

*Boatmen at Datong Qi, Qikou*

*Photo: Les Molloy*

Please submit your **February 2021** H&V articles to the editor by **29<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

HVTC Postal Address: PO Box 30-883, Lower Hutt:

Clubrooms: Birch Street Reserve, Birch Street, Waterloo

Internet: <http://www.hvtc.org.nz> E-mail: [info@hvtc.org.nz](mailto:info@hvtc.org.nz)

**President:** Dennis Page 970 6901

**Secretary:** Murray Presland 562 8194

**Trip Coordinator:** Chris McMillan 569 9019

**Treasurer:** Jim Cousins 586 2135

**Editor H&V:** Bruce Miller 563 5966 [the-bruce@xtra.co.nz](mailto:the-bruce@xtra.co.nz)



## CLUB NIGHT PROGRAMME

Starts 8.00 pm promptly



### **2 December 2020: Tony Birtwhistle – Trip to Austria**

Last year Tony and Jo headed to Austria and, after a couple of nights enjoying the city of Salzburg, undertook a 6 day 'hike' taking in the sights and sounds (cow bells) of the Salzkammergut region. This area of lakes, mountains, valleys and picturesque towns/villages provided some good exercise and great scenery. Find out why the trip nearly didn't happen and the area's connection with the 'Sound of Music'.

### **9 December : Les Molloy 2020 – Journeys to China's mysterious Yellow River**

Many visitors to China get to experience the Yangtze River but few get the chance to penetrate the upper reaches of the Huang Ho (China's 'river of sorrow') which has caused so much heartbreak to the rural people of China over the millennia – but is still revered as the 'Mother River', as much as it is feared.

### **16 December 2020 : HVTC Christmas Party BBQs still needed please**

Provided we get enough BBQs please bring meat to cook on a BBQ.  
Also please bring plate, cutlery and glass and your preferred liquid refreshment. The club will provide juice and tomato sauce.  
Plus a sweet treat or dessert to share

### **13 January 2021 : Open Night**

Welcome back to the Club 2021. A chance to catch up with your friends - and could some please bring a small collection of photos to share with members.

### **20 January 2021 : Patrick Fotheringham – Report on Experience - The SAR Perspective**

When the caller ID on the phone says "Rescue Coordination Centre" it is generally the start of an interesting time for our SAR people. Modern technology has changed the SAR contact job significantly and there are many ways we can help when things are not going so well.

### **27 January 2021 : Alan Stevens – Tanzanian Game Reserves**

In 2007 Helen and Alan Stevens visited East Africa and included a safari into some of the game reserves of Tanzania – especially the famous Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater National Parks. He will share photos and descriptions of a selection of these.

### **3 February 2021 : Jo Greenman – A Day in Life of a Ranger**




## FORTHCOMING TRIPS



### TRIP CATEGORIES

#### Tramping

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

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.

### Cycling (helmet essential)



Very Easy. Smooth surface, broad track, basically flat. Any bike will do.



Easy. Quiet roads and/or smooth gravel tracks; occasional hills. Medium to wide-tired bike recommended.



Intermediate: Usually includes off-road sections that may be rough and/or narrow; good-sized hills. Mountain bike recommended.










Advanced: Off-road on loose surfaces, steep climbs, lots of obstacles. Mountain bike necessary.

### 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.

### DECEMBER 2020



5 – 6	TARARUA FOREST PARK – HOLDSWORTH			
	Fam	Atiwhakatu Hut adventure	Emma Dobbie	027 252 5045
	T1	Help carry gear to Atiwhakatu & campout		
Sun 6	D1-	Explore Matiu Somes Island	Julie Lewis	021 293 2118
Tue 8		Mana -Pukerua Bay cycleway	Tony Birtwhistle	021 228 4430
		Makara Peak MTB Park	Andrew Fisher	027 449 3661
Thur 10	D1	 Reeves Circuit	Graeme Lythgoe	479 6630
12 – 13	INSTRUCTION / DAY WALK			
	Instruction	Introduction to Bushcraft	Dennis Page	970 6901
Sun 13	D1+	City to Sea	Tony & Jo	021 228 4430
Tue 15		County Lane-Wallaceville Hill	Michele Lythgoe	02 7359 1377
		Silverstream		
		Ride needed		
19 – 20	INSTRUCTION/DAY WALK			
Sat or Sun	Instr	River Crossing Instruction - Hutt River	Murray Presland	562 8194
Sat or Sun	D2	 McKerrow – Whakanui	Graeme Lythgoe	479 6630
CHRISTMAS / NEW YEAR TRIPS				
30 Dec – 9 Jan	T2	Hanmer -St Anaud via Waiau Pass	Andrew Robinson	586 2438
27 Dec – 6 Jan		Volcanic Wonderland Trip	John Smeith	027 244 2498
	T1			



