



# Hills & Valleys

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE HUTT VALLEY TRAMPING CLUB (Inc)



*The Dusky Track – Tarns on the Pleasant Range..*

*Photo: Murray McMillan*



Please submit your **August 2023** H&V articles to the editor by **29<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

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



**5 July: Derek and Elaine Richardson – Kayaking Around New Zealand**

As total kayaking novices, Derek and Elaine have been discovering the pleasures of life on water and waves. Every summer they dust off their kayak and explore unusual aquatic corners of Aotearoa. Their trips included both day and multi-day 'pack-paddling'. Places visited include the far north down to the Sounds in the south.

**12 July : Tim Labett – Retirement Trips**

Tim is providing a photo show, on his mission to go on heaps of trips before his body craps out. Highlights include out of season great walks, Tararua trips, deer and fungi hunting with a camera, and the odd thing that doesn't go quite as planned.

**19 July : Andy Carruthers – The S – K Challenge**

Join the adventure-loving community as they push their limits and embark on the ultimate physical and mental challenge – the S-K. (*The S-K is a North-South traverse of the Tararua Mountain Range.*) Experience the thrill of rewriting history as they tackle the Tararua range, proving that everyday life doesn't have to be safe and mundane. From the courageous trailblazers Dave Capper and Bruce Jeffries to the current trailblazers carrying on their legacy, be inspired by their determination and grit. Witness their incredible journey in this heart-pumping film, and get ready to be motivated to take on your own challenge.

Starring:

Tim Sutton, Joe Murphy, Andy Carruthers, Megan Sety, Dave Capper, Sir Graeme Dingle KNZM, MBE, Gary Goldsworthy, Jean Beaumont, Chris Martin, Olivia Lawrence, Chris Swallow, Colin Rolfe

**26 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.

**2 August: Catherine Croucher – Te Araroa: the bottom bit.**

NOBO; EFI; Bluff to the Rangitata River; 680km; 44 days, November 19, 2022 to January 2, 2023; 5 days off. Catherine lost 8.5kg and yes, Patrick did some of it with her. Her new phone not only survived rough treatment, but also took quite good pictures.





## 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.

### JULY

Fri 7	WP	Baring Head Planting	Murray Presland	022 656 8309
7 – 9	T2	Tongariro Crossing	Dave Hanley	027 711 2644
Sun 9	D1	West Whakanui – East Whakanui	Jackie West	528 4697
14 - 16	<b>Matariki</b>			
Fri 14	D1	Matariki dawn walk	Marina Skinner	021 792 260
	T1			
	T2	tba Ruahines	Andrew Robinson	586 2438
Sat or Sun	D1	Turbine - Red Rocks	Bernice & Bob	021 994 854
Fri 21	WP	Baring Head Planting	Murray Presland	022 656 8309
22 – 23	T1			
Sun 23	D1	Wainui Water Collection area	Nick McBride	021 410 551
Thu 27	Bike	Raumati – Te Horo Cycle	Bernice & Bob	021 994 854
29 – 30	T1			
Sat or Sun	D1	Turakirae Head seals	Anja van Kesteren	564 8851

### AUGUST

Tue 1	☾	Butterfly Creek	Chris McMillan	027 434 2114
5 – 6	T1			
Sat or Sun	D1	Mt Marchant	Bernice & Bob	021 994 854
Fri 11	WP	Baring Head Planting (or Sat 12)	Murray Presland	022 656 8309

## FROM THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

July 2023

## UPDATE ON THE CLUB VAN

Good news - the club van is back in service and is available once more for trip bookings.

For those of you who may not be aware, the club van undergoes annual services and is monitored by the transport officer (John Smeith ) and our resident mechanic (Doc Watson). Unfortunately the van availability has not been consistent since September, due to follow-on issues after the van was serviced. The gearbox became problematic, which worsened to the point that it suffered irreversible damage. After substantial investigation with the service provider, the gearbox was replaced at their cost. John and Doc took the van for a test drive over the Remutaka Hill to confirm the van's serviceability on 9th June, and gave the thumbs up.

Trip leaders are encouraged to use the van for larger groups, as this is an easy and effective mode of transport (and contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions, rather than using multiple vehicles for a trip). If you're unsure about how to book the van or would like to have a familiarization before you drive it on a trip, then please get in touch with John.

