



Newsletter of the  
**NELSON TRAMPING CLUB**  
Founded 1934, Nelson, New Zealand  
[www.nelsontrampingclub.org.nz](http://www.nelsontrampingclub.org.nz)

## Nelson Tramping Club December 2015



Pat Holland tees off on Tappy in November

### PRESIDENT'S PIECE :

## No Pat Answers

**I will start with a few words of thanks to Lawrie Halkett.** As the previous President for a number of years, Lawrie had the difficult job of keeping our small and venerable club active and looking to the future. This has now become my daunting role and I am depending on the support of the committee and all our membership. The club is basically in good heart but there are challenges.

**Membership** has been stable for several years but the proportion of members who are active on trips has declined. The recent programme has maintained a good balance of easy to adventurous trips. However, there are relatively few trip leaders and understandably the trip offerings tend to reflect the interests and abilities of these leaders.

The committee is keen to see more members offering to **lead trips**; in fact this is essential for the health of the club. The responsibilities are not onerous and there are the rewards of getting to where you want to go and supporting the club.

Recently, I particularly enjoyed leading a small group into the Raglan Ranges on a route I had done six years ago with Ruth Hesselyn. All the elements were there that we trampers so enjoy: wonderful and varied country with some challenges; excellent company; good exercise in the fresh mountain air. It is easy to stay bogged down in our everyday living and overlook the opportunities the club offers to get out into all that superb countryside we are blessed with.

I am currently on the executive committee of **Federated Mountain Clubs** (FMC). This is a privilege and a challenge. FMC advocates on behalf of all outdoors folk. A wide variety of issues are being handled by an impressive array of people led by the irrepressible Robin McNeil (Uncle Jacko) as President and supported by Jamie Stewart, the relatively new Administrative Officer. It is quite humbling to consider the huge number of hours these people are putting into looking after your interests. Reading recent FMC *Bulletins* and newsletters gives a good flavour of the work. FMC also has a

[website](#) and a [Facebook](#) page. These have been upgraded and are worth checking regularly.

An important initiative led mainly by FMC is the Community Partnerships Fund with the **Huts & Tracks Fund** our principal interest. NTC has recently applied for a small top-up grant to complete our renovation work on **Flora Hut**.

We have also applied for a larger new grant to assist DOC to relocate **Mount Fell Hut** which is currently closed due to it being on an active slip. If there is no community involvement then DOC will remove this key hut in the Richmond Ranges and stop all maintenance of the track from Middy Hut in the Pelorus up to Mt Fell. This is a sign of the times – with the drastic cuts in DOC funding the future for many backcountry facilities may be bleak.

Our committee is trialling the **club newsletter** being produced quarterly to match the FMC *Bulletin* post-out. This might disadvantage a few regarding the Programme. Our resources are limited and we are putting more emphasis on electronic media: email, [website](#) and [Facebook](#) (yes, the younger ones especially are active there). Please provide feedback with suggestions.

*Hope to meet you in the Hills soon...*

**Pat Holland**, CLUB PRESIDENT  
[P.T.Holland@xtra.co.nz](mailto:P.T.Holland@xtra.co.nz)

**7-DEC: CLUB NITE**  
7:30pm @ nelson intermediate  
**Annual Photography Competition:**  
Read the rules on page 6  
• BE BRAVE - SHOW US YOUR BEST IMAGES FROM 2015

# TRIP REPORTS

August–November 2015



17 members & visitors enjoy the snow on Mt McRae

## 16 August – Snowcraft Day, Rainbow Ski Field Nelson Lakes National Park | Leader: Pat Holland

**Seventeen keen ones arrived at Rainbow** in four vehicles. No chains needed—so far so good. Snow a bit thin on the tops but enough to play in.

It took a while to get everyone toggged up and into crampons but by 10:30am off we headed up the valley towards the west basin.

The weather was overcast with a nippy southerly but looking stable (as it proved for the day). Some fit ones shot up over Mt McRae and on toward Peanter Peak. The rest played at self-arresting and getting used to crampons. Snow was really soft, so we headed through the first saddle.

We made the second saddle to the east of Mt McRae for lunch. Beautiful views into the lower Travers valley and across to the south end of Mt Robert ridge—a little shelter from the wind.

Then, on towards the third saddle through which is the route to Peanter. But 100m short, we met the others coming back. “Not enough time,” they said. So, we reversed our route back to the lunch saddle and then headed over Mt McRae.

On the summit (1878m) everybody admired the views across the skifield and Lake Rotoiti. An easy stroll to the west basin with some sliding (deliberate or unfortunate) then across the frozen tarn back to the carpark by 3:30pm. An excellent day in the mountains. Not much technical learning but some appreciation for which way is up.

Participants were: Pat Holland (scribe), Annette Le Cren, Tim Tyler, Simon Garton, Andrea Cockerton, Debbie Hogan, Chris Louth, Kelvin Drew, Ian Morris and Sue Henley (members); Adrian Douglas, Ben Ayre, Chris Tillie, Ian Wallace, John Taylor (GBTC), Penny Parker and Sophie Watson (visitors).

## 30 August – Richmond Fire Lookout, Nelson Leader: Lawrie Halkett

### Sunday morning dawned fine, but very misty.

A group of five hikers met at Lawrie’s place and proceeded up Jimmy Lee Creek. It is a lovely bush gully walk, starting with an interesting bird hide not far in off Hill Street.

The gully begins as regenerating scrub hardwoods, most of which Kate and Marie were able to identify, until the second section where Lawrie was able to point out Tawa and Matai. David, Kate and Marie started swapping jokes and one was obviously so funny that David lost his footing and took a dive downhill.

