



Newsletter of the
NELSON TRAMPING CLUB

Founded 1934, Nelson, New Zealand
www.nelsontrampingclub.org.nz

EDITORIAL COMMENT >

Octogenarians

At a recent pub night, it suddenly dawned on us that our illustrious club is about to turn the ripe old age of 80. For any newbies who weren't at our 75th anniversary weekend in 2009, here's our history:

On 29 May 1934, almost 60 folks attended a public meeting. In forming our club, they chose five objectives:

- *Provide means for health-giving outdoor exercise*
- *Assist in any emergency*
- *Bushcraft instruction*
- *Increase facilities in the backcountry*
- *Foster preservation of bush & bird life*

Our first tramp, in June, was to Third House, up Jenkins Hill, returning to the Brook valley. 40 people went on this local jaunt. The first overnighter was in August to Mt Arthur. Three hours climbing above the Graham valley saw them arrive at Flora Hut. Alas, snow and rain kept them off the summit. It seems somewhat ironical, that we now help DOC maintain the exact same hut in the Flora valley.

Tramps were held every second weekend, mostly local rambles to places such as Drumduan, Mt Duppa and Dun mountain. A 'special car' was hired to access destinations further afield such as Nelson Lakes. Otherwise, members had to walk or cycle to the start of a track.

Without the luxury of DOC's excellent hut network, these 1930s pioneer trampers carried materials on their own backs and built the first Rocks Hut (20 bunks) and Starvaell Hut (12 bunks). More recent versions of these huts still stand in Mt Richmond Forest Park today.

Global Warming hadn't happened yet, and there was snow to wade through on Jenkins Hill, snowball fights on Wooded Peak, and ice skating across the tarns on Mt Robert.

The mighty Internet hadn't been invented, so Trip Reports were published in the Nelson Evening Mail.

Nelson Tramping Club April 2014



Still going strong: John Tantrum at Lake Chalice Hut

PHOTO > UTA PURCELL

Without the existence of portable cookers, the trampers of yesteryear spent lots of time chopping wood and lighting fires. And without the luxury of waterproof synthetic clothing, trampers wore everyday clothes. Women wore skirts; men wore long pants, jackets and work boots.

To celebrate their *first* anniversary, club members organised a dance. Social events such as formal dances were held fairly often, with large numbers attending. Dancing was also an evening activity on weekend trips to backcountry huts.

Speaking of social occasions, why not join us at the next club night where Hudson Dodd is sharing his plans for the Waimarama Sanctuary. It's directly related to our fifth objective: '*Foster preservation of bush & bird life*'.

See you at Club & Pub Nights...



Raymond Salisbury,

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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Congratulations on their 80th birthday:
John Tantrum



PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Kate, Neil, Richard, Chris, Bruce & Andrea on Mount Hope

TRIP REPORTS

February–March 2014

16 February – Mount Hope, Kahurangi NP

Leader: Andrea Cockerton

Grazing livestock put pay to the Devils Thumb trip, but out of disappointment sprung Hope! So we found ourselves, all six, on the unambiguous (thrown that in for Richard) start of the track marked only by two disguardered beer cans, on SH 6 near Kawatiri. The track has been marked over time with the sporadic DOC marker, occasional ribbon and more prominent white markers. It is easier to follow ascending, but care needed on the return as its more tricky to identify the route. Initially, the route was a bit grunty, but levels out after eighty minutes as we headed up a spur towards the ridgeline.

The summit was not visible until out the bush and not obvious (as we actually summited a rock sculpture east of the summit, but ten metres higher.) En route to tipsy-mushroom/snail rock, we endured a degree of bush bashing with scrubby manuka bushes adorning the ridge.

On arrival, the leader threw a wee tante, which fell on deaf ears and she was duly photographed. (Shortcomings can be mentioned as they serve to strengthen the soul.) The views were fabulous, to the SE: Mount Ella, still with patchy snow; Mole Tops, Travers and St Arnaud Ranges; Mount Owen to the north and Mount Murchison to the SW. We could only wonder what other scroggin-eaters might be gazing at our little peak from across the valleys, as we tucked into lunch.

All too soon, we turned on our heels to head on down, arriving back in Nelson by 5pm. Recommendations: take lots of water and skin protection, (or you could follow the trail of skin we left, if markers prove difficult to follow.)

Thank you to happy trampers: Kate Krawczyk, Neil Henderson, Richard Talbort, Chris Louth and Bruce Alley. Written and dramatized by Andrea Cockerton.

28 Feb–2 March – Fenella Hut, Kahurangi NP

Leader: Sue Henley

By the time Friday arrived our party of eight had dwindled to four, the perfect number to fit comfortably in our birthday boy's car – with room to spare.