*John Smeith*

Transport Officer

# WILDERNESS MAGAZINE



The club subscribes to Wilderness Magazine, and it's available at our library on club nights. It's a great resource for trip planning and ideas, and gear reviews.

*Kate Brownsword*

On behalf of the General Committee

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ***RUAPEHU EVENTS 2023***

***Please note that all events will go ahead since the Whakapapa ski field is operational this winter.***

<b><i>In</i></b>	<b><i>Out</i></b>	<b><i>Event</i></b>	
Mon 10 July	Fri 14 July	July School Holiday week 2	<i>Contact Booking Officer (Sheldon Bruce) 027 451 0415</i>
Mon 14 Aug	Fri 18 Aug	Club Week 1	<i>Contact Booking Officer (Sheldon Bruce) 027 451 0415</i>
Mon 28 Aug	Fri 1 Sept	Club Week 2 (Uni & young professionals)	<i>Contact Booking Officer (Sheldon Bruce) 027 451 0415</i>
Fri 01 Sept	Sun 03 Sept	Centenary dinner at the lodge and 100 ski/board laps	<i>Contact Kate Brownsword 027 562 0177</i>
Mon 04 Sept	Fri 08 Sept	Club Week 3 (Vets and allcomers)	<i>Contact Russell Oliver 021 245 9596</i>
Mon 11 Oct	Fri 15 Oct	Club Week 4	<i>Contact Booking Officer (Sheldon Bruce) 027 451 0415</i>
Mon 25 Sept	Fri 29 Sept	October School Holiday week 1	<i>Contact Booking Officer (Sheldon Bruce) 027 451 0415</i>
Mon 02 Oct	Fri 09 Oct	October School Holiday week 2	<i>Contact Kate Brownsword 027 562 0177</i>

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.



*Matariki (the Pleiades star cluster)*

# MATARIKI DAWN WALK TO BOULDER HILL

## Friday 14 July 2023

We are celebrating Matariki, the Māori new year, with a pre-dawn walk to Boulder Hill on Friday 14 July.

We're joining Pareraho Forest Trust and the Kelson Community Association to see the Matariki stars and sunrise from one of the Hutt Valley's high points.

Trip leader Marina Skinner will email details of the trip in coming days.

*Marina Skinner*

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## Wednesday 26 July, 2023

You will shortly receive the Notice for the Annual General Meeting of the Hutt Valley Tramping Club to be held on Wednesday 26 July, 2023 plus the Annual Report for the year 2022-23.

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. 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 Marina or any other member of the General and Ruapehu Committees about contributing before the Annual General Meeting!

# REMINDER - 2023 HVTC PHOTO COMPETITION

## Entries close Sunday 6 August - but please do it sooner!

Come-on all you aspiring photographers – please sort out and submit your entries for the Club's 2023 Photo Competition soon! Despite being given notice of the event in the May and June editions of Hills and Valleys just one Clubmember has submitted his/her entries – and I will happily award all the trophies to this person if others amongst you do not hurry up with your entries! Please make the judge's time worthwhile, and save the club embarrassment, by providing a good selection of your best shots – and ease my task in presenting the images to the judge well-before the close-off date for entries on Sunday 6 August.

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 edition of Hills & Valleys. Briefly these are:

### FMC CATEGORIES

- 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

- 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.
- Except for the Historic category, entries must have been taken since 1 January 2021.
- Please submit digital images, as .jpg or .tif files, to Murray Presland ( [murray.presland@xtra.co.nz](mailto:murray.presland@xtra.co.nz) ) – as e-mail attachments, or on a USB memory stick or on a cd or dvd disc, or via cloud-storage.
- Please label image files as follows:  
Category Photographer Caption eg **ABN** Graeme McVerry Crater Lake

## SCANNING OF SLIDES/PRINTS

If you wish to enter images from prints or slides in any category – and we will be especially delighted to receive entries in the Historic category in this year of the Club's Centenary - I am happy to arrange their being scanned into digital format. Please ensure the originals are in good condition and have been cleaned to remove dust - and submit them a week or more ahead of the closing date – ie before Sunday 30 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.

**The deadline for entries is Sunday 6 August (a week earlier for slides/prints that need to be scanned)** – allowing time to collate entries, for the judge to deliberate, and for cups to be engraved – all in preparation for presentation at the Clubnight meeting on Wednesday 6 September.

