



Newsletter of the
NELSON TRAMPING CLUB

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

COMMITTEE MEMBER PROFILE

Name: Leah Parker

Place of birth: Nelson

Occupation: First and foremost a mummy to James (5) Tom (3) and wife to my supportive hubby Kevin. I run my own business from home: *Wish Events* styling and hire. I provide styling, hire and planning services for a range of events including weddings, birthdays and children's events.

Member for: One year, following a ten year break from tramping (which I was first introduced to in my Outdoor Ed class at Nayland College).

How I have benefited as a member: I joined the club to meet new people who shared my passion for the outdoors and, in particular, find others who are available for mid-week activities. My expectations of the club have been well exceeded. I have made new friends, gained some new knowledge of the area in which I have spent most of my life and had awesome opportunities. I have pushed my comfort zones by public speaking and my fitness limits on long days in the hills.

Best trip: This is not an easy question to answer as each trip has its highlights but recently I took my two little men to Bushline Hut for the night. The 3 of us set out up Pinchgut. Tom (3) was not carrying a bag but James (5) had his sleeping bag in his little pack for the first time. They made me so proud completing both days of the trip with no complaints. If a step in the track was too big for Tom's little legs James would go up first then turn and offer his hand. They know that with 20kg in my pack I cannot carry them and they just set about the challenge ahead.

Earlier this year I was privileged enough to be part of one of the building teams working on the Mt Fell Hut project. It was a fantastic experience and awesome working with Silvano and the team.

Worst trip: An icy slip on Gordons Pyramid 15 years ago compressed my spine and has left me with a life-long lower back injury.

Funniest moment: Waking my igloo buddy up to check he was alive. (If you want to sleep in an igloo on a frozen Lake Angelus, you should fill in the gaps between your snow bricks so the freezing wind

Nelson Tramping Club June 2017



PHOTO > COURTESY LEAH

doesn't whistle in.) However, he did not think it was funny. He actually went on to become a builder. Let's hope his construction has improved.

Scariest moment: Tramping alone and not reaching Browning Hut by dark. I had a late start and only planned on going to the Hacket but decided I could make it. It was chilly and the moist air was fogging up my glasses. Having not been there before I was not even sure I was on the right track. With the possums laughing at me, I decided to turn back. I was very pleased to see Hacket Hut again.

Favourite hut: Mt Fell. Slightly biased, I guess, after working on the project but it really is a neat spot. Angelus is up there on my list too.

Bucket list tramp: I would like to do parts of Stewart Island and some more of the Southern Lakes area tramps. I enjoyed the part of the Routeburn I did do, and would love to return.

Find us on 

The NTC Facebook page now has more virtual members than real ones, albeit with some duplication. The last count was 243 members!

- Share your photos of a tramping trip
- Share your opinions & trip ideas
- Keep up-to-date with what's happening

TRIP REPORTS

February–May 2017



PHOTO > COURTESY LAWRIE

Lawrie's party of working trampers at Mt Fell Hut

24–25 February | Mt Fell & Mt Richmond | Mt Richmond Forest Park
Leader: Lawrie Halkett

Two vehicles and seven hardy souls set out from Nelson on Friday morning. Given that Brett and Darren were the speedsters, they dropped off us plodders at the Timms Creek track head, then drove on around to Top Valley and left a vehicle at the Richmond Saddle track head, then returned to catch up with the rest of the group.

The first third of the seven-hour walk to Mt Fell Hut is along the very scenic Timms Creek. Lots of big red beech, matai trees, and plenty of emerald swimming holes made for a very enjoyable walk.

Brett and Darren caught the group up during lunch and contemplating the 1,000 metre climb ahead. It was a pretty grunty ascent, but then the remaining third of the track was an alpine side, just inside the timber line. On the way up we passed a well known face in tramping circles, Geoff Spearpoint and his partner Liz. They were very praise-worthy of the work done on the hut by NTC.

The relocated hut looks great in its much-improved position, looking north and east. Silvano, Ian, Graeme, Pat, Leah and the team have done an awesome job, getting the hut back into a habitable state.

The following morning we wiped down hut walls and did a detailed stock take of remaining paint and timber.

Then it was off up the ridge to the flanks of Mt Fell and Mt Johnston. Brett and Darren, both mechanical engineers, spent a couple of hours finding and photographing wreckage from the

ill-fated *Kereru* flight of 7th May 1942; NZ's first commercial airline disaster, resulting in the death of five people. Mt Johnston is named after the captain of the aircraft and Mt Fell after a passenger on the flight, Pamela Fell.

