrafting-101?fbclid=IwAR1bDhWh-P\\_cS1M6-Gp8GkMrLL7r1CsuliULdJUWrJh4\\_rq3OpLL7lzCsNc](https://packrafting-queenstown.rezdy.com/501157/wellington-packrafting-101?fbclid=IwAR1bDhWh-P_cS1M6-Gp8GkMrLL7r1CsuliULdJUWrJh4_rq3OpLL7lzCsNc)

Happy adventuring!

## Outdoor First Aid Course

In August 2021 we organised a short Outdoor First Aid Course in conjunction with the Upper Hutt Walking and Tramping Club. It was to be run by Kate Nickson of First Aid Consultants and participants were asked to contribute \$20 only to the costs of their up-skilling. The event was postponed by a Covid-19 outbreak. However it can now be run!

A course is scheduled for 8.30 am – 12.30 pm, Saturday 3 September at St Margaret's Church in Silverstream.

Subjects to be covered:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| CPR on an adult  | hypothermia |
| soft tissue injury   | burns       |
| shock  | breaks      |
| choking  | poisoning   |
| skills for keeping people alive and comfortable in a remote area until help arrives. |             |

I will contact each of the original group of HVTC participants – to check if you are able and want to attend this course – but any Club member keen to join the course is welcome to contact me about doing so – [murray.presland@xtra.co.nz](mailto:murray.presland@xtra.co.nz) ph (04) 562 8194. Everyone should be knowledgeable about first aid, being prepared for an emergency – and each of us should tramp with companions who are knowledgeable about first aid!

Murray Presland (once upon a time - [secretary@hvtc.org.nz](mailto:secretary@hvtc.org.nz) )

## RUAPEHU ROUNDUP:

Resupply went well this year. It usually does but there is always the chance of a hiccup especially in the weather department. Of particular note was the downright energy of the young Thompson family members. These guys were just brimming with enthusiasm and zest for getting those loads of supplies up the mountain, and stowed away for winter. So big shout out to Freyja, Ezra and Baxter Gray for their efforts on lodge restock weekend.

You may have heard chat about replacement of old double glazing at the lodge. These are windows in the ablutions and foyer area originally installed in the mid 70s. Two panes of glass intricately sandwiched into a timber frame with an air gap as the filling. For quite some years a few of these windows have had the air gap filling partially with a few centimetres of water. This water of course freezes quite regularly but somehow the glass seems to survive. Indeed, some report seeing life in this small water reservoir! DOC have not been informed! Another hazard has been the use of explosives by ski patrol for avalanche control close to the lodge. This has on occasions cracked a pane of glass but fortunately not both panes of one window. Replacement of these windows with a thicker modern, factory sealed, double glazed unit has been the obvious choice for a long time. However, there are about 16 units and they come at about \$500 each so there has been no rush to do this work while other maintenance priorities exist. We are very fortunate that two families have come to the rescue with donations to get the ball rolling. In this way we are able to proceed with the most urgent replacements. So, two have been completed last summer and we have donated funds to proceed with a further three or four this summer. Special thanks to Graeme and Matt Craig and Ian and Alison Ayson for your generosity.

It is hardly surprising to inform you that there is a fee increase this season. Our biggest costs each year are food, energy and insurance. We all know the first two have gone up in recent times and we shudder to think what the costs will be for the next insurance renewal. So, about a 10% increase to our very modest bunk and locker fees has been scheduled for this season.

Your committee is working hard to make the season another good one and looking forward to accepting your bookings! Keep an eye out for further work parties and feel free to offer help in any other way to help the lodge hum along.

*John Simes* - on behalf of the Ruapehu committee.

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Please welcome new member Valray Climo. We look forward to enjoying days in the hills with you.

*Doreen Courtenay*

Membership Officer

## TARARUA 2023 CALENDAR

By Peter Laurenson

Peter Laurenson who edits the FMC Backcountry Magazine, and who also spoke to our club recently on his Khumbu book is in the process of publishing a 2023 Tararua Calendar. Peter is moving to the South Island in November and before he heads off, he thought it would be a nice idea to publish some of his extensive collection of images in a calendar to share his experiences in the 'birthplace of tramping in NZ.'