*Murray Presland*

Organiser, 2023 HVTC Photo Competition

## RUAPEHU ROUNDUP

Hi everyone

Skiing and snow boarding will be happening on Mt Ruapehu this winter!

Many of you will have seen the news yesterday that the government has agreed funding to allow the ski season to go ahead this year.

The lodge is open, our custodian Laura is there now - and it's snowing!

We will be restocking food at the lodge on 7-8 July. If you are able to help move our food up the mountain, please contact Russell Oliver on 021 245 9596, email [russell@gnawt.co.nz](mailto:russell@gnawt.co.nz), or John Simes on 565 0259, email [john.e.simes@gmail.com](mailto:john.e.simes@gmail.com)

Our Centenary Dinner will go ahead on September 2 - further details to come. If you'd like to help organise this fun event, please email Kate Brownsword on [the.brownswords@xtra.co.nz](mailto:the.brownswords@xtra.co.nz)

To make a booking this winter, please contact Sheldon Bruce on 027 451 0415 or [ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz](mailto:ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz)

Thanks and looking forward to seeing you in the snow!

*Kate Brownsword*

On behalf of the Ruapehu Committee



# MT RUAPEHU/RUAPEHU ALPINE LIFTS - UPDATE - JULY 2023

Great news there will be a 2023 season.

Season passes go on sale from Monday July 3rd for 2 weeks only. There are several options with adult passes priced at \$599 (Anytime) or \$349 (Weekdays). See <https://www.mtruapehu.com>. Life passes will be honoured for the season.

The skifields will be run by Ruapehu Alpine Lifts (RAL) after the government provided a further \$5 million loan allowing the season to go ahead. RAL is now in liquidation with PWC the liquidators. This resulting from the 20 June creditor watershed meeting where none of the proposals from potential purchasers (Ruapehu Skifield Stakeholders Association, Whakapapa Holdings and Pure Turoa) were successful. PWC and MBIE now enter negotiations with interested parties including Tūwharetoa who have a bond secured against the Sky Whaka gondola.

Major issues for new owners are the Department of Conservation concessions required to operate in the Tongariro World Heritage National Park. RAL have the current concessions (one for Whakapapa and one for Turoa). Granting concessions requires extensive consultation including with local iwi.

While there is certainty for this season the future beyond 2023 is unclear. The government funding has allowed more time to find a solution.

We will report on progress.

*David Biegel*

for the Ruapehu Committee

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Please welcome new members Ethan Price and Jude Spier.. We look forward to enjoying days in the hills with you.

*Doreen Courtenay*

Membership Officer

## HVTC BAKING COMPETITION - June 21st.

Thanks to all those who embraced the theme for the evening. It was a great success with a variety of entries in each category.

While the judges were tasting and testing, we were entertained by members recalling tramping/skiing/biking stories with a food theme.

After notices were read and prizes awarded, we were let loose to sample all the entries. By the number of empty plates at the end of the evening, every entry would be appreciated on a club trip.

Special thanks to Debbie Bainbridge and Doc Watson who did a sterling job of judging.

Results are as follows.

Category 1-Hi energy snack.

1st place--Andrew Robinson, Weetbix slice.

Category 2. Savoury lunch item.

1st place--Julie Lewis, Panakeke Bread.

Category 3--Hutt friendly dessert.

1st place--Vera de Graauw, Chia seed,coconut,apricot and almond pudding.

Category 4--Tararua biscuits, with a twist.

1st place--Bruce Miller.

Special award for most creative/imaginative entry.

John Flux--for Shackleton's biscuits and the story behind them.

There have been a number of requests for copies of recipes. We are planning to have some of these printed in the next H and V.

*Julie Lewis*

## **GAS CANISTERS**

### **GETTING THE DREGS OUT OF BUTANE GAS CANISTERS.**

**Patrick Fotheringham.**

#### **The Problem**

It is a common problem with nearly empty butane gas canisters. The gas output drops to an inconveniently low level, making you want to switch to a new (full) canister. You can hear there is still liquid gas inside when you shake the canister and the bottom of the canister feels cold.