Not to be outdone, Marie threw some clothing down the hill and Lawrie courageously retrieved the item with some help from a sapling which unfortunately suffered terminal damage.

After striking out on a forestry road we continued upward to the fire lookout and stopped for a leisurely lunch. The view was excellent – a 360 degree panorama.

The day was very calm and sunny, with puffy clouds





**Lawrie's lot lunch on Richmond Hill**

resting on the very tops of all the high points in both the Richmond and Kahurangi Ranges, though after midday, the offshore sea clouds rolled in across the Waimea Plains. A truly balmy day unfolded below us and it felt like we were witnessing the first day of spring.

We wandered back down off the tops, following Kate along a ridge leading to Reservoir Creek and the old dam, which once supplied drinking water to the village in the early 1900s.

Anyone interested in seeing Nelson's tallest tree (*Eucalyptus regans*) need only walk five minutes uphill of the old dam.

Happy hikers included: Marie Lenting, Kate Krawczyk, David Cook, Ron Graham and Lawrie Halkett (leader and scribe).

#### **4-5 September – Mount Fyffe, Kaikoura Ranges**

Leader: Ray Salisbury

**Wanting to give those new to snow travel an** easy introduction to using crampons and ice-axes, I planned a couple of medium-level excursions into the Hills. Lack of interest cancelled the first trip, and I ran the second one with only three people, which is disappointing.

The rain pelted down on us as we departed the carpark at the foot of the mountain. But we pressed on with a determined stride, up, up, up the 4WD road which is steeper than I recall. [Time: 2.5 hrs]

Rain became snow as altitude was hard-won. Lucky for us, I carried dry kindling and got the woodfire in Fyffe Hut roaring. Three of us in a six-bunk hut was cosy, until at some ungodly hour when a trio of hunters barged inside.

On Saturday, one of the bloke's cell phones woke us all up in the wee hours. I was not amused.

Our little group decided we weren't fit enough for a full circuit of the mountain, and chose a leisurely walk up to the summit instead. Crampons were strapped to boots, and we meandered up the vehicle track to the trig in about an hour.

Lunch was wolfed down in the sunshine, then a hasty retreat was made, as the wind chill factor saw the temperature plummet. A steady stream of day-walkers made the pilgrimage all day, following our footprints in the snow.

Back at the hut, we read books, listened to pod-



**Marie-Anne at the Mt Fyffe trig. Kaikoura peninsula beyond**

PHOTO > RAY SALISBURY

casts, and generally gazed out to the ocean, far, far below.

During the afternoon, the local high schoolers appeared up the vertiginous Spaniard Spur track. Their over-enthusiastic teacher allowed them to 'get lost' on their very first ever tramp. Not amused, half of them rebelled and returned home. We hosted two remaining girls with their teachers.

On Sunday, we dropped back down the road, grateful for the improved weather. A number of pit-stops were made at various watering holes.

Climbers were: Ray Salisbury (scribe), David Cook and Marie-Anne Hermsen.



**Mount Fyffe Hut coated in a fresh dump of snow**

PHOTO > RAY SALISBURY





Kate finds the coast route to Taupo Point blocked



Walking the golden sands of Anapai Bay

PHOTOS > CHRIS LOUTH

13 September – Separation Point – Abel Tasman National Park | Leader: Chris Louth

## A CLIMB IN RHYME

At 7am sharp, our group of nine met  
For a two hour drive to Wainui Inlet  
Stopping at Takaka to collect number ten  
That made five good keen ladies and five macho men

Out of the cars and off down the road  
The packs on our backs seemed a very light load  
Brian suggested straddling an electric fence  
But with a gate so close by, that didn't make sense

On up a hill with hardly a bend  
Some found it steep and unsure of its end  
Then into some bush and the song of the tui  
We headed on down to Totaranui

A pause on the beachfront for an elevenses snack  
Then northwards along the Anapai Bay Track  
From a nice patch of bush we dropped down to the bay  
A great place to dwell, but no time to stay

So we strolled along the golden sands of the beach  
To find the track ahead was in easy reach  
Next point of interest was the scenic Mutton Cove  
A real beaut spot with the campsite in a grove

As we drew nearer to Separation Point  
Six of us chose to check out the joint  
Four obeyed the signpost instruction for "separation"  
And headed down to Whariwharangi Hut for relaxation

Jacqui was experiencing a light-headed sensation  
But soon revived after some serious rehydration  
At 'The Point' we looked for the gannet colony  
But the pseudo mob were in the monopoly

Could it be that some live birds were asleep?  
From the decoys though, there was not a peep!  
Way in the distance was the spectre of Mt Egmont  
Rising from the sea almost dead straight in front

On rejoining the others at Whariwharangi Bay  
There were two options for the last part of the day  
Four chose to continue safely along the Coast Track  
The rest favoured the beach, a boulder-hopping attack

This route was adventurous, approached with much zeal  
Until progress was slowed when meeting seal after seal  
Eventually we were blocked by a rocky impasse  
So we scaled up a steep cliff with scant tussock grass

On reaching the top with some nerves rather frayed  
We looked down on the coast; our fears were allayed  
With plenty of scrub and trees to grab hold  
We proceeded with caution, grew more and more bold

At last back on the beach on familiar terrain  
It's true the old cliché re no pain, then no gain  
As the boulders reduced and we saw the last seal  
Sue walked uncomfortably close to a log that was real

It sleepily popped up its head from the beach  
But by then Sue made sure she was well out of reach  
On reaching the carpark the clock was on five  
The others had just beaten us and were ready to drive

Back in Richmond by seven, our journey complete  
The moment had come to go home and replete  
'twas a cracking good day of adventure and stimulation  
'twas time to disband, reaching the 'point of separation.'