## JANUARY 2021

Tue 5		Belmont School – KGB/Bridge Fairway Dr	Leena Stowell	027 672 1604
		Mt Victoria Haitaitai ZigZag		
Sun 10	D1	 Te Marua/Kaitoke ridge	John Evans	020 4166 4410
Tue 12		Avalon – Harcourt Park		
		Colonial Knob area	Paul Labett	0273442906
<b>15 – 17</b>	<b>TARARUA FOREST PARK – MANGAHAO</b>			
	T1+	Burn Hut (Mangahao)	Chris & Jackie	528 4697
	T2	Ohau - Mangahao		
Sun 17	D1-	Catchpool tracks		
Sun 17	D2	Tapokopoko, Remutaka Forest Park	Jim Cousins	586 2135
Tue 19		Belmont RP	Murray McMillan	022 497 4755
		Te Marua-Goat Rock Trig tracks	Phaedra Upton	021 0232 6726
<b>23 – 25</b>	<b>WELLINGTON ANNIVERSARY – OHAU</b>			
	T1	Powell – Jumbo Circuit		
	T2	Ohau – Otaki Forks	Chris / Tania	569 9019/022 503 5604
Sun 24	D1-	Tunnel Gully explore		
Tue 26		Porirua -Onehunga -Titahi Bay	Chris McMillan	027 434 2114
		Polhill Gully Reserve	Andrew Fisher	027 449 3661
28 – 29		Greytown Overnighter	Michele & Graeme	479 6630
<b>30 – 31</b>	<b>RUAPEHU LODGE/TAUHERENIKAU</b>			
	D1	Ruapehu Crater Lake	Kate Brownsword	562 0177
Sat or Sun	D1	Swim/Float Part Lower Tauherenikau Gorge	Graeme Lythgoe	479 6630
Sat or Sun	D2	Swim/Float Full Lower Tauherenikau Gorge	Russell Clayton	577 1742

## FEBRUARY 2021

Tue 2		Explore Wainuiomata	Tony Jaegers	027 777 3240
		Wainui MBP	Paul Labett	027 344 2906
<b>6 – 8</b>	<b>WAITANGI WEEKEND</b>			
	T1	Kahurangi		
4 – 8	T2	Kahurangi	John Evans	027 464 1824



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **BUSHCRAFT INSTRUCTION : 12 - 13 DECEMBER**

Following postponement of the theory module of the Bushcraft Instruction course, here is an outline of what is now proposed for the weekend of 12-13 December.

Saturday morning, 12th December: In the clubrooms going over the theory I had planned for the Sat 21st Nov date. Then after lunch, we'll head over to Remutaka FP to walk into Waerenga Hut (this is the TTC Hut just over from where the Orongorongo Track comes out). Stay Saturday night at the hut doing some practical applications on the way.

Sunday 13th Dec: We will cover more practical elements of bushcraft such as basic river crossing (n.b. another course potentially being offered later to build on this knowledge), map reading/navigation in the field, tent pitching etc... Return back to Hutt Valley later on Sunday afternoon.

The hut is booked and sleeps 14 - Please let me know if you wish to come so I can begin to plan meals/catering etc. Any questions, just ask.

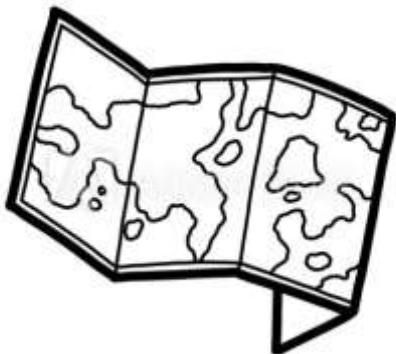
The hut is booked and sleeps 14 - Please let me know if you wish to come so I can begin to plan meals/catering etc - Note that as there is no Rangiwahia Trip that weekend, you may wish to join us for a night out even if bushcraft is not your thing and you just want to come along for the social component - you just need to let me know so that I can plan for this. If we get more than 14 takers, some may need to camp. As the hut needs a down-payment, I may need to collect a small deposit of ca \$10 in advance (note; this may be non-refundable if you pull out).