#### **A Little Bit of Science.**

Sweating is a major cooling mechanism for trampers. Your skin produces slightly salty water that evaporates by drawing heat energy from your skin. Turning a liquid into a vapour requires energy input, it is referred to as the "heat of vaporization". It represents the energy that a molecule of water on the surface of a drop of your sweat must find from somewhere to become a molecule of water vapour just above the surface. Oddly, the temperature of the water molecule making the transition does not change but it has moved from liquid (a lower energy state) to gas (a higher energy state). Fortunately, for us trampers, the remaining water molecules in the drop of sweat are chilled slightly by providing the heat energy needed by the molecule making the liquid to vapour transition. This liquid to vapour (or gas) transition provides us sweaty trampers with a very efficient cooling system.

#### **Back to the Gas Canister.**

As you draw off the compressed gas, the liquefied gas in the canister evaporates to maintain the internal pressure equilibrium between the gas and liquid. The evaporating gas draws heat energy from the remaining liquefied gas, in the same way as a sweaty tramper cools down. If there is a lot of liquid gas there is no problem, it cools only slightly. If the canister is nearly empty, the remaining gas cools down very quickly. Butane is a liquid at atmospheric pressure at about 0°C, so as the remaining liquid gas cools to a few degrees, it is less inclined to evaporate, which causes the frustration when using a nearly empty canister.

#### **The Simple Fix.**

The simple fix is to place the canister in 1cm, or so, of water. The water provides the heat energy required for the remaining canister gas to evaporate. The canister will be able to provide full gas output until the last drop of liquid gas is gone, at this point the gas pressure will drop quite quickly.





The water does not need to be warm.

The water must not be deep enough for the canister to float (which could be dangerous).

*Patrick*

## **DISPOSAL OF EMPTY GAS CANISTERS**

**Chris & Jackie West**

We have found a company in Upper Hutt that will take empty canisters for recycling so are happy to collect these on club nights.

Our only request is that they are completely "burnt out"-we have a tool that screws onto the canister which can then be used to puncture same but the instructions say to not proceed if there are any signs of escaping gas.

We will place a box in clubrooms for collection of same.

*Chris & Jackie*

## **TRIP REPORTS**

### **AVA PARK ENVIRONMENTAL WORKPARTY**

**3 June 2023**

**John Simes**

The HVTC patch of bush at Ava Park got a good makeover today on a glorious sunny Saturday morning. 13 turned up and there was much chatter and many weeds pulled. Remaining blackberry was pulled by the roots, the northern end is now very tidy, about 10 plants were added. Cake was eaten. This was a good turnout and we all had a good time proving the value, yet again, of having a small easy to get to, simple environmental task for all comers. Thanks team. For the future I have plenty more plants specifically for this patch under cultivation, so there will be more workpartys to come.

*John*

**2 Davids 2 Andrews 1 Catharina**

**29-30 April 2023**

**Andrew Robinson**

For my trip at the end of April I decided to repeat a trip I did to Neill Forks hut in 2013. I got five takers which made taking the club van the best option but we had no van driver. One person pulled out a few days before the trip which meant we could then all squeeze into one car so I set about organising that but then David McQueen stepped up and got himself signed up as a van driver which made things easier.

We (Andrew Robinson, Andrew Fisher, Catharina Fisher, David McQueen and David Hanley) left Saturday morning and were on the track about 9:30 heading up the Waiohine River. As there was a lot of mud and little in the way of views for the first couple of hours I found the track not overly appealing though it wasn't difficult. At our first stop I realised I'd been going a bit too fast as one of the party was not quite as recovered from Covid as they'd thought. About half way to Totara Flats

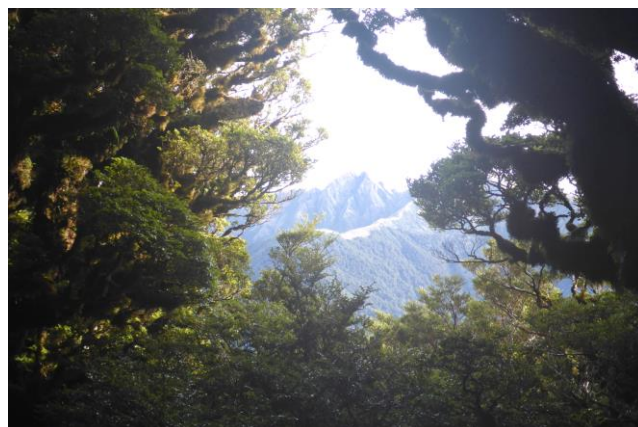
hut we started to get a bit of variety and some views and when we hit Totara Flats the going was very good. We stopped for a map check to decide on the best route as we neared the site of Tōtara Flats hut number two and turned the stop into our lunch stop. It was a good spot for lunch - grassy, flat, with a view up and down the valley and the weather was warm but not hot.