Participants, poets and 'wouldn't you know its' were:  
Kate Krawczyk, Sue Henley, Penny Parker, David  
Cook, Chris Louth (leader), **Bruce Alley (poet)**,  
Brian Renwick (GBTC), and visitors Alison Wilson,  
Arif Matthee and Jacqui Bozoky.

### NO PRINTED TRIP PROGRAMME

Due to a lack of leaders willing to run trips  
over the summer, there will be no printed  
Programme for Dec-January. Look on-line for  
summer tramps on the [NTC club website](#).



PHOTO &gt; DAVID COOK



PHOTO &gt; KATE KRAWCZYK

**NTC folks frequent Mt Arthur Hut in Nelson's big backyard... then the rustic red Wainui Hut in Abel Tasman**

## 20 September – Mount Arthur – Kahurangi NP Leader: Lawrie Halkett

**After a typical spring cold snap, with rain and snow on the preceding day, Sunday turned out fine, which set the tone for the day.**

Two cars with eight on board met at the Badminton Hall, Richmond, but by the time we arrived at the Flora carpark our fleet had increased to three – Dion, daughter Keilynn and friend Silva joined the party.

The drive up was challenging for David in his mighty Corolla, as the road near the top was very sludgy with fresh fallen snow.

The scene was magic, blue sky, offset by white terra firma, plus one raucous kea to trumpet the start to our tramp. As we began walking and the temperatures rose, so the sky literally began falling on our heads! The heavily laden trees began to shed their loads on top of us unsuspecting hikers! All the way to Mt. Arthur Hut we were peppered by great dollops of snow.

It was truly a picture postcard walk, with one or other of our group of 11 constantly exclaiming isn't that beautiful ... 'click' would go the camera.

A quick spell at the hut then we went on to the tops for a view of Mt Arthur, Gordon's Pyramid, Mt. Peel, the Tableland, Lake Sylvester and Iron Hill.

Because of a very persistent, cold wind, we dropped off the northern side of the ridge for an early lunch and a hot drink. It was a bit of a challenge; finding a snow-free posse to sit, but once ensconced we all enjoyed each others company, ate our lunches and soaked up the splendid views.

Then it was back down the track to the carpark to head home. We stopped off in Upper Moutere for coffee, cake and ice creams.

The younger among our party – nine year olds Keilyn and Silva – did very well, coping with the slippery track.

The party included Dion Pont, Keilyn, Silva, Marie Lenting, Sophie Barclay (visitor), Jacqui Bozoky (visitor), Kaye Halkett, Heidi (visitor), Ken Lefever (visitor), David Cook (photographer), and Lawrie Halkett (scribe and leader).

## 27 September – Wainui Hut circuit, Abel Tasman Leaders: Kate Krawczyk & Sue Henley

**It was a beautiful day to travel up to Canaan Downs and go for a walk in the Abel Tasman National Park. The Evans Ridge / Wainui Loop makes a great day walk exploring an area of the park that avoids the crowds of tourists and boaties. It's about 15km long with a total climb of approximately 350 metres and takes around 5–6 hours at a leisurely pace.**

We reached the Canaan carpark around 9am and carried on up to Wainui Saddle where the track branches to either go straight towards Moa park Shelter or left towards Wainui Hut. We carried on straight up the ridge with a bit of a grunty climb up onto Evans Ridge and the Inland Track. Instead of turning left to start the loop we detoured to Moa Park Shelter for a lovely morning tea break in the sunshine.

Back on-track, after morning tea, the birds were singing. We meandered along the lovely bush-clad ridge admiring the gnarly old Northern Rata trees until we reached the turnoff to Wainui Hut. From there we descended steeply off of the ridge into the Wainui River valley and onto the hut for lunch.

DOC has built a large aviary at Wainui Hut for their bird re-introduction programme as part of Project Janszoon. This trip was planned to have a surprise kaka interlude at Wainui Hut as the birds were to be waiting in the aviary for release in two weeks' time but, unfortunately, the release into the aviary was postponed by a week, so as I am writing this, the birds will happily be sitting in their aviary up at Wainui Hut—never to be seen by the Nelson Tramping Club.

From Wainui Hut it was another hour and a half or so back to the car park via the farm tracks for a bit of different scenery and some new lambs.

Participants were: Pat Holland, David Cook, Penny Parker, Anya Schol, Anette LeCren, Marianne Hermsen, Sue Henley and Kate Krawczyk.



## Information & Rules

# PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Dig through those shots from the past year. Get those pics printed out & ready for judgement. Come along to enjoy the fun, wine, cheese and social atmosphere of this last club night of the year.

**Date:** Monday 7 December. **Place:** Nelson Intermediate School staffroom, Titipahi Street, Nelson. **Time:** 7.30pm. **Guest Judge:** Martin de Ruyter

### Format:

*All photos need to meet the following criteria:*

- Prints must be the normal 6 x 4 inches in size.
- Photos are to have been taken within the past 12 months.
- No manipulated photos (except for cropping & sharpening.) Exception is category 7 below.
- Person submitting the photo must be person who has set up the photo.
- Entries limited to 3 prints / per category / person
- On the back of the print put the category and the title of the picture. Do *not* include your name

### Categories:

#### 1. Landscape (no people)

This includes wide angle shots (which may even be predominantly sea or sky) or an 'in your face' close-up. What's important is that the *mood* of the landscape which is being captured comes through in the image. It's acceptable to include man-made structures (huts, power lines, sign posts, etc.) providing they add to the scene.