After a long, winding drive we eventually arrived at Trilobite Hut, greeted by freezing temperatures and howling wind. However, our birthday boy soon had a roaring fire going, accompanied by cake and our birthday song.

After a windy night we awoke to a clear, crisp and crunchy morning. We set off for Fenella Hut at a comfortable pace. Eventually the sun warmed us up. A morning smoko stop and chat with the occupants at Chaffey's Hut was enjoyed before continuing on to Fenella.

We arrived at Fenella with plenty of time for a leisurely lunch before deciding on an afternoon excursion to Cobb Lake and beyond. We all set off, and after admiring the tarns behind Fenella, we soon arrived at Cobb Lake. At this point, Elizabeth and Uta decided to loop back to the hut while Ken and I decided we were up for more adventure, aiming for Mount Cobb.

However, once we reached the ridge above Round Lake we realised time was not on our side. So, we decided on an alternative loop over Mount Gibbs, coming down the ridge through a mass of tarns and then skirting around Xenicus Peak, eventually arriving back at the hut about 7pm, tired and pleased with ourselves.

A very pleasant night was spent in the hut about two-thirds full. Luckily, a group of chattery women had chosen to stay at Cobb Hut that night.

Next morning, we headed back down valley in perfect weather, our two botanists marvelling at the flora on display in the sunshine. We then enjoyed a cup of tea and birthday cake at Trilobite Hut before the long drive back to Nelson.

A big thank you to Ken Ridley, our chauffeur and birthday boy, and to Elizabeth Dooley and Uta Purcell for joining me. I have to say that this has to go down as one the most enjoyable trips I have been on. Sue Henley, (scribe.)

AN UNEVENTFUL JOURNEY

2 March – Pearse Resurgence & Nettlebed – Kahurangi National Park

Leader: Ross Price

Seven of us signed up for what we thought



Ross Price and his cohort: Chris, Ray, Charles, Bruce, & Carole Louth rest at a rock shelter above the Pearse River

would be a nice summer walk following the Pearse River to its resurgence. It was a sunny day full of promise as we left the carpark and headed for our first river crossing at 9.30am. Shortly after, we crossed it again and Carole remarked that it would have been more useful for them to have cut the track on the same side of the river all the way along. Indeed there were another eleven crossings to come, not to mention having to do it all again on the return journey (26 crossings total). She was led to believe by *someone* close to her that she would only have to get wet feet a couple of times.

All went well for the first couple of hours during which time we enjoyed some stunning views looking down on the river and a pleasant break in a clearing at river level.

However, very soon after this a series of unfortunate events happened upon us. As we made the next river crossing, our leader foundered on some slippery, slimy riverbed rocks. He promptly fell over backwards, immersing himself to shoulder level and soaking all his clothes and most of the contents of his pack. But to his credit, most of the important items like camera, locator beacon and part of his lunch were saved from a soggy ending.

There was no time for sympathy – just as Ross picked himself up out of the river, another drama was unfolding not far ahead.

A wasp nest was discovered on the edge of the track. Poor Charles was a bit slow and was stung six times. Younger-Chris, his mate, picked up a couple as well. The remainder of the party scurried past it in double-quick time, unscathed. Older-and-wiser-Chris pulled a tree branch across the track to mark the spot for our return journey.

We reached the Pearse Resurgence after a three-hour walk with no further mishaps, stopping briefly for photo opps, as a solitary whio obliged us. A friendly robin perched close by to watch the action. A blue duck was spotted on three more occasions

during the trip; some say it was the same whio disappearing and re-emerging to bask in the lime-light, lap up all the attention.

Ross decided that this would be a good place to dry out wet gear. He stripped down to his undies and basked in the sun at the caver's campsite. His party boulder-hopped to the start of Eyles Creek to explore the entrance to the Nettlebed Cave for an hour. (In January 2014, Nettlebed was proven to link with the Stormy Pot system, creating the deepest cave in the country.)

Armed with torches and head-lamps, we ventured underground for approximately 100 metres, encountering the odd stalactite and misleading cavern till where the pathway narrowed. Here, a rope disappeared down a vertical



Charles at Nettlebed Cave entrance

shaft into the blackness below. We were happy to retreat and leave further exploration to the next lot of cavers. Some of us learnt the hard way about the innocuous-looking stinging nettles: it is best not to touch them!

Back at the Resurgence we found a much warmer, more relaxed, restful, rejuvenated and resurgent Ross. We joined him for lunch.