If doing the course, you will still need to bring a compass, pencil and the BQ32 Lower Hutt topo50 map - we can use this in the field as well as for the theory exercises in the clubrooms - Please let me know if you are a theory participant so I can ensure I photocopy enough of the hand-out resources in advance.

Note, the maps and compasses can potentially be purchased from Hunting and Fishing, Macpac, Sports Den (in the Hutt) or Macpac, Bivouac etc in Wellington - any issues, feel free to let me know and I will try and assist.

Dennis Page

[dennismpage@gmail.com](mailto:dennismpage@gmail.com)



#182410138





## CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY



## Xmas Party

Wednesday 16 December 2020

6.00pm onwards at Club Rooms

Provided we get enough BBQs please bring meat to cook on a BBQ.

Also please bring plate, cutlery and glass and your preferred liquid refreshment. The club will provide juice and tomato sauce.

Plus a sweet treat or dessert to share

# **SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER 2020**

## **RIVER CROSSING - Challenges, Crossing Techniques, Practice!**

Rivers present, arguably, the greatest hazard for trampers in the bush and mountains of New Zealand. Anyone who goes into the bush should therefore have some training and practice in river crossing.

On Sunday 20 December, from 9 am at the Clubrooms, I intend to run a short introduction to the challenges that rivers pose for us and the decisions we need to make in order to prepare for crossing – or not! (That option should always be kept in mind.)

Then we will head across to the Hutt River to practice techniques for crossing - firstly individually, then some mutual support methods that make best use of the strengths of a group. We should also practice what to do if you do get knocked off your feet! Please come in your tramping gear – boots, warm top, shorts. You will get wet but we will be close to our vehicles where you should have a towel, some dry, warm clothes, food and drink (preferably hot!).

Everyone is welcome to join the group, especially those who need to build their confidence around rivers – but I will also welcome more experienced members willing to share their knowledge. All of us can usefully review our knowledge and practice the skills for safely crossing rivers! Please contact me if you have any questions or to let me know you are interested in joining us.

Murray Presland  
(562 8194; [murray.presland@xtra.co.nz](mailto:murray.presland@xtra.co.nz))

=====

## **RUAPEHU LODGE WORK PARTY**

### **12 - 14 February 2021**

The first Ruapehu Lodge work party of 2021 is scheduled for the weekend of 12-14 February. Here is your chance to help with the maintenance that keeps the lodge running for you. The "après work" facilities are outstanding. So come and join in the fun.

We are looking for 10-12 able bodied persons to undertake thorough spring cleaning of the lodge, food stock take, changing mattress covers etc. Extensive maintenance skills are not a requirement.

We won't have the benefit of using the chair lift for access this year so all tools and materials will have to be carried, although we don't expect to have too much of this.

If you are interested please contact Ian McIlraith on ph. 4758458 ([ian@speyside.co.nz](mailto:ian@speyside.co.nz)).

*As the lodge will be open that weekend, if you wish to come up and enjoy the mountain but not participate in the work party, the usual very cheap summer rate of \$27.50 per night applies and there are plenty of yummy roasts in the freezer to be eaten! Book with the Booking Officer in the usual way at [Ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz](mailto:Ruapehubookings@hvtc.org.nz).*

## HOW TO BECOME A MATIU RANGER GUIDE

*Following his talk on Matiu Some, Ross Jamieson has provided the following explanation on what is involved in becoming a Matiu ranger guide.*

Training is flexible to suit individual availability. There are comprehensive notes provided to walk the trainee through what's required and the information to be imparted. Firstly the trainee would attend the Whare Manuhiri. This is the welcome shed all visitors pass through for flora and fauna security and guidelines for walking the Island. The prospective Eastbourne Forest Ranger (EFR) will learn to brief visitors. This is done by observing, putting together one's own brief statement, having a go solo with an EFR in attendance then DOC Ranger clearance. Not all guides do Whare duties - preferring taking people and school groups around.

Guiding duties are acquired accompanying experienced guides around the island, so getting different perspectives on what an individual guide will explain. When confident they are cleared to be a Ranger.