#### 2. Hut or Camp Life (includes portraits)

#### 3. Above the bushline (people allowed)

#### 4. Below the bushline (people allowed)

#### 5. Nature flora & fauna (no people)

Informative, artistic images showing non-domestic flora and fauna (so no garden roses, cats or dogs). Geological or meteorological phenomena, (e.g. dramatic clouds, formations or details of rock strata are also acceptable if they are accurately titled). The 'hand of man' should be avoided - no fences, power lines, buildings, etc. Try to give an accepted common name, or a formal Latin name for the title.

#### 6. Historic

Pre-1980, featuring an aspect of club life. Black & white encouraged but not essential.

#### 7. Anything Goes (Not an FMC category - just NTC.)

Includes humour and manipulated images. Also, larger format prints, panoramics, and shots older than 12 months can be submitted here.

#### 8. People's Choice (Not an FMC category - just NTC.)

Attendees vote on their favourite amongst all the pictures on offer. Winner gets the Ruth Hesselyn memorial trophy.

View previous winning entries on the NTC [Photo Galleries](#) webpage.

# DO YOU USE THE LOCAL PATHS?

## Active Travel Advisory Group

**Nelson Tramping Club has been invited to join** this Nelson City Council (NCC) initiative, which is aimed at getting input from walkers and bikers on the growing network of shared pathways through the Nelson region.

NCC have developed a comprehensive policy document covering a vision statement, desired outcomes, policy objectives, key issues, way-finding, standard public messaging and methods.

They have also included an Etiquette Discussion Paper which outlines rules and expected behaviours of shared pathway users. In summary, the rules are keep left, control your dog, don't block the pathway when stopped, warn when approaching, and control your speed.

The Out and About Travel and Pathway-based Recreation Policy covers physical activities on our roads, footpaths, either for travel or recreation purposes. It includes: walking, running, cycling, scooting, skateboarding, wheelchairs, mobility scooters and electric bikes.

Desired outcomes of this project include developing:

- 1) An embedded culture of courtesy and respect between all users of paths and roads.
- 2) More residents seeing active travel as a fun, attractive and normal option for their daily life journeys.

The project aims to complement existing pathways, connecting those that already run north-south, and also add new pathways running west-east. For example, at the last meeting four specific projects were tabled and NCC were looking for recommendations from the Project Committee, of which NTC is now a part.

For example: To join the existing coastal pathway from Richmond to the Airport—Mitre 10 area, the Council has put up three options:

- (1) Bolt Road—Beach Road
  - (2) Pascoe Street—Muritai Streets and
  - (3) Tahunanui Drive.
- Our Committee voted on option (1) as the preferred choice.

There are also a multitude of smaller projects, all documented that will require feedback by the Committee.

The NCC has an approved budget to undertake much of this work over the next five years. If you, as a club member, want further detailed information on this work, then please contact [Lawrie Halkett](#) or [Pat Holland](#).

**2–4 October – Paske Hut, Rainbow Valley**

Leader: Mike Drake

**After poor weather resulted in this trip being aborted a month before, a dubious forecast and other factors resulted in several abstentions for this re-run. So just Mike and Pat flew the flag of optimistic heroism and headed up the Rainbow on Friday.**

The late arrival of the station manager to supply the key to the locked gate meant the famous early start was not possible. We got walking at mid-day from off the Rainbow 'highway' just before the main bridge.

The weather was fair with a brisk easterly blowing us upriver and a few spots of rain. However, there were enough blue patches to make the sailor's trousers. In the event, we got up the Rainbow valley and then the Paske valley dry (except for the wet feet).

Rainbow valley might be regarded as boring by some but it has amazing vistas with a good mix of gravel, tussock and matagouri. The Paske is a gem of a valley surrounded by 2000m+ peaks. We got to the hut in 5.5 hours and had time to stock up the firewood before dusk. The six-bunk NZFS hut is in excellent condition (recently repainted by DOC) and in a beautiful location.

At 6am on Saturday we were off to climb Mount Paske (2217m) on a fine, calm morning. Up valley brought us to the snow on the upper terrace leading to the saddle under Paske. This is where the pain began as there had been no freeze so we were up to our hocks in soft sugar snow. It took us three hours to reach the saddle.

Then we tackled the ridge with more soft snow. The snow conditions gradually improved as we went higher, although the ridge got steeper and narrower. The last 300m vertical was quite challenging and unrelenting but after 6.5 hours we finally reached the summit for lunch with only a gentle, mild breeze.

What a glorious spot with excellent views all around including Mt Belvedere to the west, peaks in Nelson Lakes to the norwest, and way across to Tapuae-o-Uenuku to the southeast.

After down-climbing the first steep 200m, we abandoned the ridge for a big snow-filled gully leading directly to the bushline. Again, soft snow made for slow, tiring progress – oh, for snowshoes or skis! At last we were able to rest at the headwaters of the Paske. We got back to the hut in the late afternoon [10.5 hours total].

Sunday morning dawned fine but we decided to head out. After a leisurely start, without any more daring-do. Steady walking with a strong nor-wester behind us got us back to the vehicle in six hours – obviously the exertions of the previous day has taken its toll. It was an excellent trip in some of the best country this part of Nelson-Marlborough has to offer.

Climbers were: Mike Drake &amp; Pat. Holland (scribe).

**Mt Brown Hut painted in rescue orange**

PHOTO &gt; RAY SALISBURY

**10–11 October 2015 – Mt Brown Hut – Hokitika**

Leader: Ray Salisbury

West Coast or East Coast, that is the question. The nagging umming and ah-ing that plagues us prior to any tramp locked into the calendar, months ahead. A humungous High loomed large over the Tasman, and brought hope to our cynical, jaded psyche. Finally, the decision was made, the beacon borrowed, and intentions sheet filled in.