The lads rejoined the plodders and beat us to the top of Mt Richmond where we all sat in glorious sunshine, taking in the 360-degree panorama that is Nelson and Marlborough provinces. A steep descent to Richmond Saddle Hut then a lazy afternoon followed. (Track time: five hours between Mt Fell & Richmond Saddle Huts.)

At night, a pesky mouse entertained the lighter sleepers, but several missions to despatch 'twinkle toes' were unsuccessful.

Next morning it was a three hour decent to our twin cab truck, and seven bodies with packs squeezed inside and headed back to Timms Creek to pick up the remaining vehicle.

We were Brett Halkett, Darren Borcovsky, Sue Marren, Louise Wheeler (guests), Miriam Alpheus and members David Cook & Lawrie Halkett (scribe).



PHOTO > COURTESY LAWRIE

Engine block remains from the ill-fated aircraft



Chris, Andrea, Marine, David & Kate at Fenella Hut

18–19 March | Fenella Hut | Cobb Valley, Kahurangi National Park

Leader: Kate Krawczyk

We met early at the bottom of the Cathedral steps in Nelson to get a good start for the long drive up to the head of the Cobb Reservoir. We arrived just after 10am and were on the trail by 10:30am.

It is a lovely walk up the valley with lots of places to stop. After an hour and a half you reach Chaffey Hut. The hut takes its name from Chaffey Stream, named after Henry Chaffey, who led a reclusive life in nearby Asbestos Cottage with his wife Annie from around 1914. The hut was built a year after Chaffey's death in 1953, by forest ranger Jack McBurney. The hut was completely rebuilt in 2013 to be historically accurate to the original. We stopped here for a leisurely morning tea.

After another hour and a bit of walking the next stop up the valley is reached; another restoration project of historical significance, the last remaining Deer Culler's tent camp in New Zealand.

This camp, built in 1973, was falling to bits until its historical value was recognized and the camp was restored to its former glory in 2014. The group had another break here to enjoy the surroundings.

As we were sitting outside the tent camp a couple of trampers walked past and you could see their concern and dismay at seeing such a large group heading to their choice destination: Fenella Hut. They conveniently changed their plans and stayed at Cobb Hut, the last hut before Fenella, only half an hour away from their preferred place to stay. Fenella Hut is always a popular destination. It seems other trampers seem to assume they are going to have huts to themselves, which is very seldom the case with the increasing popularity of the backcountry.

We, of course, were well-prepared with a tent (thanks Kelvin) and lots of sleeping mats – if the floor was going to be our only option.

Arriving at the hut, we were made to feel much less than welcome by the six existing occupants, a

group of older gentlemen from the far north who were very unhappy to see us arrive and didn't waste any time in telling us that. Reluctantly, they made some space for us in the bunks, but the atmosphere was pretty awkward at first.

After an hour or so they finally relaxed and opened up a bit. It might have been the beer and spirits that they had brought with them, but whatever it was, it made for a pleasant evening sitting around the table playing cards and chatting away.

The next morning the group split up to do some exploring with a few of us heading up to the ridge below Waingaro Peak to get some views and others checking out the local tarns to take advantage of the photogenic morning light.

The walk out was a pleasant stroll. We were all back in Nelson by 5pm for a nice shower and Sunday roast.

Hikers: Mark Graesser, Andrea Cockerton, Chris Louth, Kelvin Drew, Gwenny Davis, David and Marine Goujou, Liz Henderson, David Cook & Kate Krawczyk (scribe).



The Banff Centre

BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL WORLD TOUR NEW ZEALAND

June 17 | 7:30–10:30 pm | Doors open at 7pm
Annesbrook Church | 40 Saxton Rd West, Stoke

Tickets (Cash Only):
\$20 General Admission
\$15 NZAC Members and Students

From:
Torpedo7 (Rutherford St, Nelson), Stirling Sports
(Richmond Mall), Stirling Sports (Motueka).



PHOTOS > PAT, STEVE, ETC.

Debbie Hogan on the tops | Members in a merry mood at the Wobbly Kea cafe | Steve McGlone entertains on guitar

EASTER @ ARTHURS PASS

14–17 April 2017

Trips based at CTC hut, Arthurs Pass National Park

Generally there were several groups out at any one time doing different things so someone from each group has contributed to the following account.

Friday 14th April | Cave Stream

After arriving late on Thursday night, the first carload of four people, (Andrea, Sue, Steve and Chris), attempted Cave Stream on a day that was, at best, drizzly throughout. The foursome had to abort when they were nearly through – because of the high water level. Various walks and short bike rides filled in the rest of their day until the other two cars arrived in the late afternoon.