A comprehensive session run by Gerald Rawson (brilliant at organising things), will explain safety obligations, the particulars needed for school guided tours and a walk-through the senior secondary school curriculum. Not as onerous as it sounds.

All EFR volunteers need go through a simple police check - which is gratis.

EFR Ranger's need to be on the Island is flexible governed to individuals' availability and demand. Much of the weekend work is Whare briefing duties, for which there is a roster. Although there can be spontaneous guiding requests.

School guiding obviously is in the school week. Certain times of year have a high requirement, such as November and December - then February and March.

Guides take around other groups or individuals than schools. Some businesses arrange for a special day out teambuilding. Local and national government departments send staff to the island, for a variety of reasons. I have accompanied the likes of town planners etc. These can be intriguing, inquisitorial groups, helping extend an EFR rangers knowledge. Overseas tourists were not uncommon too.

There is a dedicated motel like room for Rangers, where one can overnight – to better see penguins and tuatara. Uniforms are provided.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer guide, or who would like further information, please contact me at [jampa@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jampa@xtra.co.nz)

*Ross Jamieson*

## RUAPEHU ROUNDUP

Te anga karaka, te anga koura, kei kitea te Marae!

In the early part of this year the outlook for the coming winter season appeared dire: lockdown meant that there was no access to the Lodge (the final work party to refurbish our leaking main water tank took place the weekend before lockdown), it was anticipated that people's reduced incomes would mean that they would be less inclined to come skiing, and could a ski field even operate under social distancing and gathering numbers restrictions? As it transpired, problems were overcome and punters and RAL learned how to operate in the new constrained environment. The weather and snow conditions also were not helpful this year. The snow came late and there was a poor covering at lower levels, although on the top T bars it was adequate. RAL's extensive snow making capacity alleviated this and ensured that skiing (yes, and boarding too) was possible



for almost all of the season on the Staircase and Rock Garden. The Far West T didn't open until the last couple of weeks of the season and the West Quad chair not at all. Maintenance interrupted and curtailed by lockdown as well as poor snow cover were the reasons there.

So, it was not a good season, especially in comparison to last year's bumper effort. However, from the perspective of Lodge occupancy, it was surprisingly good: we have had a total of 941 bunk nights to the end of the winter season, and summer usage is yet to come. Ruapehu operations are, as always, in good heart. In fact, if you want to see lots of young people participating in Club activities, come to the Lodge!

Instead of all the overseas travel you were going to do next year, why not come up and enjoy our facilities on Ruapehu? Confirmed trips based at the Lodge this summer are a Crater Lake day trip on 29-31 January and unspecified day trips on 20-21 March. Both these will be led by Kate Brownsword, our Vice President Ruapehu, so please contact her if you are interested. There will



*Two past VPs Ruapehu, a past Booking Officer and a drone practice good face hygiene at the Waka.*

be at least one summer work party, 12 – 14 February (see notice above), and people would be welcome to join the workers and take advantage of the Lodge being open to do their own thing. Just remember you will have to pay (at reduced summer rates), whereas workers stay for free!

We look forward to a successful 2021 winter season. He mahi te ataa noho, e kii ana te wheke!

*Ian McIlraith,*

For Ruapehu Committee

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Welcome to new members Julie Deslippe, Hinrich Schaefer, Rebecca Osborne, Natalia Levine and Jeanette Jamieson.

We look forward to enjoying time in the hills with you all.

*Doreen Courtenay*

Membership Officer

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SOUGHT

Tony Birtwistle is struggling to put together his slide shows.

Despite a new computer the simple software which comes with Windows is frustratingly inflexible (e.g. compared to the now defunct Picassa). Tony is not blaming Microsoft entirely – his computing skills are, as his son puts it, 'useless'. He'd like some help in accessing a basic, but flexible, software package and some tuition on its use. For example how does one collate/integrate Camera and Mobile phone photos?

Tony will fit in around your location and availability. He will bring flowers/chocolates/wine (your choice). He does not require this prior to his presentation on December 2<sup>nd</sup> but sometime between then and Christmas.

Tony can be contacted at 021 228 4430 or [tonybandjoscott@xtra.co.nz](mailto:tonybandjoscott@xtra.co.nz)

*Tony*

## TRIP REPORTS

### CAKE ON KAUKAU

11<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Michele Lythgoe



Chris was keen to have an extra Sunday trip running on Sunday 11th October.....a trip that was short and easy. The ascent of Mt Kaukau in Khandallah seemed to be a good option.