The return trip proved to be nearly as good. On reaching the wasp's nest, Ray, who was fresh from writing his latest newsletter editorial regarding 'team players', decided to sacrifice himself for the team by distracting the wasps and taking a hit for the rest of us.

However, those cunning wasps were intent on savouring more juicier prey. Instantly recognising poor Charles, he suffered a further three stings. Just as well he'd outgrown his childhood allergy, as he lived to tell the tale.

By this time, the writer was feeling pretty left out of all this risk mis-management and decided to create some action of his own. As the track narrowed in the undergrowth, he stood on the edge and pivoted to warn those coming along behind him. In doing so, he lost his balance and fell a couple of metres down a bank and was caught by scrub below. He promptly clambered up, walked a few more metres and repeated the act. Apart from a sudden loss of dignity, Bruce was unscathed and very relieved to have escaped from the clutches of the river below. That served to quickly clear his mind and renew his focus.

Our barmy band of blunderers bravely battled on and made such good time that we shortened the return journey by 50 minutes. Our 7-hour ordeal was a character-building day-trip for some of the live-wires and loose-cans of our tramping club.

The pantomime players were: Ross Price, Chris and Carole Louth, Ray Salisbury, Chris Tilley, Charles Kerkham and Bruce Alley (scribe)



ANDREA'S ADVENTUROUS ADJECTIVES

7 March – Diamond Lakes – Kahurangi N Park
Leader: Andrea Cockerton

As a word, "Awesome" is apparently dead.

It has been applied to every scenario from solar eclipses to summiting Everest, then worked its way into teenage vocabulary to mean literally anything that does not correlate to school or homework. The remedy? A quick Google reveals at least 28 words to replace it. Both Resplendent and Splendiferous and totally-kick-ass is Diamond Lake on a still day. A snapshot: 'the crisp reflections displaying 3D imagery, the symmetry of the landscape, a solitary cheeky weka waddling, the harmony of the tuis, cloudless sky, the distant moreporks cooing lullabies as they settle to sleep'. 28 words don't even cut it.

Diamond Lake was just one gem of seven, and our home for two nights. We had a leisurely start on Friday, arriving at the road end at midday, lunching at Sylvester Hut. Opting for the known route, we dropped into the basin below Lake Lillie and then sidled north west above the bush-line until well-marked cairns indicated the drop to Diamond Lake. A welcome dip followed. Plenty of firewood led to a comfortable night and lots of chit chat. Annette regaled us with her tales of the Lockett people. A weka joined us by the camp fire (later trying its luck with our boots).

A beautiful dawn included a distant kiwi in the chorus, welcoming us to a new day. Our destination was Lake Lockett and we delighted in finding a well-marked route on the true left of Diamond Lake stream outlet. Following red markers, we kept good altitude, making for a cruisy walk, sidling around, and finally up, through clearings to the Lake.

Nina opted to relax and swim before heading towards Ruby Lake. We headed into the bush to find the spur taking us east of Lake Lockett onto aridge. Relatively easy bush meant we were topping out within the hour to a 360-degree panorama. We explored the ridgeline as far east as practical, meeting up with two four-legged white-bottomed beasts with beards. These curious creatures came within 50 metres, bemused by the seemingly one way conversation. Eventually, even our best goat chords did not amuse and they moved on.

Barry impressed us with his artistic skills, which call for an 'ocean of patience'. *Wikipedia* defines this as "an art, discipline or hobby, depending on the intent of the practitioner."

By the day's end, three rock art sculptures stood along the ridgeline, each incrementally bigger. We had to leave, or Barry would have had us moving



Andrea & her awesome adventurers at Lake Lockett, one of seven Diamond Lakes above the Cobb Valley

boulders. As it was, we traversed over Mt Lockett and past the summit point (1610m) before heading down a steep grassy slope into the valley.

Nina had been watching our progress from below. We happily regrouped. The wonderful romp along the ridge had used precious time, so it was 5pm when we turned for home, having seen a tantalizing glimpse of Lake Ruby. Not such a straightforward trot to Diamond Lake; more akin to a battlefield: rough ground, camouflaged and boggy in parts, well-loved by speargrass, towering two metres high. A bloody hour later we arrived at the lakehead, where a lovely path took us along the west shoreline to base camp. Refreshed by a dip and roasted by fire, blissful sleep finally came.

Our final day was spent retracing our steps to Lake Lillie, then up and over Iron Hill. We returned in time for Nina to rendezvous her friend in Motueka, but not before entertaining the locals with some impromptu dance grooves in the pub car park; Nina and Annette being somewhat pros.

Thank you for great company: Nina, Annette and Barry. Written and produced, in small part, by Andrea Cockerton.