It had been agreed that most of us would share a pot-luck dinner which turned out to be an odd affair. David had brought garlic bread, there was a stew of sorts contributed by Pat and broccoli, Brian had bought lots of eggs and he cooked several omelettes with a generous cheese ration. Michelle and Peter had provided an apple crumble. Steve, although cooking independently with Andrea, had roast vegetables to spare. There were also several communal bottles of wine and port. Earlier, Debbie had served some crackers, relish, cheese and raw vegetable sticks as an aperitif.

Saturday 15th April | Mountain bike group

Mountain Bikers will always be seeking out fresh rides to thrash their bikes and, more often than not, offer up body parts, skin and blood to the trails. So, we had to include some wheel time on

the purpose-built Grade 3 Craigieburn tracks.

Starting at Flock Hill off SH73 the Coal Pit Spur track was first, linking over 24km of single track. Thereafter, a jaunt up the ski-field road and a grunty track led to the Lyndon Saddle at 1100m. Here, a conglomeration of bikers were bracing for the first significant 2km of downhill. We eyed up their extra padded knees, threw caution to the wind and honed downhill. Needless to say, the first aid kit was soon put to use.

We had marked the track on behalf of NTC. Out of saline and gauze, we pressed on. Not all the tracks cut through rooty beech forest. We broke out on to stunning views of the Craigieburn Range and a particularly sweet, gentle, rolling track through low-lying *dracophyllum* with welcoming afternoon sun.

As the sun waned we got incrementally muddier, our bikes and trusted steeds rolling on. After around five hours we arrived at Castle Hill, an easy hitch back to the cars was secured. Meanwhile, cooling off quickly, we crawled into the mail bags in a rural mail box to keep warm and await our lift. Attracting a bit of curious attention, we entertained ourselves by rifling through the mail to read the Castle Hill emergency plan and village news. It was a fascinating and informative end to a lovely day.

NB. For the more sensible, there are walking tracks in the area that are not habituated by dirty, smelly bikers!

Participants: Steve, Chris and Andrea (scribe).

Saturday 15th April | Lagoon Saddle, Mt Bruce

While there had been a partial clearance overnight there was still drizzle at the township so it was agreed that eight of us remaining would look at Lagoon Saddle and Mt. Bruce where the weather appeared to be much better.

We were able to set off from Cora Lyn at 9:40am; first detouring to Bealey Hut before climbing up to the bush edge without problem. Debbie found some 'Sticky Bun' mushrooms growing in the pine forest section and she picked some. The traverse section through the tussock was very wet, the recent rain not having had much chance to drain away.



PHOTO > ANDREA

PHOTO > PAT HOLLAND

Intrepid trampers don wet suits to enter Cave Stream | Chris, Sue, Steve & Brian happy to get alpine

Once over Lagoon Saddle, the descent to the hut took some time but we were at the A-Frame Shelter a bit before 12:30pm. We made the side trip across the neophytic Harper River to visit the Lagoon Saddle Hut on the other side. This had a fireplace and four bunks but was fairly rundown. We returned to the shelter where most lunched in the sun. The logbook showed that most visitors were walking the Te Araroa Trail.

While more than half of our group wanted to climb Mt. Bruce, the loss of altitude and the need to regain this height discouraged some. So Peter, Graeme, Debbie and David retraced our steps while the rest climbed Mt. Bruce, taking a short-cut descent to regain the track near the bush edge.

The first car-full returned to the village where Debbie bought some bacon and cream for her mushroom dish. We had time for leisurely showers before the other group returned. Then, we stumbled along to the *Wobbly Kea*. As the MTB group were delayed, we started without them. Lamb shanks were a popular choice, though a few preferred the fish and chips. Most of us walked back to the CTC Hut after leaving the restaurant about 8:15pm.

Participants: Brian, Debbie, Graeme, Michele, Pat, Peter, Sue and David (scribe).

Sunday 16th April | Avalanche Peak

The day dawned clear and fine with a half-moon standing in the sky. A moderately early start by the whole crew was accomplished without too much fuss. Andrea and Steve headed for Scotts Track and while we started the scramble up the Peak Track at the back of the Visitor Centre.

Brian and Chris shot off ahead and were not seen again all day. David was having back problems after the exertions of the previous day, concerned about delaying the party. So, after 30 minutes, he called it quits and turned back. That left the tight bunch of eight.

The first hour in the forest was certainly tough going with steep rocky steps to be clambered up. A steady stream of young tourists passed us. We wistfully envied their lithe bodies and noted their often rather meagre kits for a mountain outing.