I met a group of 15 at the end of Woodmancote Road, which is the main entrance of Khandallah Park. We walked up and over to Clarke Street where there is the beginning of a gradual uphill track. We reached the top of Kaukau where it was blustery but we found a sheltered lunch spot of grass and a windbreak of gorse bushes. Lunch was

consumed and then as Marie Antoinette reportedly said "let them have cake" so I handed around banana cake and Dutch ginger cake. Time to go... and heading back down the same way we deviated half way down and followed a track with many steps. The group reached our starting point...4 headed home and 12 decided to have coffee at the Cafe du Parc, sitting and relaxing around a large table out on the deck.

Many thanks to those who joined me and Dash.

Those on trip;Debbie Bainbridge and her friend Emma, Cathy Priest, Kerrie and Roman Howard, Sandra Pearce, Michael Grace, Linda and Graham White, Bernice and Bob Deller, Kate Jones and Neil Hickman, Doreen Courtenay, Cheryl Bruce, and Michele (Leader) and Dash Lythgoe.

*Michele*

## GREYTOWN - GLADSTONE CIRCUIT

15 October 2020

Graeme Lythgoe

It was good to be able to switch this bike ride from the previous day which was not pleasant weather. So, in decent conditions eleven of us met in Greytown and rode off from there at 10:00 hours. We rode a couple of kilometres on SH2 and across a narrow bridge before we got on to a quiet road for the rest of the journey around Carterton and along to Clareville and its very popular bakery and cafe. We enjoyed a coffee and sampling from there very extensive menu - almond croissants recommended!!

We were a bit pressed for time as there was a big booking at our lunch venue for 12:30 hrs and we needed to get there ahead of them, so we took the quickest and shortest route and arrived at the Gladstone Pub in good time.

The weather was light wind and fine with some cloud - ideal for biking.

We enjoyed a good lunch and then proceeded back at a leisurely pace via some back roads to complete a circuit of Carterton. A cuppa before the trip back home rounded off an enjoyable day.

Those on the ride were: Russell Oliver, Koos van Lier and friend, Anna and William Liao, Graham White, Tony Birtwhistle, Catherine Croucher, Robyn and Frank Usmar, Emma Dobbie and Graeme Lythgoe



*Graeme*

## RICHMOND RANGE ALPINE ROUTE

22-27 October 2020

Nick Mc Bride

Labour weekend is a great time of the year for tramping, with warm but not too hot weather, daylight saving and no wasps. However for trips to the South Island transport can be a challenge, especially if the trip depends on separate road ends.

We selected the Richmond Alpine Route as a good Labour weekend destination. It joins the Te Araroa Trail from Hackett Hut, just south of Richmond. The Te Araroa Trail carries on to St Arnaud, but we took the option of heading north at Mid Wairoa Hut to the Wairoa Gorge road end. The transport challenge was overcome by the kind services of Andrew Robinson's parents (Frank and Frances), who live in Richmond and were happy to drop us off and pick us up at the separate road ends. Without this service the transport options would have been quite challenging and/or expensive.

Influenced by Shaun Barnett's trip report in Wilderness Magazine, the magazine's rating of the route as "difficult", and its estimated times to each hut, I planned the journey over five days. This included two short days and two longer days. As it turned out, our party was consistently ahead of



the DoC times and the route works better over four days. After we took into account updated weather forecasts, we changed the plan and did the journey in four days (or more specifically three full days, and a half day and evening combined).

Thursday night after Frank and Frances dropped us off at the end of Aniseed Valley Road, we walked to Hackett Hut just as it got dark. The next day we took the track alongside Hackett Creek and through the bush to Starveall Hut. As with our walk to Hackett Hut we were well ahead of the DoC and Wilderness times. We carried on to Slaty Hut as intended, again arriving early. Like Stearvell Hut, Slaty Hut is in a clearing with great views of the surrounding ranges.

The original plan on Saturday was to head to Old Man Hut, which based on Wilderness times would have taken five hours. At our pace, it was more likely to be four hours (and by no means were we walking at an epic pace). Mike was also keeping abreast of the weather forecast, which suggested heavy rain and wind was on its way from Sunday. We therefore changed the plan to carry on to Rintoul Hut and finish the trip a day early. Andrew was able to make contact with Frank and Frances to change our pick up time and confirm they did not mind some guests on Monday night.