As many of you will be aware from his Khumbu book, Peter is a very accomplished photographer so the calendar will make an excellent gift - It might also be a nice additional item of tramping memorabilia for our 100th anniversary.

The price per calendar is \$29 but this excludes postage or freight. For those of you that reside in Greater Wellington and who can make it to club, I propose to coordinate a bulk order and that way we get a free delivery to club and can save on postage - You only get to pay for the number of copies of the calendar that you wish to order. I will advise of payment procedures closer to the time - No need to pay just now; just let me know of your order size.

Please advise me of your interest and the number of calendars you would like by 20 August. (email: [dennismpage@gmail.com](mailto:dennismpage@gmail.com), phone: 021 229 9901) I will collate a list and pass details of numbers required onto Peter to help him finalise the publication run. Please only let me know if you are serious about ordering so we don't muck the publishers about.

For those members that live further afield and cannot make it to the club to collect, it is probably best that you contact Peter directly to order a copy - by calling/texting 021 446 725 to arrange details, email: [occasionalclimber@gmail.com](mailto:occasionalclimber@gmail.com)

This calendar is likely to be a 'one-off' publication so if you are keen, let me know by 20 August so we can ensure no-one misses out.

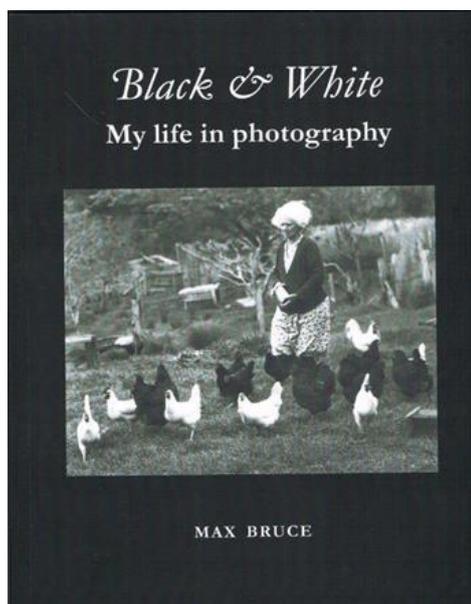
*Dennis Page*



# BLACK AND WHITE

## My life in photography

### By Max Bruce



Max Bruce, our club's premier image recorder, has published his memoirs of his now 92 years. This book covers a quite remarkable life and vocation, its brilliant text being accompanied by an extensive collection of his wonderful photographs, mostly black & white, and many of his paintings.

Revealed in its pages is Max's profound attachment to two very different landscapes: the untamed New Zealand back country, and the distant Shetland Isles, home to his forebears.

Above all, "Black and White" is a love story. Max met Pam Allender in 1950 when they both worked at the iconic National Publicity Studios. In Max's lively words and stunning photos, this volume celebrates their more than 70 years together and provides perceptive and often humorous insights into their shared journey.

*"We are very fortunate to have in our Club members like the Bruce Family who have contributed in so many ways and sincerely thank Max for sharing his life story with us. The book will be in our Library."*

*Alan Stevens*

This delightful book can be purchased for \$40.00 from:

Camera House

77 Queens Drive

Lower Hutt 5010

Email: [CameraHouse.Queensgate@gmail.com](mailto:CameraHouse.Queensgate@gmail.com)

04 566 2267

## TRIP REPORTS

### THE APITI RIDGE ROAD CYCLE TOUR.

13th and 14th May 2022, 160km

Mike Wespel-Rose

Our cat Mitze is 19. She is stone deaf. A few months ago she became blind. The vet explained it was due to high blood pressure. She is now on blood pressure pills. Now she is sometimes blind and other times she seems to see. But she can still get around the house, enjoys her food and sleeping and being stroked. So she is pretty dependant on us and we haven't been away for a while. However we decided we can't let her condition totally dominate our lives. So we planned a

two day trip away and got a friend Sue to come and visit and feed her while we were away. Sue likes Mitze a lot.

So last Friday 13th!! May we left Wellington with our bikes on the back of the car at 6.30am and headed for Palmerston North. This was a bikepacking trip described in the Kennet Brothers book "Bikepacking Aotearoa". In PN we parked in the car park in front of the council camp/cabin grounds that we had stayed in 5 years ago on our Tour Aotearoa journey. We were away by 9am.