As we cleared the bush onto the somewhat gentler tussock slopes, we could see the low and high peaks of Mt Bealey. However, cloud and mist billowed on the tops. Soon the ridge between Bealey and Avalanche disappeared – along with our hopes to complete the traverse and circuit. A stiff breeze picked up so we were glad of shelter as the track skirted beneath the ridge-line.

A solitary, mournful kea was seen circling. After about two hours, the mini-saddle below the main peak was reached. Some bellowing in the mist alerted us to the transit of Brian and Chris. Soon we were at the rock cleft marking the junction of our track with Scotts Track that Andrea and Steve duly arrived on.

We all pushed up the summit ridge to the main peak, misty and crowded. No views; so it was back to the shelter of the cleft for an early lunch.

We then descended Scotts Track – easy going and very pleasant, especially down the tussocked escarpment above McGrath Creek.

A second lunch was consumed above the bush before the final descent as some weak sunshine emerged from the lifting mist. Some visited Punchbowl Falls. Thence back to the CTC Hut via a coffee break in the township.

This night's meal was planned to be self-catered, but there was so much food that it was almost another pot-luck affair. Debbie prepared a mushroom, bacon, onion and cream dish using the Sticky Bun mushrooms collected on Saturday, which went well with the left-over garlic bread. There was more broccoli and a fresh omelette was cooked... in addition to the sundry collection of Easter eggs, crackers, relish and raw vegetables.



Andrea with her push bike



One of many alpine tarns above the bushline

EASTER @ ARTHURS [contd...]

Monday 17th April | Cave Stream

After hearing about the previous attempt, we knew we were in for a challenging journey. Dressed in wetsuits, waders, and multiple layers of polypro, we soon found out the value of having a spare torch, as one member had forgotten theirs, and a second failed not five minutes into the cave.

Meanwhile, David waited five minutes to ensure that they negotiated the first deep pool, then returned to the high terrace; walking round the Lookout Track to the cave entrance to wait.

The cave twists its way through 594m of darkness, with the chilly stream being fast-flowing in some places and waist deep in others, and with two waterfalls to negotiate as you make your way upstream. The smooth white limestone looked much more slippery than it actually was, and in several places we made our way along narrow ledges on the edges to avoid stepping into the deeper pools. The roof arched impressively high above, and there was even a side passage to explore.

About two thirds of the way through, we came to the waterfall which had turned the previous group back. We could certainly see why, as the force of water coming down was too much to push up against, especially with the slippery rocks. However, with the help of a solid push from behind, Michele was able to haul herself up, and Peter followed with a combination of pulling from above and pushing from below. Graeme and Debbie took the alternative route of scrambling up the steep limestone on the side.

Further along, we found another equally challenging waterfall which we negotiated in a similar way. Then, before we knew it, we could see the natural light of the far entrance shining through.

The last bit required a step up over another waterfall, before grasping the iron rungs which to climb onto a ledge then crawl along to the exit. Having achieved this, we celebrated a unique experience with high fives and chocolate all-round. Cavers were: Debbie, Graeme, Peter and Michele (scribe), and David via the overland route.

Monday 17th April | Helicopter Hill

After waiting patiently above ground for the 'cave group' to reappear, David was very keen to test his walking boots once again before departing Arthur's Pass. The suggestion was a quick walk to the top of Helicopter Hill (1256m) for lunch. This is part of the popular Craigieburn Forest Park and being only 90 minutes drive from Christchurch is popular with both mountain bikers and trampers.

On arrival at the busy park, the wet gear from the cave was spread over the car roof with Peter left in charge. David headed off at a very steady pace with Graeme, Denise and Debbie struggling to keep up. (Debbie found many interesting toadstools and mushrooms to distract her walk) It was a steady uphill track for just over 450m of climb. The track time of an 1.5 hrs took us just an hour! Lunch was a chance to rest, soak up some sunshine and enjoy the expansive views.

The return trip to the cars was equally fast. Peter had been tending the gear drying on the car and reading a *Wilderness* magazine that coincidentally had a short article by Graeme Ferrier.

Debbie again found mushroom hunting a distraction but had found a good supply of mushrooms (pine bellettas) for those brave enough to try them.

Walkers were: David, Peter, Michele, Debbie and Graeme (scribe).

Monday 17 April | Temple Basin & Mt Blimit

Typically, the finest day of the long weekend was the day we were heading home. But before that we had another mountain to climb. While some of the group went to splash in the cold dark confines of Cave Stream, the remaining five piled into Steve's car for the short trip to Temple Basin carpark... leaving Andrea, who was feeling poorly, tucked up in bed.