After about four hours, much of it very pleasant ridge travel, we stopped for a long lunch break to prepare for the major event of the day. This was to ascend both Little Rintoul and Mount Rintoul. Each ascent was about 300 metres, but the combined descents from each peak would be over 700 metres. While the ascents were straightforward, the descents were both very steep and loose and not easy tramping at all. In many places the track was on scree, but with jutting boulders and no decent runout. On this occasion, we did not beat the Wilderness time and we arrived at Mount Rintoul Hut tired and with sore knees and toes. Like the other huts, Mt Rintoul was in a clearing and had six bunks. The clearing was quite rutted, as had been the bush floor in many places, and we could never work out what caused this.

While we had enjoyed brilliant weather to that point, on Sunday the cloud came in and there were no views as we crossed Purple Top, before being back in the bush and descending to Tarn Hut. Tarn Hut was in a felled clearing and, as the name suggests, close to an attractive tarn.

We carried on through beech forest and eventually reached Mid Wairoa Hut. Just as we arrived it started to rain heavily. Before then, the only other people on the track were two tough trail runners, and a couple heading to Mt Rintoul Hut (despite being aware of the miserable forecast) who we met north of Tarn Hut. While were at Mid Wairoa Hut a mother and daughter both separately poked their heads in the hut door to ask "is there any room at the inn?". There was one bunk space, but they chose to camp next to the hut in the clearing and were happy to do so in the rain (joined by the father).

The rain ceased overnight and for the final day we left the Te Araroa trail and headed up Wairoa gorge. The track was not benched and involved picking our way over steep slopes above the

Wairoa river. We did not, however, see the bluffs referred to in Wilderness magazine. The track did become easier and finishes next to the Wairoa Gorge Mountain bike park. After a half hour walk along a gravel road, we reached the pick-up point and ten minutes later Frank and Frances arrived to collect us.



Finishing the trip a day early meant a night in Richmond and some time to kill before catching the ferry. However, this was worth it as the trip was the perfect length for a four day trip. We also avoided the pressure of getting out of the bush in time and a long drive on the same day as catching the ferry. Many thanks to Frances and Frank for their hospitality and their kind service in providing transport and making this wonderful trip possible.

Natalia Levine, Nick McBride, Andrew Robinson, Phaedra Upton, Mike Wespel Rose.

*Nick*

## **MAKARA CIRCUIT RIDE**

### **6th November 2020**

**Graeme Lythgoe**

I was forced to change the scheduled day from the previous day which may have explained the low turn-out. Graham White and I left at 10:00 hours and cruised down through Ngaio before the first hill up to Wilton.

Then along to Karori with another hill before the long downhill to the south Karori Park where we stopped for a scone and coffee. A grunt up to the saddle and then a swooping downhill to Makara and then the southerly blew us along and out to the beach. We found a sheltered spot to have lunch and then headed back via Ohariu. It was before school collect time but even so the traffic got quite heavy. A highlight was seeing a Canadian Goose with several chicks. The well graded climb up out of Ohariu does not take long and then there is the wonderful swoop down to the centre of Johnsonville.

A bit of traffic dodging and “taking the lane” on Burma Road saw us back in Khandallah about 4.5 hours later having done about 38 kms. We both thoroughly enjoyed the ride in good conditions.

*Graeme*



# REMUTAKA OFF-TRACK ADVENTURE

8<sup>TH</sup> November 2020

Alan Benge



*Alan*

## WHANGANUI

13-15th November 2020

Graeme Lythgoe

After some recent rain it was good to have a mainly fine forecast for the weekend. Seventeen of us assembled at the Aramaho Top 10 Camp and settled into four adjacent motel units. The sun was shining and the pool was open and heated to mid-30s degrees. Those who wanted drove in to the CBD for a Mexican meal, which was very tasty.