Firstly the route takes you around cycle paths in PN itself as you head west of the city. A lot of travel on an shared cycle paths and an excellent cycle path beside the Mangaone Stream. Then we skirted around the PN airport and on to Bunnythorpe and further to Colyton, now on mainly quiet country roads. At Colyton we stopped at the Ginger Bird Café for a top class morning tea. Outside. A couple of cyclists were there. One of them when he heard where we were going, first told us the route ahead was pretty hilly. And also that bad weather and rain was coming. An older woman at another table replied for us " You just get started and you do it don't you". I also felt like saying but didn't "If it rains we can put our coats on".



We now continued east on sealed roads for 10 kms and then onto gravel. Now into quiet and pretty farmland. And great weather. Pollock Road. Our road starts to climb up. We will be cycling at up to 500 metres today. After an hour we reach ridge road where we stop for lunch. To the east we can now see the Ruahines and also the giant Pohangina Valley.

For the next 30 kms we are riding this exceptionally quiet undulating back country gravel farm road at around the 500 metre above sea level with a great outlooks both near and far.

During the next 30 kms we saw 3 vehicles A motor bike, a house truck, a famers ute . This was great riding on a nice day. After about 25kms the road returned to a tarseal surface and we raced downhill and into Apiti in the dusk. We went to the Apiti Tavern and had fish and chips.

It was now 6.30, dark and very cold, We put on lots of clothes for the 7km ride to out accommodation at the Makoura Lodge. Our ride on this back country road in the pitch dark with just our bike lights was both strange and exciting. The lodge stay was a bit pricey but a very nice place to overnight.

The next day was supposed to be mainly down hill. After a big downhill immediately on leaving the Lodge on seal, we were back on gravel for a big climb back up. The next 2 hours felt really quite remote and also interesting. The remoteness meant that this area was not settled by Europeans until later in the 19th Century. We finally came to Pohingna East Road where we were back to tar seal. Where we turned right. The guide said left. An error. Left would have taken you to Whangarei.

Much closer to the Ruahines now we could also look up high to the right and the ridge that we had come along yesterday. The further down valley we went the more developed the farms became. But still minimal traffic.

Completely gorgeous stands of exotic trees at the height of their autumn colours. This was very beautiful to see and was a reward for riding this road in early winter. And the small old churches and community halls, some deserted some still used. That would have been at the heart of community.



We are guided off the main road to another back road. The climbing is a bit trying now. But always interesting.

At Pohangina village we stop for lunch. The nor-Wester has come up but that suits us as we ride with the wind generally on our stern quarter. At Ashhurst we stop for afternoon tea, at the same café we used on Tour Aotearoa. We have been on parts of todays route previously on our TA..

After Ashhurst we need to be on the main road for just a little. Then turn left and down to the river which we ride beside. At one point the riverside track stops – it will be developed soon. However we need to return back to the main road and ride down that for a couple of kms. It is now raining quite hard, so we put our coats on. And the traffic is busy. But there is a good shoulder and not far to go.

After a few kms we turn left and take quiet roads back to the river trail as we ride through market garden country.

Back at the river – the Manawatu, it is easy riding on a well-developed multi use path back to our car.

By about 4.30 and still light.

A very interesting and varied trip.

I think it is a trip that many would find very interesting. Would I lead it as a club trip? Maybe. But it was physically quite hard. I would think about 800 metres of accumulated climb day 1 and 500 day 2. And the gravel takes energy. Electric bikes would be fine. I think for leg powered bikes it would be in the medium fit class. And you would want reasonable weather on the ridge road which is high and exposed.

*Mike*

## **SPION KOP (MAKARETU) HUT**

**14 MAY 2022**

**Andrew Robinson**

A week out and I had four takers and a good forecast for my grade two overnight trip to find Spion Kop (Makaretu) hut and explore the Makaretu Stream west of the Waiopehu track. Unfortunately the forecast steadily deteriorated during the week which led to one person deciding not to come, then on Saturday another rang in sick. Fortunately the two remaining were happy to make a last minute change to just a day trip. After some hasty repacking from the each of us, Catharina Fisher, Anna Davison and I left the clubrooms at 8:15 Saturday morning in the Fishers' car. It was the first time for me on the new highway north of Wellington and the first time on the new bridge at the start of Poads Road. Being a day trip, it was only 10 minutes at the carpark then we were off.