After grunting up the steep rocky track for 40 minutes we arrived at the ski field in calm conditions, glorious sunshine and with magnificent vistas across the valley towards Mt Rolleston. A conspiracy of kea were there to greet us.



PHOTO > STEVE MCGLONE



PHOTO > ANDREA C

Brian & Chris high above Temple Basin ski area | Pot luck meal at the CTC base hut

Both Pat and Brian had fond memories of the area; Brian in his well-spent youth crawling over the surrounding peaks and Pat delving into the murky depths of his memory to when he helped build some of the buildings with the Canterbury University Ski Club back in the dark ages.

Our objective for the day was Mt Blimit (1921m), still some 600m above us, and clearly visible on the ridge above. How to get there through the bluffs was not so obvious.

After a steep 300m climb we reached Bills Basin, with Pages Shelter far below. Further up, below Mt Blimit, were three lovely tarns where we stopped for a while to take in the serenity and beauty.

After sussing what we thought would be the easiest route to summit, it was off again, up an ever-steepening scramble, over frozen rock to the ridgeline which led to the top. From here we could see down into the Mingha Valley, the cascading Kennedy Falls, and across to Mt Oates, and along the Southern Alps. It was a far cry from the cold clag of the previous day on Avalanche Peak.

The ridge had looked fairly benign from below but once on it, it was anything but. Rather than risk life and limb, we decided to stop about 200m and 60 vertical metres below the summit and return to the tranquillity of the tarns for lunch, eventually returning to the ski-field.

A check of phone messages revealed that Andrea had awoken. She had hitched to the carpark and was somewhere in the basin. However, we didn't see her until, with perfect timing, she arrived back at the cars as we were changing to leave. Six into five seats didn't work, so Sue climbed into the back for the ride back to the village.

Along for the climb were Pat, Brian, Steve, Sue, Chris (scribe) and a belated Andrea.

Riding the Otira viaduct

Riding lots of fast downhills on a mountainbike, you view everything for its potential to give you a buzz. We had decided on the way home we would unload the bikes at the top of the Pass, then bikeless Sue would drive down to Otira, while Steve, Andrea and I would race over the viaduct to meet her.

Coming down from the viaduct lookout, we spotted a gap in the traffic and belted it, Steve at the rear with his flashing tail light, and keeping to the centre of the lane – so any cars would have to fall in behind till it was safe to pass.

Not so, as there are always some moronic clowns around. Halfway along the viaduct, flat out at around 60kph, a couple of f***wits decided they couldn't wait another 30 seconds till we cleared the bridge and overtook us in the other lane, then swerved back in front to avoid oncoming traffic.

Even gentle Andrea, who loves and forgives everyone, said she was so incensed that she gave them the finger as they sped past. I wasn't feeling so charitable and would have gladly dropped them over the side by their ankles. There was also one corner further down, Candy's Bend, that we hit far too fast, but we all managed to get round safely without being spat over the edge into the Otira River gorge.

The ride was fun though, despite the idiots, and an exhilarating way to end the weekend's activities. Riders were Andrea, Steve & Chris (scribe.)

The following items of lost property can be reclaimed from the club's Gear Custodian:

- a sleeping bag
- a Bank Card
- a water bottle
- a torch.
- two cases of lost balance
- one in an overnight bag
- the other is in a day pack

In addition we have a request from DOC: they want their mushrooms back.

Personnel:

Andrea Cockerton (Organiser), David Cook (Continuity Scribe), Michele Cunningham, Graeme Ferrier, Sue Henley, Debbie Hogan, Pat Holland, Chris Louth, Steve McGlone, Peter Phipps & Brian Renwick.



Grant and the ladies at Hackett Hut



Andrea's party negotiate the karst bluffs below Mount Arthur

PHOTO > STEVE MCGLOWE

3 April | Hackett Hut | Mt Richmond Forest Park
Leader: Leah Parker

Weekday trips are great for me as I can reserve weekends for family and work.

With the weather slightly damp I had anticipated there would be a few withdrawals from the trip. However, instead I had a few texts checking the plan was to go ahead. I had walked this track a few times; once in extremely wet weather, so I knew the minimal rain would not affect the track or group safety.

We met a few people on the track. One of the first was Karin's 'sister-in-law', so I found myself thinking 'Nelson certainly is a small place.' Marie also happened to know Grant through their running. We only had the tiniest sprinkle the whole trip and the temperature was perfect – not too hot; not too cold.

We arrived at the hut to discover a welcome new addition to the area in the form of a picnic table. We sat down and set about enjoying our tasty, packed lunches.

Although not unpleasant, we chose not to hang about too long. The absence of sun helped in this decision and after the obligatory group photo we returned down the track.