Our first ride was a circuit in the west. We rode along the river trail to the city (picking up Ridgy on the way) and then all the way down to Castlecliff. The cafe did not open until 1100 hrs but they let us use their seating for a short break. A few showers were forecast but there were only a few drops and the day gradually improved. Then we headed via quiet back roads before stopping at Bason Botanic Gardens for a brief look around. Then it was on to Kai Iwi Beach or more correctly Mowhanau, where we had lunch overlooking the sea. A short hill and then some lovely downhill to Kai Iwi and a careful crossing of SH3. The climb up to the Brunswick plateau was the big one of the day but it is well graded and not too bad. The westerly wind helped as we cruised back towards the city and then a beaut section of downhill emerging at the rail bridge leaving a short ride back to our accommodation. The pool was even more popular. Dinner saw us all at one big table in a crowded restaurant and we enjoyed our meal - Thai this time.

Sunday was sunny and warm with a westerly breeze. We again headed down river stopping to enjoy morning coffee at the Yellow House - a popular stop for cyclists (and others). Then we crossed the Dublin Street Bridge and through Kowhai Park after which those who chose took the



elevator while the remainder rode up the short steep climb on to Durie Hill. Once together again the ride was mainly flat all the way to Fordell - 14kms on No 2 Line. There is not much shoulder for cyclists but Sunday is a good day for this ride with few vehicles. The breeze kept us cool in the hot sun. There is a service station at Fordell but it is closed on Sundays so our stop there was very brief. Most of us turned left and carefully descended Station Road and the rough gravel section which hugs the railway line and provides an alternate route back. Others took a less gravelly option and we were all soon on tarseal again and heading to Okoia and No 3 Line. Ridgy guided us to the Gordon Park Scenic Reserve for lunch where we were able to sit in the shade as it was now a hot afternoon. From there it was a short ride around to the rail bridge and back to the MC before the drive home. Next time it should be possible to include the round trip via the soon to be opened Upokongaro bridge.



Participants were: Helen Lukes, Paul Haines, Gerard McGreevy, Graeme and Carolyn Lyon, Frank and Robyn Usmar, Jean Cookson, Frieda Collie, Kate Livingston, Derek and Elaine Richardson, Brendan Quirke, Mike Priest, Ann Hayman, Neil Parker, Ridgy Lythgoe and Graeme Lythgoe.

*Graeme*

## **DOBSONS - SMITHS CREEK CIRCUIT**

**Friday 20th November 2020**

**Graeme Lythgoe**

The change to Friday paid off with a beautiful day. Four of us met early at Haywards and headed off for Kaitoke. The climb up to Dobsons was in sunny but cool conditions as the dying southerly gradually changed around to a strong norwester. We stopped at the old hut site for morning tea before descending through some lovely bush into the Tauherenikau Valley. We had lunch in dappled sunshine under large beech trees enjoying the mild and peaceful conditions. The tramp out brought back many memories of the many times we had walked that route from simple day trips into the valley to ending long and arduous SKs!! (Schorman (to) Kaitoke).

We were out early which left ample time for me to get to the final NZSO concert for the year.

Those on the tramp were John Simes, John Smeith, Murray Presland and Graeme Lythgoe

*Graeme*

## **AORANGI CROSSING**

**20-22 November 2020**

**Andrew Robinson**

My plan to promote my rescheduled Aorangi crossing as an opportunity to get fit in preparation for Christmas or New Year trips worked because three of the participants for my New Year Waiau Pass trip (Chris and Murray McMillan and Sam Visvalingam) decided to join me. On Friday evening we travelled in the van to the Putangirua Pinnacles campsite with Sharman's grade one trip which included a further two participants for my New Year trip. It was a windy but otherwise fine night so in the morning we didn't have wet tents to deal with. We bade farewell to Sharman's crew then headed off on the first leg to Washpool hut.

We headed up the Putangirua Stream for half an hour then had a steep climb for quarter of an hour to the Pinnacles lookout. After the obligatory photo stop it was a further quarter of an hour to a 4WD track along the main ride we would be following for the next couple of hours. After half an hour on the 4WD track the track seemed to disappear. A quick look didn't find it so I figured straight ahead was the best option and we'd find the track again soon enough. It wasn't difficult to find a reasonable route weaving amongst the manuka scrub but with the ridge being broad it was hard to tell whether we should be heading left or right. My gps suggested right but Murray's phone suggested left so I steered a middle course. After half an hour (which included a 10-minute break) we stumbled across a broad track which made us wonder how we'd missed it. A further half hour along the still easy track we had morning tea then half an hour after that we had a steep climb to the highest point on the way to Washpool hut. At the highest point we turned right and followed an easy ridge for a while before the steep descent to Washpool hut. Just before the hut we met a hunter whom we discovered was one of a group of hunters staying at the hut. We contemplated having our late lunch by the stream rather than at the hut but when we reached the hut we were invited in for a cuppa by one of the nicest group of hunters any of us had met. It was cups of tea or coffee all round and plenty of laughter.