15 minutes of walking took us to the park boundary and the Waiopehu track. Part of the objective for the day was to practise using map and compass and see if we could find the hut without using gps or phone. I had estimated it would take about 20 minutes up the Waiopehu track to reach a point where we could head due west off track to Makaretu Stream then hopefully pick up an unmarked track to the unmarked hut. 20 minutes proved to be about right. We had a short break before heading down towards the first of two unnamed streams to cross before we reached Makaretu Stream. We soon found there was no avoiding the supplejack, but generally it wasn't too difficult to negotiate. Certainly having relatively light packs made it easier. Catharina and Anna found it easier than me, but I had a pair of secateurs which, though they didn't give me the (cutting) edge, enabled me to keep pace. After twenty minutes descending we reached the first stream. It was then another twenty minutes over a small ridge to get to the next stream. There were hints that other people had been that way previously, including the odd random marker, but navigation was straightforward enough without a track. After a climb out of the second stream similar to that out of the first we were soon started on the big descent to Makaretu Stream. Normally it's a good idea to stay out of gullies when descending, but we found ourselves in one that seemed worth a gamble so we continued and it proved negotiable all the way down to Makaretu Stream. It had taken an hour and a half from the Waiopehu track. After a quick break we decided to carry on, hoping to get to the hut in time for a late lunch. I made a rough guess as to where we were based on the course of the stream and decided that we were a bit too far upstream from the likely start of the unmarked track on the ridge in front of us to head downstream

to try to pick it up, so we headed up, aiming for the top. Still plenty of supplejack, but otherwise not too difficult. After forty minutes of climbing we stumbled onto the unmarked track and from there it was twenty-five minutes on an easy track to Spion Kop hut. It had taken three and a half hours from the carpark and we'd found our way there without using a gps.



Spion Kop/Makaretu Hut

The hut is a fairly spacious low-roofed two bunk hut with a corrugated iron roof, clear plastic walls and a woodburner. We had had the odd shower of rain on the way in but chose to have our late lunch outside on the nice wooden seat and managed to eat our lunch without getting rained on. We decided it best not to linger because as well as the impending rain there was the possibility of tramping in the dark, something I wanted to avoid. I anticipated saving perhaps as much as half an hour on the return journey by following the ridge track past the point at which we met it on the way in and hoping that we might pick up a trail heading in our direction once we'd got to the bottom.

Indeed it was good going and when we got to the bottom we found another track, but after a few minutes found it was heading away from where we wanted to go. We bushbashed back down to the stream then found another track but again decided it was heading the wrong way. We then had a big climb in front of us. It was reasonable going until we got into some kiekie and it got quite steep. Negotiating that gobbled up any time we might have gained, but perseverance got us through. When we eventually reached the first of the two unnamed streams between Makaretu Stream and the Waiopehu track the rain decided to set in, but at least it wasn't cold. Three quarters of an hour later we hit the Waiopehu track so our journey was nearly over. Thirty five minutes later we were back at the car and it was still light, just. At the carpark was a couple who had just come out and said the wind and rain on Gable End Ridge were atrocious. We'd had no wind and were very grateful for that.

Thank you to Catharina and Anna for joining me on a trip with lots of unknowns and uncertainties and making it an interesting adventure.

As a footnote, looking at the gps track afterwards we first hit Makaretu Stream about 400 metres downstream from where I thought we had. The stream had a left turn in it where we were, so I looked on the map for one about where I thought we were and found one. Following the guidance Patrick gave at a recent club talk I should have confirmed it with two other things. One could have been a bearing on the stream heading and the other could have been the presence of a gully nearby. That would have sufficed to correctly identify our location, though I think in this instance we would still have taken the route we did

*Andrew*

## **ECCLESFIELD/SILVERSTREAM WALK**

**22 May 2022**

**Jackie West**

A group of nineteen strode into the bush at the end of Chichester Drive on a track that you need to know is there as there are no signs just a gap in the bush by a white fence. Within five minutes we had taken a turn to the left to sidle through the bush to the Ecclesfield Reserve. This patch of predominately beech forest which had been privately owned was gifted to Forest and Bird in 1965. Here the tracks are well maintained and there are several benches and a lookout which makes it an ideal place for morning tea.