It was a lovely group and I found myself having a good chat with each of the group members. Once back at the cars, some workmen having their lunch in the carpark found it amusing that I was talked into jumping off the bridge. I didn't take much convincing, I am always up for a refreshing dip following a walk. Another great day enjoying nature!

Monday morning walkers were: Leah Parker (scribe), Marie Lenting, Karin Widmer, Leah Shopneck & Grant Derecourt.

WILDERNESS WISDOM:

"Many of life's failures are people who did not realise how close they were to success... when they gave up." – Thomas Edison

25 April | Mt Arthur Dawn Service
Leader: Andrea Cockerton

Anzac Day dawned clear and calm and a gorgeous day to be in the Hills. What usually would take five minutes to cross the middle of town to pick up a fellow trumper, took more like 20 minutes with roads closed, policemen and soldiers marching, and cars parked all over, and Joe Public out in force everywhere for the "Lest We Forget" gathering – (I forgot.)

I was impressed to see such a turnout to respect our fallen soldiers, but of course I was then running late for the 7.30am rendezvous at Richmond.

The fine weather also brought the trampers out, and there were 16 to make up our happy band. A lovely drive out through Neudorf and we were at the Flora car park in no time. Amazingly, so was half of Nelson – with every available inch of parking and a few hundred metres of the road full of cars.

We booted, banded up and joined the queue of eager walkers making the pilgrimage to the summit.

And very pleasant it was. The still and sunny conditions made for nice rests along the way for snacks with much wagging of chins. We had a good lunch spot, just off the crest of the summit where a chill wind had picked up.

We had intended wandering down the northern ridge route to gain Horseshoe Basin. Barry James was keen to lead the merry crew off the side of the ridge to find a 'hole' that pierced though said ridge from one side to t'other. I foolishly took a wander to the opposite side of the ridge from the main party to scout for the same opening and found myself at the saddle to Horseshoe Basin without finding it.

Much to-ing and fro-ing followed as I regained the ridge and found the party waiting for me. "The hole's by a domed rock" called Debbie, so I dropped off the opposite side of the ridge and wandered down a couple of hundred metres without finding anything. Back up I went again. I could hear a voice calling from above. "Aha.. there's the hole!" and through I popped to find the party. Then I heard Tim had gone through the hole to look for me. Richard went back to look for Tim, and so on and so on...

Eventually, after a pleasant game of hide and



Cairn marks a high point on the Red Hills plateau, with the Wairau River winding west toward the Rainbow valley

seek, we all gathered at the saddle, descended to Horseshoe Basin then regained the route down to the hut, spread out like Brown's cows.

A late return with tired but smiling faces all round. A great day out thanks to our amazing trip leader Andrea who was nursing cracked ribs from a mountain biking mishap a couple of days before.

Trip leader Andrea Cockerton was joined by her merry band of walkers: Kazuhiro Abe, Barry James, Chris Louth, Debbie Hogan, Kate Krawczyk, Kathy Smith, Leah Parker, Michele Cunningham, her friend Anne, Peter Phipps, Nina Solter, Tim Tyler, and scribe Steve McGlone.

2 May | Red Hills | Mt Richmond Forest Park Leader: Pat Holland (private trip)

I wanted to do a recce of the area and the forecast was excellent so three of us headed off on a mid-week adventure. We reached the Red Hills carpark off SH63 (just past the Rainbow turnoff) just after 8am. This was in time to disturb the slumbers of a traveller in his car who drove off as we booted up.

The first kilometre of track crosses a little wooded spur just above the farm, a delightful walk but not the easiest travel for bikes.

Soon we trudged up the 4WD road, towards the saddle. About half-way up, a TA trojan came towards us under heavy pack, though she did not tarry to talk (wise girl; we did look disreputable).

The road is in remarkably good condition considering this is unstable country and basically does not go anywhere useful. It ended after two hours at the bushline where we took our first rest in brilliant sunshine.

Red Hills Hut is a modern six-bunker. Beyond, this the track heads north from the saddle to Porters and Hunters Huts, part of the TA Trail.

Not far past the hut there is a branch towards Beebies Knob; the MTB route. But we went hard right up into the Red Hills.

The initially well-defined track petered out in the tussock and low *dracopyllum* scrub. However, some cairns lead to the crest of a broad knob. Views on a grand scale were had in every direction. Lines of traffic heading up SH63 to St Arnaud. We gazed across to the Raglan Ranges, further into the Rainbow Valley over the mountains of Nelson Lakes NP. But our route lay ahead up the long ridge towards Red Hill Peak. So near but so far!