Bright and bushy tailed we were, excited as boy scouts about to be unleashed into the wilderness, after months of winter hibernation. Lou wanted to escape the harrowing obligations of a birthday dinner; Grant wanted to escape the dark shadows of despair; Ray wanted to escape the addictions of Facebook and Reality TV ... if only for a couple of days.

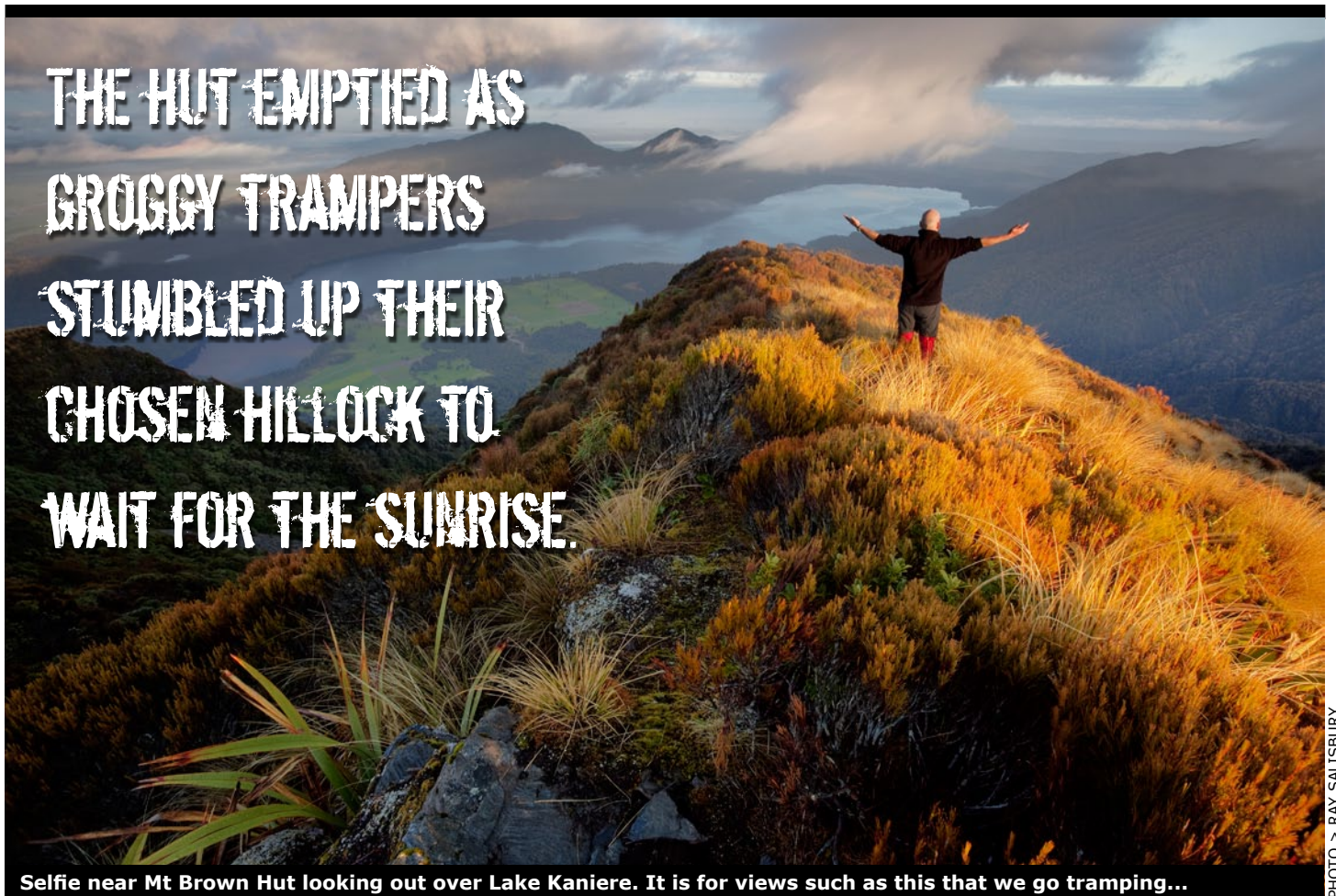
At Kawatiri, the happy trio were pouring tea from thermos flasks; at Maccas in Greymouth they were sipping from flat whites. By Hokitika, they were pushing sandwiches into their mouths, knowing there was no time to stop for lunch.

Damn! There were three vehicles at the track-head carpark. They did the maths, and realised their destination was only a four berth hut, which may be full. But prayers were answered when some foreign backpackers suddenly appeared, and left a solitary car, whose two occupants were still at large. We stashed a tent into Ray's pack, and set off.

Early on, our progress was impeded by tree-fall. Moreso, by tangled supplejack, which took an age to battle through. This isn't your typical beech forest; this is in-penetrable West Coast jungle. From here down to the Glaciers, the mountains are cloaked in lush podocarp forest, dripping dark and wet. It's called the beech gap. We marvelled at rimu, miro, totara, horopito, kahikatea, and later, mountain cedar.

The middle third of this track becomes steep, and requires some real grunt to haul oneself up 60-degree slopes, but there's ample rooted handholds – nothing too gnarly. Two hours elapsed before the angle eased, and we were engulfed in the clouds. Ray's iPhone GPS told us our location, as we walked through leatherwood, turpentine and





Selfie near Mt Brown Hut looking out over Lake Kaniere. It is for views such as this that we go tramping...