Having enjoyed a break we continued on towards the trig at 155m passing above Remutaka Prison which could be glimpsed down through the trees. At the trig we reached the area that had been burnt in the Anniversary Weekend fire. The fire began in a pile of grass clippings that had been dumped under pine trees behind a property below the two reservoirs. When the home owner



saw steam rising from the clippings they opened them up only to have the clippings burst into flame. The fire spread quickly uphill through pine & scrub and burning some native trees as well as coming dangerously close to houses. Five months after the fire there is a green tinge to parts of the hillside with gorse, bracken and toi sprouting. New growth is also unfurling from blackened punga trunks. With less vegetation there is a panoramic view of all the many new buildings in Trentham/Heretaunga area of Upper Hutt including the state of art NZ Campus of Innovation and Sport on the old CIT site.

After admiring the view and identifying various place we had a short walk through the streets re-entering the bush at the top of Chatsworth Road. From there it was back to the burn & retracing our steps to the junction of three tracks. Here we had lunch in an open area under beech trees. After lunch our route back to Chichester Drive only took about thirty minutes arriving four hours

after we had started. For me the most negative aspect of this tramp is because it is close an urban area you never get away from the sound of traffic, lawn mowers, traffic and chain saws.

As we drove home down Blue Mountain Roads we saw a walking pole lying on the road ahead. We were among the last to leave so deciding the pole probably belonged to one of our group we stopped and retrieved it. At home we sent out an email and soon had a reply with photos of two poles one of which was the partner of the one we had. Before we could reply the owner phoned. Advice for trampers with poles when you return to your car put the poles in the boot and NOT on the car roof.

On the tramp: Doreen Courtenay, Geoff Wilkin, Pauline Prendergast, Vera de Graauw, Bruce Miller, Heather Eskdale, Rob Buxton, Jim Cousins, Lex Grubner, Valray Climo, Cathy and Mike Priest, David McQueen, Tania Hatfield, Ann Hayman, John Smeith, Utsav Trivedi and leaders Chris and Jackie West.

*Jackie*

## **BARING HEAD TREE PLANTING**

**Graeme Lythgoe**

### **Thursday 19 May 2022**

Friends of Baring Head have another planting season planned for this winter and the first tranche of trees - all ngaio - were waiting for us just over the bridge. Eleven of us arrived slightly earlier than usual as the forecast was bad for the afternoon. The one wheelbarrow was put to good use in helping carry the plants to where they were needed. Paula had previously grubbed some of the sites for the plants so it made for easy work to know exactly where to site each specimen. We planted on both sides of the river downstream from the bridge, including putting protective matting for weed suppression and weighing these with sticks or rocks.

The morning weather was almost ideal, cloudy and mild but strong winds from the NW - still, better than having sandflies which can be really annoying in calm conditions.

After lunch the clouds became much darker and it looked as though it was raining further north. Sure enough the forecast rain arrived just as we were finishing the last load of ngaio and we were very happy to finish and retreat to the van.

We planted about 330 young trees and the heavy rain would have been welcome as most of the ground was quite dry despite recent rain.

There will be further planting days - probably one a month - through the winter. It would be really good to see some new faces at these sessions as the work is not too arduous and are a good social occasion as well as being very worthwhile for the environment.

Those who enjoyed getting down on their knees were: Elaine and Derek Richardson, Catherine Croucher and Patrick Fotheringham, John Simes, John Fox, Neil Parker, Murray Presland, Chris Ward, Paula Warren and me.

## 2nd Winter Planting Party Friday 17th June 2022

This day's effort was based near the south end of the flat on some higher ground and again featured mainly Ngaio plants, with a few *Coprosma robusta* and Manuka. The PB2 black plastic containers were really holding the roots back and, in most cases, it was hard work to loosen them enough to remove the PB2s. It was really time to get them into the ground a lot of which was very stony and hard work getting a big enough hole dug. Thus, we were down on numbers planted compared to last time, although a change of venue after lunch to lovely soft soil saw things speed up.