Firstly, we had to drop 50m into a large boggy basin with many tarns. We picked our way across this two kilometre plateau, not quite managing dry boots. Then, onto the easy travel of the broad and not very steep ridge. But time was running out. We had hoped to reach Chrome Peak (1646m), about halfway to Red Hills. But there was no chance in the time available, so we crossed an old fence line, reaching a craggy outcrop (1480m) with interesting conglomerate with glacial boulders cemented into tufra.

Here we drank in excellent view of Porters Knob and into the Right Branch of the Motueka River which starts in a large basin under Red Hills. It was brilliantly fine but a cool breeze sent us scurrying back down from whence we came.

After a brief stop at the hut, we barrelled down the 4WD road, arriving at the car, nine hours since setting out. It was not a feasible day trip to Red Hill peak, even in summer, but very worthwhile to explore an interesting, unusual and scenic area.

Participants were: Pat Holland (scribe), Barry James & Ian Morris.



PHOTO > PAT HOLLAND

Large party of oldies relax in the sun atop the Lodestone

14 May | Mt Lodestone–Mt Hodder Kahurangi National Park

Leader: Pat Holland

This trip was organised at very short notice so it was pleasing to have a turn-out of eleven keen souls, perhaps mainly encouraged by the excellent weather forecast. We arrived at Flora car park in good order with the beloved leader making only one false turn on the drive from Richmond.

It was a brilliant day and, although cool, it was just above freezing level. We headed en-file (Chris in front; Pat at back) up the standard route towards Lodestone (1462m).

The track had been freshly trimmed by DOC and the going was good. But it was cool in the forest with a chilly southerly breeze that did not bode well for the tops. However, the back markers reached the summit in two hours to find the rest lounging about on the north side in very balmy conditions.

Excellent views were enjoyed with the only snow visible on Ben Nevis, but more extensive on the distant Tapuae-o-uenuku).

After an extended break, three decided to carry on enjoying the sunshine before taking the direct route down to Flora Hut. With fond farewells, the other eight headed norwest off the summit ridge towards Mt Hodder (1377m). We followed a well-marked trapping line down a couple of steep pitches to the saddle between Lodestone and Hodder. This involved bum-slides for some.

From the saddle, the trap-line goes up the not-so-steep ridge, 200m to the broad summit of Hodder, covered in stunted beech forest. There we found a party of twelve from Waimea TC lunching in the sun. We socialised for 30 minutes. Then we continued into denser forest, still following a trap-

line. The Waimea bunch went down Saddle Creek but we decided to stay on the ridge, traversing Pt 1148 down to Flora Stream.

The crossing necessitated wet boots but nobody immersed themselves. We reached the Flora Track where the swing bridge crosses Horseshoe Creek. Ian unkindly pointed out my map had the bridge wrongly marked at Holmwood Creek, two kilometres further towards Flora Hut. Never mind, we trudged the extra 40 minutes along. A quick check of Flora Hut revealed both rooms were in good order with no sign of the graffiti someone said now defiled them after our renovation.

And so it was, onwards to Flora car park to meet our other three travellers awaiting us. The Lodestone-Hodder route was a very pleasant one with no technical or route-finding challenges. (About 7.5 hours round trip.) Just the thing for a leg-stretch on a fine autumn day.

Participants: Pat Holland (scribe), Ian Morris, Debbie Hogan, Uta Purcell, Marianne Hermsen, Chris Louth, David Cook, Michele Cunningham, Pete Phipps, Nicola Harwood & Mike Drake.

21 May | Mount Malita via Roding River, Nelson

Leader: Chris Louth

When the overnight temperature drops to zero in Nelson you know it's going to be colder up the valleys. So it was as we left the car at the frosty Aniseed Valley road end and began the trek up the Roding towards mineral belt country.

Heavy rain during the week had raised the river levels and no one likes wet feet at the start of a walk so it was slow going as we removed and replaced boots for the four toe-numbing crossings. The sun finally caught up with us as we rock-hopped across United Creek and began the climb up to the old United workings. The effort



PHOTO > CHRIS LOUTH

United Mine: Scott, Penny, Andrea, Simon & Chris

PHOTO > DAVID BLUNT

David, Deidre, Lynette & Ray at the start

of the steep climb was almost cathartic after the cold of the valley.

Like reptiles basking in the sun, we flopped for a break in the warmth before the grunt through low bush and tussock up to the ridgeline on a now well-used track. We owed thanks to Gary Davies of Tapawera who has done more than anyone to open this area up. This became even more evident later in the walk.