PHOTO > RAY SALISBURY

dracophyllum near the bush-line.

Grant disappeared into the swirling mists; waiting for his elders made him too cold. Lou and Ray struggled upward; with aching calf muscles they followed snow poles across the tussocky tops to find the hut, painted in rescue orange – a handy colour in the murky and bleak whiteness.

Together again, they were welcomed by another Grant, from Canada, and his friend Sanna from Sweden – and the resident woodhen. Five in a four-bunker was comfy, and we hit the pit well before nine o'clock.

In 2010, members of the Kokatahi Tramping Club and Permolat spent much of their free time building this wee shelter. Parts of the old Lower Arahura Hut were used, but because of the alpine environment, severe winds and modern building codes, new structural materials were necessary. These wonderful volunteers also re-marked and cleared the overgrown tracks, including another trail which drops down into the Styx River, giving the option of a round trip.

Sunday saw us peer out the window, and drop our jaw in amazement. The hut emptied as groggy trampers stumbled up their chosen hillock to wait for the sunrise. Far below their boots, the long sausage-shape of Lake Kaniere revealed itself; beyond the low-lying hills was the distant Tasman Sea.

Eastward, across the glowing golden tussock were snowy peaks stabbing into the sky, some more

than 2000m high. A kea cried from its nest nearby.

By breakfast, this glorious weather window had dissipated, as the clouds descended once more. While Ray drank his third cuppa, Lou made a brave attempt to reach the top of Mount Brown, turning around on a nearby summit, a compromise the others appreciated.

Our merry trio, their spirits lifted, began their retreat, grateful to the Kokatahi Tramping Club and the Permolat volunteers for their strenuous work in clearing the track, and marking it with ...permolat, of course!

The descent was uneventful, the occasional slippery slide not really worth mentioning. Back in the metropolis of Hokitika, hot drinks were purchased before our party ate lunch at the Hokitika Bar. Not a pub, this is where the mighty Hokitika River meets the turbulent Tasman, and where whitebaiters were wading. Gazing inland, we gave a nod towards the distant, dark green profile of Mt Brown – a worthy weekend destination, despite the long drive.

[Times: 3.5 hrs climb to hut. 2.5 hrs descent, via the same route to Geologist Creek.]

Participants were: Ray Salisbury (scribe), Lou Kolff and guest Grant Standing.

#### **WILDERNESS WISDOM:**

*The best things in life... aren't things."*



**Pat Holland and hikers half-way up the climb****October 17 – Cable Bay Walkway, Nelson**

Leader: Kate Krawczyk

We all gathered at the Glen at 8:30am looking forward to a round trip of the Cable Bay Walkway by walking along the beach and then climbing and returning on the walkway proper; A route that has been done before by the club on their Beach Clean Ups.

We started off along the beach which turned out to be a three and a half kilometre boulder hop - definitely not 'a walk on the beach.' Boulder-hopping can be fun, but doing it for two hours straight can be a bit wearying. We finally made it to the spot where we enjoyed our morning tea. Looking up at the climb - it didn't look too bad but it turned out to be very steep and precarious at times - four wheel drive material: hands grabbing onto clumps of grass and holding on for dear life! Some said that their 'lives flashed before their eyes!'. It is definitely not a climb for those scared of heights because it is one long, steep, grassy slope from the rocky beach all the way to the top.

Once at the top, we all breathed a sigh of relief. We carried on for lunch at the top of Sentinel Hill with a gorgeous view over Cable Bay. From there, it was a leisurely stroll back through sheep paddocks, native bush and forestry down to the Glen.

Participants: Ron Graham, David Cook, Pat Holland, Chris Louth, Dan McGuire, Kelvin Drew, Simon Garton, Andrea Cockerton, Steve Crompton, Bob Renshaw and Charles Kerkham.

# LOST MEMORIES

**23–26 October – Around the Raglan Ranges**

Leader: Pat Holland

**Day 1: Branch—Silver Stream.**

Five of us squeezed into Mike's 4WD to drive over to the Wairau Valley and into the hills at Argyle Pond.

There was some early excitement as we neared the ford across the Leatham River. Mike and Pat were taking a comfort stop by the road-side when an old cockie appeared with excitable pig dogs. After retreating to the vehicle and steadying our nerves, we crossed the ford and proceeded up the Branch Road towards Greigs Hut. We were pleased that we had a 4WD as the fords were in poor condition.

Parking at the junction with the Silver Stream, we kitted up and staggered across the Branch River to the start of the Silver Stream track. The weather was calm, overcast, but with a few spits of rain.

The marked track is just above the stream through the forest and is in only moderate condition with some windfall and overgrowth. Progress was steady but not spectacular with four-day packs. Pat and Ray indulged their OCD tendencies by minor track clearing and humming respectively.

After a few hours we reached the first of three major side streams with steep gullies. These took some effort and care to cross but had lovely waterfalls and pools. After seven hours we reached Mid-Silverstream Hut. This is an old six-bunk NZFS hut in good condition in a small clearing. Kelvin got the woodstove firing, so we could dry our socks.

**Day 2: Silver Stream—Bull Paddock Stream.**

After a cosy night in the hut, we proceeded up-river on the surprisingly good track in super-fine weather. Mike and Pat had done this trip with Ruth Hesselyn six years previously but, unfortunately, their memory banks were not up to recalling the details of where to turn off to get to the tops, 1000m above.

After a close examination of the map, we decided to go up a forested spur about two km from the hut (we should have proceeded further up-track to-

**Kate's intrepid team relieved to be on a proper track**





PHOTO > RAY SALISBURY

Marie and Mike cruise along the tops of an unknown ridge

wards the valley head.) The going was steep, but not difficult. The views of Scotts Knob were spectacular (this trip essentially circumnavigates the 2160m peak).