The day stayed fine - just some very light drizzle for a short period with a cold southerly wind. Despite the conditions there were quite a few sandflies which seemed strange given the temperature. We started about 1015 and ended at 1600 hours.

Those who got down on their knees for this cause were: Elaine and Derek Richardson, Jackie and Chris West, Meryl Park and Ian Flux, Bruce Miller, Martin Watson, Doc Watson, Neil Parker, Paula Warren and me.

To all a big thank you!

*Graeme*

## TOP GORGE HUT Queen's Birthday weekend, 4 - 6 June 2022 Andrew Robinson

Chriselda and Murray McMillan, Catharina Fisher and I set off from the clubrooms at 1 o'clock Friday afternoon of Queen's birthday weekend which got us to the end of Petersons Road near Apiti at 4:30 and Heritage Lodge just after 5 o'clock. It was nice to have the hut to ourselves.



Tunupo

Saturday morning we started with the long gradual ascent to Tunupo, on a former logging track for quite a while. We stopped for morning tea not far from the bush line and when we heard voices behind us we figured it was time to get moving again. As the bush opened up ahead of us we could see a dusting of snow on Tunupo. When we reached Tunupo it was in light cloud, but that meant we had the right conditions to see a Brocken spectre. Shortly after, the trampers we'd heard then seen behind us joined us on Tunupo. Catharina quizzed them on routes out of Top Gorge hut, having earlier suggested we could take a

different route out from Top Gorge hut to the route we would be taking in. We were told of a route upstream that could work for us, but would mean getting wet feet. The couple headed towards Iron Gate hut and we followed soon after. The clouds lifted before long and with little to no wind it was very pleasant walking. We stopped about three quarters of an hour later for lunch in a sheltered spot away from the very occasional breeze which had a real bite to it. We could have sat there all day enjoying the views in all directions, but we did have to get moving. Fifteen minutes later at the turn off to Top Gorge hut we met a solo trumper and Catharina quizzed him about routes out of Top Gorge hut. He told us just what we wanted to hear - there was a track right behind the hut that went up to the main track along the Ruahine Range. That made a route via Longview hut and Pohangina Saddle a practical option. The distance would be longer, but the climb wouldn't be as steep and would be split in two. And we'd keep our feet dry.

The sign to Top Gorge hut said two hours, but I reckoned we would take less than that. There was no marked route to begin with, but once we got onto the spur there was a good track to follow. Towards the bottom it was quite steep. Seeing the Pohangina River on the descent I thought our chances of getting across with dry feet were slim, but when we reached it an hour and a half from the top, it looked we might be able to do it. After a bit of searching we found a good place to cross and managed to keep feet dry. Top Gorge hut was empty so there was room for the four of us. True to what we'd been told earlier there was a track behind the hut. Catharina followed it for a bit and it headed in the right direction.

About half an hour after we arrived a woman tramping by herself turned up and she was not in good humour. When the options to accommodate her were not to her liking she disappeared in a huff. She returned about half an hour later with a much-improved attitude and we sorted things out.

Our dinner was a colourful and tasty affair - pumpkin, kumara, carrot, capsicum, onion, mushrooms, and beetroot, with a coconut curry sauce.

We had a fine but chilly night and in the morning we decided that since the weather was good we'd take the track behind the hut. Although there was not much of a footpad it was well marked and it took us an hour to ascend. The hardest part was finding our way through the scrub after the climb. Once onto the main track it was an hour and three quarters to Longview hut for an early lunch. As we left the hut Murray spotted a group of about eight people presumably heading



*Top Gorge Hut*

for Longview hut, but we didn't meet them as we headed for Pohangina Saddle. On the ascent out of the saddle we met a group that had come from Howletts hut about four hours away. After the turnoff to Howletts we met a group from the Wanganui Tramping Club and shortly after that we met a group of about seven teenaged girls doing a silver Duke of Edinburgh trip. They looked overdressed in their hats, scarves and over trousers. They were heading for Longview hut and I think one of the groups we met earlier was too, so Longview hut was going to be crowded that night.