When we reached the old hut site after lunch my memory of the route was correct in that the bush was pretty open and route finding was straight forward. There was a small amount of supplejack for perhaps the first twenty minutes and it was easily negotiated. Occasionally we saw bits of supplejack that had been cut reasonably recently (within the last few months at a guess) but they were about the only signs we saw that other people sometimes use the route. We had earlier redistributed some of the gear from our Covid recoveree and that avoided the group getting too spread out. Part way up we did another gear redistribution and that enabled us to do the 750 metres of height gain to Cone Ridge in a reasonable three and a half hours.

When we reached the top it wasn't far off getting dark. We carried on along the ridge for another quarter of an hour to the start of the track down to Neill Forks hut. I would quite happily have done the one-hour steep descent to Neill Forks in the dark but wiser heads than mine recommended finding a place to camp for the night and I followed their recommendation. Catharina found the best available site and it wasn't too bad. It was big enough for the large club fly and level enough with not too many bumps. It was a good thing we had tent poles as we otherwise might have had to make do with a less suitable spot. Once we'd put the fly up Andrew and Catharina went off in search of water. Despite being on a ridge they came back about quarter of an hour later with filled water bottles which was just as well because I was out of water. It was dead calm as we cooked and ate tea so there was zero wind chill factor and at 13° it didn't feel that cold.

Remarkably it was almost completely still throughout the entire night with just the occasional tiny hint of a breeze. The temperature dropped about 5° overnight, with an incoming layer of cloud stopping it from dropping any more than that. In the morning everything including the fly was still dry.

Not having descended to Neill Forks hut meant we didn't have to start Sunday with a climb. Instead we made our way along Cone Ridge which is one of those bits of track that isn't as easy as it looks on the map, though still not too bad. Along the way there were breaks in the bush every now and then which gave us good views of the parallel Tararua Range south of the Tararua Peaks. After about an hour we popped out of the bush and had morning tea at the tarns just before Cone. It was lovely lazing on the rocks in the sun. From Cone the rest of the way was in bush and mostly downhill. As we descended the wind developed so that come lunch time we had to look for a site that was sheltered. The wind dropped over lunch or just after it. We soon ticked off Cone Saddle and then the turnoff to Cone hut which left just the final stretch back to the start. After three quarters of an hour on a relatively flat section we had a break not long before the big descent started. The descent was benign to begin with but the track got steeper and more slippery the lower we got. Fortunately it was over sooner than I anticipated. We got back to the van at ten to four, probably at least a couple of hours earlier than we would have been if we'd gone to Neill Forks hut so that was a nice bonus. We hadn't done quite as much as planned but I think the experience of a still night camping, which we would have missed if we'd been in the hut, was more than enough compensation.



*Tararua Peaks from Cone Ridge*

Special thanks to David McQueen for being the van driver for us.

*Andrew*

# PARAWAI LODGE PERAMBULATIONS

20-21 May 2023

Andrew Robinson

The weather forecast for the weekend wasn't great but for what we had planned it didn't really matter. Five of us left the car park at what is now the end of the Ōtaki Gorge Road at 9:15 with our coats on. There were no dramas crossing the slip and by the time we got to Roaring Meg Stream it was time to take coats off. When we got to Ōtaki Forks it started to rain so I used my umbrella for the short walk to Parawai Lodge. The umbrella came in handy later on for the short walk to the loo. We claimed our bunks and half an hour later set off in fine weather on the first of our short walks. Twenty minutes took us to the turnoff to Waitewaewae then we continued across the grassy flats for another five minutes on what was new territory for us all. At the edge of the flats was a stone wall about a metre high and maybe twenty metres long, built for what purpose I don't know. At the edge of the bush the track was hidden by overgrowth but once we'd found it the track soon opened up. The track used to go through to Penn Creek hut but is pretty much a dead end now and I would think frequented mostly by keen hut baggers. After about ten minutes we reached the long derelict Fisherman's hut near the Ōtaki River. It still has four walls and they're more or less upright but it would be a long time since it provided any shelter. After ten minutes of seeing what else was around we headed back. At the stone wall we explored through the gap in the wall and there were some good camping spots, but it would be a bit of a walk from there to get water. After the turnoff to Waitewaewae we took the track across the grassy flats which led us to an overgrown track with large round wooden marker posts and we concluded it was what used to be the main track heading for Field hut. We got back to Parawai Lodge for lunch then after lunch three of us set off on the Arcus loop track. I'm sure it used to get used by lots of people camping at Ōtaki Forks or just visiting for the day but the track is now becoming overgrown. Despite that it was a pleasant stroll of about an hour. At the farthest point it looked like finding a route to Sheridan Creek wouldn't be too difficult but we would likely have got quite wet making our way through the scrub so we didn't investigate any further. We were back in time for afternoon tea where we decided we'd done enough walking for the day. The rest of the afternoon was spent reading or lounging then it was time to cook tea which was a group activity.