The second leg to Pararaki hut was always likely to be tiring. Having descended about 470m to Washpool hut we then had to ascend 500m on the other side of Washpool Creek. One step at a time got us to the highest point of the trip then it was a 550m descent to Pararaki hut. It had taken us a little over 10 hours to reach the hut, about what I'd estimated. We had the hut to ourselves and enjoyed an early night after a nice lentil curry courtesy of the McMillans.

It rained a bit overnight but the stream hadn't risen so there was the prospect of completing the trip with dryish feet. It was raining lightly when we set off at 8, in plenty of time to be at

our pickup point at the prearranged time of 4 o'clock I thought, particularly as we had only half of the previous day's climbing to do. We started with a steep but reasonably short climb. As we neared the top of the climb we had some brief hail, then that was more or less the end of the precipitation for the day. It was however somewhat cooler than the previous day so we had coats on for much of the day. I had previously done the Aorangi crossing but none of the route from Pararaki hut to Kawakawa hut was familiar until the final descent to Kawakawa Stream. The descent is quite steep on a very narrow ridge yet it's actually a very nice piece of track. The route down the right branch of Kawakawa Stream to Kawakawa hut has multiple stream crossings but apart from one of the crossings is pretty easy going. I had hoped to get to Kawakawa hut for a late morning tea but it ended up being an early lunch.

After lunch we headed up the left branch of Kawakawa Stream. It had a bit more water in it than the right branch so there were some acrobatics as we endeavoured to keep feet dry. An hour and a half after leaving the hut we got to the final climb of the day. It was another climb that started

steeply but soon eased off. From the top of the climb we sidled for a while before descending to Mangatoetoe Stream. Heading down Mangatoetoe Stream to Mangatoetoe hut was similar to Kawakawa Stream down to Kawakawa hut. We got to Mangatoetoe hut at 4 o'clock so obviously we were going to be late for our pickup. We had a much-needed break then headed off on the final leg to the coast. Having done the Mangatoetoe Stream between the hut and the coast three times previously I knew there were plenty of bits of track but there doesn't appear to be one continuous track. We

managed to get about halfway out on a succession of track segments and then the stream bed seemed to present the best option. Although it had been quite windy for most of the weekend we were sheltered from the wind for pretty much all of it except for the last half hour or so as we neared the coast. I hoped that the others had decided to wait in the van because they could easily have missed us if they'd gone looking for us. Fortunately they had wisely stayed put and we met Tony a couple of minutes from the van. We were an hour and forty minutes late but there were no complaints from anyone. My thanks to Chris, Murray and Sam for joining me on my trip and to Sharman for helping with the transport.



Crossing the Kawakawa Stream left branch



On the 4WD track

*Andrew*

# MULLED WINE AND ROCKY ROAD

11 November 2020

Michele Lythgoe

12 bikers gathered at Tulsa park in Totara Park to head off to the site of the burnt down (1969) McCurdys Castle. I had been concerned days before that rain was going to affect the running of the trip but the forecast improved and there was no sign of it.



We headed back to the Totara Park bridge then turned right to a flattish old bitumen road, rough in parts, then a bit of uphill to the short path where we found the old pear and walnut trees in the old garden..... based on a map Marina had given me some years ago when she led a bike trip here.

We very quickly reached the area where the landmark house had once stood and indulged in warm mulled wine from the flasks and rocky road I had made that morning. We followed a fairly steep path down through the pines to the Whakatiki River then biked back to the cars via a grassy track, a

gravel track through bush and past the pony paddocks. A shortish trip with a variety of terrain and bit of history thrown in.

Thanks to those who came with me:

Doc Watson, Jean Cookson, Paul Haines, John Smeith, Catherine Croucher, Paul Wolstenholme, Robyn and Frank Usmar, Ann Hayman and Neil Parker, Michele (Leader) and Graeme Lythgoe.

*Michele*





## PHOTOGRAPHIC FILLERS

Here, and elsewhere in this edition, are some images stolen from Facebook entries about club trips this last year.







*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.*