23 March – Cycle Ride to Rabbit Island

Leader: Lawrie Halkett

A beautiful day with clear skies and light winds saw eight NTC cyclists gather in Richmond to ride the Great Taste Trail to Rabbit Island.

It is an awesome ride when the tide is high, but unfortunately, we saw lots of mudflats as we peddled our way westward. There were plenty of other people that had the same idea as us, as the cycleway was, at times, a little congested. There were people of all ages including family groups.

We made it in time to catch the 11am flat-bottomed ferry to Mapua for lunch and the mandatory ice creams.

1pm we waved farewell to one of our team (Brenda), who was being collected by her family and returning to Upper Moutere, while the rest of us shuttled back across to Rabbit Island.

Being such a great day, all the ladies went swimming while John and Lawrie posed as lifeguards (as they brought no togs).

A marvellous day was topped off by an incoming tide, fantastic scenery and abundant birdlife.

The happy bikers included Brenda Sincalir, Bruce Alley, Kathy Smith, Kate Krawczyk, Jo (Kate's Mum), John (Kate's man), Lawrie (scribe) & Kaye Halkett.

Wilderness Wisdom – Poem from Poor Pete's Hut

Shall I work until age is written on my face
Two cars and a house. My life will not waste.
Or shall I skip through the hills.
Bathe in the streams.
Rest my back on the earth and live off my dreams

UPcoming CLUBNITES...

Monday 7 April

Brook Sanctuary

NZ's next major fenced wildlife sanctuary?

7.30pm, Nelson Intermediate School, Tipahi St, Nelson South

Guest Speaker : Hudson Dodd

Hudson Dodd is general manager of the Brook Waimarama Sanctuary. His professional background spans the public, private, and non-profit sectors, with extensive leadership experience in community-based wildlife habitat conservation initiatives in the United States' Pacific Northwest.

He will speak on the urgent need for fenced mainland island wildlife sanctuaries as a key component in NZ's wildlife conservation movement.

He will also provide an update on the plans and timelines for completing the development of the 14km pest-proof fence to enclose 700ha in the Brook Valley. This will create NZ's second largest fenced sanctuary and visitor attraction.

Monday 2 June

Club Night

7.30pm, Nelson Intermediate School, Tipahi St, Nelson South

Guest Speaker : TBA

Monday 4 August

Club Night & AGM

FMC Bulletin No. 195

March edition is hot off the press. Collect your copy at Wisers Picture Framers, Buxton Square, Nelson. Copies are also available at club nights along with *Safety in the Mountains* (this edition is nearly sold-out nationally!)



COURSES RUN IN NELSON

<http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz>

Risk Management Essentials

17-18 May > COST: TBA.

Venue: TBA.

This course teaches participants how to apply risk management principles in outdoor activities and tests their ability to cope with emergencies.

Risk management is defined as "the process of reducing potential loss to an acceptable level".

Outdoor First Aid: Refresher

15 June > COST: \$95

Venue: Nelson Girl Guide Centre, Lee Valley, Brightwater

Participants will work together to treat people injured in mock accidents and emergencies.

Some classroom based theory work. Must have a valid 1st Aid certificate already.

Bushcraft Basics

6-7 September > COST: TBA

The course is aimed at beginners or those with little experience. A planned weekend overnight trip is included. More info on this one: www.mountainsafety.org.nz

CONTACT DETAILS >

Contact: Evelyn O'Neill.

Mail: 23 Coleridge Place, Stoke.

Telephone: (03) 547 2426

Email: nelson@mountainsafety.org.nz

BEACONHIRE

Our five PLBs can be borrowed from **Rollos** or **Stirling Sports**.

Please remember to:

1) Fill out the *entire* form. The details are what SAR need to find you. Explain your intended route & possible alternatives.

2) Before activating the beacon, get into a clearing. Satellites can't pick up signals in thick bush. Keep the PLB upright.

3) Hold up bright clothing or pack liners to assist the helicopter in sighting your position.

4) Consider using a cellphone 1st - this can provide two-way communication & save money.

PRIVATE TRIPS

If you've borrowed our beacons for your personal tramp:

EMAIL your intentions to Pat Holland, Lawrie Halkett or Chris Louth before leaving. They are the SAR contacts, especially if the hire shops are closed, (e.g. at midnight.)

COMMITTEE :

President: Lawrie Halkett

Correspondence Secretary: Pat Holland

Minutes Secretary: Kate Krawczyk

Treasurer: Brenda Griffin

Gear: Mark Stevens

Programme Co-ordinator: Chris Louth

Committee: Dion Pont, Mike Glover, Bob Janssen

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