From the top of the ridge we descended back into the cold shadows and down the slippery slope to Champion Mine for lunch. Time was getting on but after a quick discussion about daylight hours, or the lack thereof, we crossed Champion Creek for the flesh-shredding bash upstream and up onto a spur that led to the ridge between Mt Meares and Mt Malita. It was evident that a lot of wilding pine control had been done in this area, and the many fallen trees didn't make the going any easier.

It was a glorious day on the ridgeline, calm and warm. We picked up a faint track and headed higher towards the bush clad peak of Mt Malita, stopping to record our passing at the geocache hidden on top of one knoll. It used to be a navigation exercise to find your way through the many windfalls to Mt Malita Hut, but Gary had been busy again and a newly cut and well-marked track led us straight there.

The N.C.C.hut was unlocked for once and would be a reasonable haven if you needed to spend the night there. It's just a pity that it is sited in such a cold dark situation with absolutely no view.

The sun was now getting low in the sky but the views on the descent were superb. Malita, though not very high, seems to be one of those mountains you can see from all over the place. Logging half way down the mountain had changed the forestry roads a bit but with the help of GPS and combined vague memories we navigated the shortest route back down into the now frigid valley to the car.

On the long, but pleasant, autumn walk were Penny Parker, Simon Garton, Andrea Cockerton, Scott Stocker (visitor) and Chris Louth (scribe).

28 May | Airport Perimeter Walk | Nelson

Leader: Lynette Salisbury

We all met on a lovely sunny morning at the Trent Memorial near Nelson Airport. Who should pass by on her bicycle, but Deidre Glover, who, seeing us there, spontaneously locked up her bike and joined the party as we set out along the estuary inlet to the left of the airport terminal itself.

Having negotiated the kissing gate, we continued on, deep in conversation and enjoyed an easy flat walk and each other's company. After heavy rain the track was a little muddy, but for the three of us nursing injuries it was just what the doctor ordered.

After skirting the Golf Course, we paid an impromptu visit to the facilities at the 19th hole, and completed the circuit via Bolt Road. (Total time about 90 minutes).

Sunday walkers were: Ray & Lynette Salisbury (scribe), David Blunt, Deidre Glover & David Cook.

Tramping gear BUY-SELL-SWAP

BRAND NEW MSR Whisperlite 'Universal' Stove

- Unwanted prize – never used – still in original box
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- Fits normal Propane-Butane canisters, or
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- Great cold-weather performance (esp. at altitude)

RRP at [Torpedo7](#): \$299 NZD. **Offers over \$230.**

Contact Ray Salisbury (editor)

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UPcoming CLUBDATES...

Monday 12 June

Club Night

7.30pm, Nelson Intermediate
Speaker: Nina Dickerhof

Our invited speaker is **Nina Dickerhof** from Christchurch. Arriving from Germany as a student, Nina fell seriously in love with New Zealand and our great outdoors, especially the mighty Southern Alps.

She has accomplished more hard trips and climbs over the past decade than most of us in a lifetime.

Nina will speak on some of her recent adventures in the Hooker and Olivine wilderness areas. This evening is not to be missed as a motivational and inspirational talk for all, particularly younger members. Illustrated with some of her images. [See her photos here](#)



7pm, Monday 3 July

Pub Night

Monday 7 August

Club Night AGM

7.30pm, Nelson Intermediate
Speaker: Robbie Burton

Our invited speaker is **Robbie Burton** from Potton & Burton Publishing. He is Craig Potton's business counterpart, and also his climbing companion on their epic traverse of the Southern Alps.



SUPER-HEALTHY RECIPE! LEAH'S ROCKY ROAD

This is a great one to have in the freezer ready to pop in your pack for that energy boost on a tramp.

Base

- 1 pkt of Wine bikkies – smashed up
- 1 pkt mini marshmallows
- ½ cup cranberries
- 300g dark chocolate melts
- 150g butter
- 3 TBS Golden or maple syrup

Mix bikkie crumbs, marshmallows and cranberries in a bowl. Melt butter, chocolate and syrup in a heavy base saucepan and add to bikkie mix. Combine quickly and press into a slice tin. Refrigerate.

Topping

- 150g dark chocolate melts
- 50g butter
- 1TBS Golden or maple syrup

Melt in heavy saucepan and spread over base before returning to the fridge. Allow to set fully before slicing in big or bigger slices. Top with a sprinkle of icing sugar. Freezes well.

Wilderlife

An FMC Production



Wilderlife is taking off!
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Emily Forne's [ski-tramp on Poseidon Peak...](#)
and the experience of **Anthony Behrens** [traversing the spine of the North Island.](#)

Wilderlife welcomes contributions that celebrate our outdoor lives.

[FMC's new Wilderlife website](#)
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