Eventually, we emerged from the forest into scrub and then open tops. These were not the expected tussock basins, but a long rocky ridge with several ups and downs. No problems but a lot of work after some scouting by Mike, to a final exit onto a ridge near pt 1794. This is above the tarn and saddle on the official route to the Bull Paddock Stream catchment, with the bivvy just visible in the distance.

We made a steepish, but untroubled descent through the bluffs and waterfalls onto the tussock slopes and stream leading to the bivvy. This was a vigorous ten-hour day, so we tumbled into bunks (2) and tents (3) after a quick cook-up.

**Day 3: Bull Paddock—Lost Stream.**

The steep, unmarked route from the bivvy to the tops is directly up behind the bivvy. Again, there was debate just which spur to attack once we emerged from a short section of forest. We took a steep, but unobstructed route that brought us over pt 1828. We sidled around to a delightful small tarn just below the saddle to Lost Stream where we had lunch on a calm, sunny day. From this saddle, the Lost Stream bivvy was just visible way below at the end of the main upper valley. However, the route through the array of steep bluffs was not obvious.

After some scouting, Mike found a steep 100m gut with some tussock and small shrubs that we grovelled down to gain easier ground. The bivvy seemed to take forever to reach through the tussock and some fringes of forest. After a nine-hour day, we were pleased to recline in our bunks (2) and tents (3).

**Day 4: Lost Stream—Branch.**

Now on a marked track, with lighter packs and weather holding, we jauntily made our way down Lost Stream valley – a delightful gem. Like the grand upper basin, the lower valley has open beach forest, with small gorges and side-streams with waterfalls ... well worth a visit in its own right.

We reached the main Branch track which goes south to Misery Creek. We went north to Siberia Hut. Although the track is mainly clear, there is lots

**MIKE FOUND A STEEP 100M GUT WITH SOME TUSsock AND SMALL SHRUBS THAT WE GROVELLED DOWN TO GAIN EASIER GROUND.**

of evidence of the severe windfall from a major storm about five years ago.

After lunch at the hut we proceeded down-river, crossing at the hut to true right and then back over a new swing bridge after one km. We were then on the broader farm/forestry track leading us to the swing bridge at Scotts Creek and Greigs Hut (8 hrs). The rampant wilding pines/Douglas fir in the lower Branch threaten to obliterate views on the track and take over remnant beech forest right to the tops. Another 4km down the 4WD road got us back to Mike's vehicle and so home, all in good order.

Overall, it was an excellent effort considering that two of the party are 70+. There was much ribbing of the leader about the grading in the programme for the trip. (It more properly could be advertised as 'fit'.) However, some may not have participated and therefore missed out on a very satisfying adventure.

Adventurers were: Pat Holland (scribe), Kelvin Drew, Marie Lenting, Mike Drake and Ray Salisbury.



PHOTO > PAT HOLLAND

Kelvin, Mike and Marie at Lost Stream bivvy



# INTO THE ROUGH



Simon tees off on Tappy, 2885 metres above the sea

## 7–10 November – Mt Tapuae-o-Uenuku (2885m) Inland Kaikoura Ranges, Marlborough

Leader: Simon Garton

**“Wake up, Ray!” Pat Holland is knocking on my front door at the insane hour of 3am. There is no response to his wake-up calls, so he checks the time—oops! He’s four hours too early. (I am beginning to wonder if our club captain is losing his marbles.)**

At a more civilised hour, Pat returns to collect me and my mountain of gear. We rendezvous with other sleep-deprived adventurers at Simon’s house. By 7am, we’re whisked over the Whangamoas, chattering in excited anticipation about our proposed climb.

More than three hours after leaving Nelson, we turn inland up the Awatere River. Clouds of dust follow our vehicles as we follow the Molesworth route to Gladstone Downs.

We’re here, splashing up the Hodder. This narrow ravine cuts through steep, broken hinterland, hemmed in by vertiginous, crumbling walls that rise to a slash of blue sky above. An hour up-river, we arrive at the confluence where the Shin flows in.

Five hours upstream, we are moving as a tight unit, criss-crossing the turbulent torrent as it slices through an ominous gorge. As the landscape steepens, the force of the current on our thighs intensifies, so we team up to tackle the most dangerous fords. I count 92 crossings on our first day.

Topping out of the second gorge, we are blocked by a waterfall. A quirky marker indicates a rough sidle track. Alas, this ‘up-and-over’ is steep and eroded. We clamber onto a narrow path that drops through a copse of totara into the river. A couple of clicks later we spot the twin huts ahead, perched high above the Hodder. Sleep deprivation has us all hit the pit by 8pm.

**Day Two.** “Wake up, Ray!” Andrea is hitting my sleeping bag at the ridiculous hour of 5am. I soon succumb to the allure of a warm cuppa. It’s a case of mind-over-mattress. We depart by 6:30am.

Half an hour later we’re hopping the Hodder to a prominent rock cairn. Simon locates the solitary marker pole where the track climbs above the

mouth of Staircase Stream. Many parties miss this, though the route is merely a light ground trail, marked with spasmodic cairns.

We reach the foot of the first snowy slope. Crampons are fitted to our boots; poles are swapped for ice-axes, as we start a slow plod up the hill. We revel in perfect cramponing conditions, zig-zagging up the 30-degree slope.

Eventually, we clamber over into a broad snow plateau for an early lunch. Behind us the menacing north face of Mt Alarm rears above the head of Staircase Stream. To the west, the rock pyramid of Mitre is equally impressive, being the highest point on the aptly-named Red Hills. Before us looms the summit spire of Tappy – a full hour away.