Just before meeting the girls we had passed a sign that said three hours to Iron Gate hut. That meant it might have been dark by the time we got to Iron Gate hut, but again I reckoned we could knock half an hour off the time. I had been that way previously though in the opposite direction and couldn't remember any issues with the track. The last twenty minutes or so were quite steep and there were a couple of patches that required a bit of care, but we did do the stretch in two and a half hours.

At Iron Gate hut the fire was going and a father and son were in residence. We knew they'd be there, having been told by the Wanganui Tramping Club party. In a similar way, nearly everyone

we met over the weekend knew there was a Hutt Valley Tramping Club group out and about, either from seeing the club van or from talking to other trampers. Tod, a dairy farmer from Pahiatua (a cow squeezer in his own words), was good company as was his son Logan who was carving wooden spoons. We were joined later by a solo trumper who had interesting stories to tell, having been to Antarctica several times. With the hut being just a couple of years old it was well insulated and with the fire going we had a cosy night.

Monday was a straightforward tramp out with the only diversion being an attempt to find a disappearing stream. Several streams were shown disappearing on the map so we chose one that disappeared in the vicinity of the track. When we got to the point on the track nearest where the stream had supposedly disappeared a stream was flowing across the track. Catharina and I followed it upstream for about ten minutes, well past the point on the map where it supposedly disappeared, but it was above ground the whole time. I wonder how many other people have gone in search of the non-disappearing stream. We had lunch at Heritage Lodge then an easy half hour back to the van, a pleasant way to finish off what had been a very enjoyable trip.

*Andrew*

## EARTHQUAKE LIGHT

Dr Neil Whitehead, ex GNS

*Hills and Valleys* .....hmm - this one is about the valleys!

It may surprise you to learn that the Hutt Valley is an internationally significant place for earthquake light. What's that? Well the picture below shows what it can look like. A white centre, but overall, like a pale blue flash, sometimes turquoise, more rarely other colours, and usually a couple of dozen flashes, each about half a second. Usually a dome on the ground, ranging from pineapple-sized to geodesic dome-size with colours getting more intense at the outer fringes. But a few marine flashes have been reported as well.



*Sendai, Japan, (2022) earthquake light on road, and illuminating buildings. Colour turquoise.*

Earthquake lights happened in our valley during the Kaikoura earthquake in 2016. Did you see any? Or even during another earthquake at another place? There are still things we do not understand, and the more accounts the better, so can you contact me at [neil@chchquake.co.nz](mailto:neil@chchquake.co.nz) or 5650263 with your stories?

There were reports of the Kaikoura earthquake light, from Hanmer Springs to as far as Kerikeri. In the Wellington region there were 11 videos which captured the phenomenon, and it looked downright apocalyptic, with reflections in clouds. So strange, that people were even reluctant to talk about it, but the collected 60 accounts were valuable. Earthquake light was in the 2010 Christchurch earthquake too; one man actually drove through the centre of one such dome. See one of the published papers:

(<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288228703-Origin-of-Earthquake-Light-Associated-with-Earthquakes-in-Christchurch-New-Zealand-2010-2011>) For video examples, mainly international ones, try googling "earthquake light".

The best explanation of origin is seismic pressure on minute quartz crystals a few tens of metres underground. Negative charge is (briefly) retained, but a wave of positive charge reaches the ground surface and interacts with the air to give the light. Have you seen these strange lights?

*Neil*

## RAIN

A poem from the TTC newsletter, brought to us by Mike Wespel Rose, .

It rained and rained and rained and rained  
the average fall was well maintained,  
and when the lawns were simply bogs  
it started raining cats and dogs.

After a drought of half an hour  
there came a most refreshing shower.  
And then the most curious thing of all –  
a gentle rain began to fall.

A little cloud went floating by  
releasing a deluge from the sky  
that wetted people to the skin  
and after that the rain set in.

Folks wondered what they next would get.  
They got in fact, a lot of wet.

But sometime soon we'll have a change  
and then perhaps we'll get more rain.

[By a visitor to the island of Mull in Scotland during a soggy summer].

*The views expressed in the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Hutt Valley Tramping Club. Any queries or comments should be directed to the writer of the article. Contributions to the Hills & Valleys are welcomed and encouraged but all are accepted on the understanding that the Editor has the authority to make minor changes if deemed necessary, refer back to the contributor for amendment, or return the contribution for amendment by the Writer.*