There had been rodent droppings on the bench when we arrived and after tea Doc spotted a rat scurrying into a hole but it and any friends it may have had were thankfully quiet during the night.

The first question for Sunday was whether to pack up before or after the walk. We opted for the latter. After crossing the big swingbridge it was about twenty minutes to the end of the road and the now abandoned campground. We set off on the Fenceline walk, wondering which end of the

1-2 hour spectrum it would take us. The first part was on Te Araroa and in good condition. After leaving Te Araroa the track was a bit overgrown with the occasional windfall but otherwise in pretty good condition. There wasn't much in the way of views but it was still an enjoyable walk. Back at the old campground the McMillans decided to return to the hut while David, Doc and I headed up the Waiotauru in search of an historic mill site. It took about twenty minutes and given the continued exposure to the elements the various bits of machinery were in remarkably good condition. Back at the old campground we met a cyclist, the first person we'd seen since the start of the trip.



Figure 1 Historic mill site up the Waiotauru River

Back at the hut twenty minutes later David discovered he didn't have his walking poles with him so he headed back to retrieve them. We had lunch then headed for home. On the sealed road after the slip we met a family group out for a walk so there were a few people besides us out and about

but overall it was a quiet weekend. It had been a good opportunity to ease back into overnight tramping for some of the group and a chance to see some tracks that would usually be bypassed.

Trip participants: David Barnes, Chriselda and Murray McMillan, Andrew Robinson (leader) and Doc Watson

*Andrew*

## **ECCLESFIELD/SILVERSTREAM WALK**

**Sunday 11 June 2023**

**Jackie West**



The fourth consecutive Ecclesfield winter tramp that I have led came with the coldest start as Upper Hutt experienced its heaviest frost of the year. Fortunately by the time we began walking from Chichester Drive at 9.30 am the temperature had reached 3C and with no wind and sunny skies was perfect for tramping. The sidle track from Chichester to Ecclesfield Reserve requires care in places where it is very damp, slippery and for short sections steep. After forty minutes of walking we reached the seat at the lookout in Ecclesfield Reserve where we had morning tea. Once refreshed we climbed up and out of the reserve in the direction of Remutaka Prison. We climbed a style over the fence, the

boundary of what was once prison land and now belongs to DOC. Twenty metres from the style is a dark blue sign with the word DANGER being prominent and we are informed we are on Corrections land and there are dead and dying trees and the track has been closed for own safety. This sign has been there for at least ten years and soon after DOC took over the land several years ago the ring barked pine trees were felled. We continued on getting glimpses of the prison through the trees until we reached the trig at the high point of 155 m. This is as far as the fire of Anniversary Weekend 2022 reached. There is a steep drop on slippery clay down through the regrowth where various ferns are making a good recovery. However the most prominent plant is gorse so those not wearing long trousers suffered from scratched legs. We dropped down to the first water tank and admired the view of Upper Hutt and the Tararua Range.

We then had a short street walk with Marina leaving us as we headed into a pleasant grove of bush at the top of Chatswood Road. Once through the bush we climbed back up to the trig and along a ridge to a junction of three tracks in the beech trees. After lunch we continued on up the ridge before making a right turn towards Chichester Drive where the track down to the road was the muddiest I have seen it. We returned to our cars at 1.45 pm having had a short but pleasant tramp through different types of bush and some great views.

On the tramp: Bob and Bernice Deller, Bruce Miller, Leanne Asher, Marilyn Sickels, Clare Kelly, Marina Skinner, Jeanette Jamieson, Jude Speirs and Chris and Jackie West leader

*Jackie*

*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.*