Five of us are climbing a perfect ridge of firm snow; a sort of dress circle arcing to the east where Tapuae-o-Uenuku rises in a shadowy silhouette. The angle of ascent is only a maximum of 45-degrees – nothing too technical.

## IN SLOW MOTION OUR SEPTUAGENARIAN PERFORMS AN ACROBATIC MARVEL; THREE DESPERATE STEPS THEN A SOMERSAULT INTO THE SOFT SNOW.

A gnarly gut has our crampons scraping to secure traction on the rock. Finally, six hours since leaving the huts; here we are, happy on Tappy. At 2885 metres above the Pacific – this is the highest peak in New Zealand north of the Southern Alps.

From our lofty vantage, we gaze over Cook Strait to the North Island; westward to the Richmond, Arthur and Raglan Ranges; eastward to the Seaward Kaikouras. Then, in an inspired moment of organised spontaneity, our leader produces a golfing iron! Simon sets up a snowy tee beside the summit trig. Our man has balls – five of them – one for each of us hackers to slice, chip or hook into the Clarence Valley. (Or, into the rough, I like I did).

With weather closing in, we down-climb, losing altitude efficiently, glissading down the softer snow to the rocks below. On the very last vestige of the winter’s snow, which is undercut by a hidden watercourse, I fall through the thin crust, yelling a warning to those behind me. “This is the most dangerous place on the mountain!”

Pat impulsively leaps onto the perceived safety of the adjacent boulder field. But his crampon catches. I watch in horror as he skates over jagged rocks. In slow motion this septuagenarian

# UPcoming CLUBNITES...

## Monday 7 December Photo Competition

Our club's annual, informal get-together around the table; a chance to show off your skills with a camera – and show us where you've been tramping all year. Guest Judge: **Martin de Ruyter**, of the *Nelson Mail*

Check out page 6 this *Newsletter*.

### TRIP REPORTS CONTINUED...

performs an acrobatic marvel; three desperate steps then a somersault into the soft snow. We hold our breath, relieved when our club president stands to his feet. A handful of Panadol and plasters are dispatched.

We make fast progress toward the huts. Still not out of the woods, we must ford the Hodder River before reaching safety. Crossing in jandals, young Andrea finds herself chasing her dubious footwear downstream, with Simon in hot pursuit. Said jandals are rescued from an eddy, and happily reunited with their owner.

It's been an epic, ten-hour day. Back at our base, the billy is boiled, and rain begins to fall. Sleep comes quickly.

**Day Three.** Rest days are the best days. As a warming sun inches over a ridge, we do our domestic duties, read books and shoot photos. All is well with the world. Eventually, cabin fever flushes my four friends outside to explore the valley head. By nightfall, the Hodder Huts are engulfed in swirling cloud, as we play 500 and argue over Scrabble.

**Day Four.** "Wake up, Ray!" Pat is rousing me at the ungodly hour of 3am. But this is no nightmare. He tells me the mist has cleared and the stars are shining.



PHOTOS > RAY SALISBURY

Tapuae-o-Uenuku's snowy summit

I sluggishly don shoes, beanie, jacket and finger-less gloves, then head outside. A stone's throw from the hut, I set up my camera and stabilise my heavy tripod.

It's a moon-less night with no wind or dew. I watch the Milky Way burn through a blackening sky. The wind sings a song through the tussock. The river roars. I am grateful to be alive. Our expedition has been perfect ... to a tee.

**Climbers were:** Simon Garton, Andrea Cockerton, Sue Henley, Pat Holland and Ray Salisbury (scribe). Thanks to Marlborough Tramping Club for the excellent Hodder Huts (16 bunks).



Tararua Hut was built in 1970 by TTC

### 1st November – Wairoa Bike Ride | Leader: Lawrie Halkett

Soon after midday, a bunch of trampers propelled by two wheels turned up at the Brightwater Tavern and headed east up the Lee Valley.

After three kilometres, we turned south onto Wairoa Valley Rd, along a loose, metalled road.

The weather was perfect, while the agricultural hinterland yielded scenes of sheep, lambs and beef cattle munching happily on green pastures. This eventually gave way to scrubby hardwoods as we approached the turnoff to Pig Valley. Then it was westward towards Wakefield.

Near Wakefield we joined the southern terminus of the Great Taste Trail and had a well-earned rest stop. Some bright spark decided another hill would be good, so we took a deviation around Mt. Hesselington. Not far from home. some enthusiasts among us decided a race back to the cars was in order, so it was a fast finish back to the motorised beasts.

Happy peddlers included: Penny Parker, Kaye Halkett, Pat Holland, Bob Renshaw, Kelvin Drew, Bruce Alley and Lawrie Halkett (leader and scribe).

## COMMITTEE :

- President:** Pat Holland
- Correspondence Secretary & Vice President:** Kate Krawczyk
- Minutes Secretary:** Andrea Cockerton
- Treasurer:** Ian Morris
- Programme Co-ordinator & Gear Officer:** Chris Louth
- Committee:** Sue Henley, Dion Pont, Graeme Ferrier, Lawrie Halkett
- Newsletter Editor:** Raymond Salisbury
- Post reports to: 71 Montreal Rd, Victory, or email to: [newsletter@maxnet.co.nz](mailto:newsletter@maxnet.co.nz)
- Patron:** Robyn Walsh

**Website:** [nelsontrampingclub.org.nz](http://nelsontrampingclub.org.nz)  
**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1548415462086918/>

**Mailbox:** C/o Wises Picture Framers, 78 Buxton Square, Nelson 7010.