



Newsletter of the
NELSON TRAMPING CLUB
 Founded 1934, Nelson, New Zealand

Nelson Tramping Club

October 2009

MEMBER PROFILE > Mike Drake

1. **Place of birth:** Leeds, Yorkshire, UK
2. **Occupation:** Develop software applications for our company, Food Management (NZ) Ltd.
3. **Been a member for:** 9 years.
4. **How I have benefitted** (from being a member):
Made lots of friends and visited many places.
5. **Best trip:** All trips are great, irrespective of the weather or degree of difficulty. But the one freshest in my memory is Five-Passes in Aspiring National Park. A pleasant drive down to Glenorchy and back, lots of coffee stops, plus a bit of walking. The trip lasted several days, so gave a good opportunity to switch off and enjoy the outdoors.
6. **Worst trip:** The worst (from a sandfly perspective) would be a three-day trip to Mt Snowdon, Kahurangi National Park. The sandflies were in good form. Each evening, after taking a dip, I was tingling 30 minutes after getting dressed (from the many sandfly bites).
7. **Funniest moment:** On my first attempt at Faerie Queene, our campsite was on a slight slope. During the night, I slid to the tent bottom many times, but Ian Pavitt was rock solid – didn't move. I lost count how many times I crawled back into position. I found out later that Ian had the 'non-slip' version of Thermarest. My Thermarest was the 'shiny' sliding version.
8. **Scariest moment:** Descending Mt Paske, my crampons got balled so I slid a short distance.
9. **Favourite tramping hut:** Paske Hut.
10. **What wild place would I put at the top of your 'bucket list?'** Multi-day trip through remote parts of the South Island.



Mike Drake returns from Angelus Peak

ANNUAL PHOTO COMPETITION < Monday 7 December >

Get your favourite pics cropped, printed & ready for public exhibition.

> **Categories:** Landscape, Hut/Camp Life, Above & Below Bushline, Nature, Historical & Humour. Finalists get their photos entered into the FMC Bulletin's national club photo competition.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS >

Chris Olds, Nicki Everton & Julie Marriott.



EDITORIAL COMMENT >

iPLOD

Warning: this issue could prove dangerous to your normal urban existence. Some of the trip reports exude passion for wild places and remote adventures ... they might be the catalyst to addict you to this odd sport we call tramping.

A few of the 'hard trips' were led by Mike Drake, our featured member, intrepid guide, and not a bad photographer. Check out his photo album on the *Pi-casa* website, and you'll be sorry you missed out on some classic climbs.

I'm on the lookout for an interesting name for our newsletter. The TTC have their famous '*Tararua*', a DoC conservancy have '*Footnotes*', and the ATC have their '*Wanderlust*'. Please email me some innovative, creative ideas, or I might have to resort to *my* worst: *i-PLOD*. Perhaps we could add a silent 'h', just to be trendy.

Shaun Barnett, the *FMC Bulletin* editor, is asking us for ideas to freshen up his magazine – a larger page size, more glossy photos, a more modern name, etc. Hmm... seems change is here to stay.

You may have noted a number of tragedies this past winter; some skiers, snowboarders and alpine trampers have perished in the mountains. I guess it's a reminder for *us* to be well-prepared. To practise good risk management. And to carry one of the four personal locator beacons our club has purchased.

In the earlier years of our nation, drowning was called 'the NZ death', it was so common. My grandfather, uncle and brother drowned in recent decades – perhaps things haven't changed so much? Which brings me to the advert on the back page.

I reckon I've done every MSC course under the sun: from firearm safety to first aid; from abseiling to avalanche awareness. So, I can testify to their excellent value for money, fun, and professionalism. I mean, really, how much is your life worth? One Sunday in November learning how to cross rivers safely?

They say that experience is life's harshest teacher – you get the exam first, and the lesson later.

Raymond Salisbury
EDITOR

newsletter@maxnet.co.nz

TIP > The current Programme is also posted on the club website:

www.nelsontrampingclub.org.nz from where a PDF version can be downloaded and printed. This file is very small in size, to suit those with only a dial-up modem connection.

TRIP REPORTS

August–October 2009

9 August – Whispering Falls & the Chromite Mines, Mt Richmond Forest Park

Organiser: Robyn Walsh

Our day together began at 9.30am outside the Stoke Post Office which included a happy catchup chat. Then we were off to the Hackett.

A very good frost was still evident on Aniseed Valley Road with numerous white patches in the shady bits. Hackett carpark, now in the sun, was quite muddy.

Over the first hour, we split into two groups, resulting in a segregated morning tea stop at the Falls Track junction. The leading group was ensconced on the picnic table, while the back group sprawled on the ground nearer to the main track. Moving right along, it was a pleasant saunter by the creek and on up through the native bush to the falls. Gentle drops of 'water-jewels' fell from the cliff top to give us a lovely, albeit small, display.

Lunch time approached, so we headed back to the junction, and on to the Chromite Mines track around 12.15pm. As always, it was a hot climb through this sheltered, sunny gully for 30 minutes. Wise ones had shed layers before we started. Prior to lunch, we found the short mine cut into the hill, just above the track. Our lunch stop was 10 minutes further at 12.50pm ... a pleasant spot in the sun as we munched away at the 'Chromite Cafe'.

An hour later, when we made a move to retrace our steps, we discovered that we'd been sitting directly above the second, much longer mine. It was just by chance that someone glanced back down the bank and saw an opening in the undergrowth Jim led the way in. No torch was needed – we could stand upright inside. There were no spiders or wetas this visit.

A lovely day was enjoyed by: Gillian Arbuthnott, Beverley Muirhead, Jim Maxwell, Robyn Walsh, and visitors Ken Holmes and dog Bridie, past member Shirley Gabrielsen, and Veronica Griffiths.

21–23 August – Te ao Whekere (2590m), Seaward Kaikoura Range

Organiser: Mike Drake

Thursday evening found a team of three head-ing towards Blenheim as our launching point for Te ao Whekere. Our dinner stop at Havelock didn't meet our expectations, so we called into a supermarket to take on board some additional carbohydrate. Only to arrive at Lynne's to find the kitchen lined with muffins! After tea and muffins we felt duly ready for the morrow.

On Friday we had a mandatory stop at Kekerengu for coffee and more carbohydrate which set the

scene for the day. The turn-off to Pui Puhi Road was soon attained, and the 2WD car easily managed the fords.

After the driving it was time to start drawing on our carbo loading. However, soon it was time for lunch – just over from Point 1086. From here we could see the track leading down to Happy Valley Stream. Low cloud prevented any views of the mountains. A pleasant walk up the valley found us at a spot mentioned in Ben Winnubst's book *Kaikoura – Kahurangi, a guide for climbers*.

Our 2004 summer campsite had been a stony, exposed area another hour up the valley. This site was grass, protected from down-draughts by a rock buttress. We dropped our packs and went further up the valley to confirm this was the better site, and check the way for the morning. That night we enjoyed a decent meal, then retired to bed early.

On Saturday at 05:40am, we were ascending the valley, past the 2004 campsite, then onto the snow. Not long after entering the basin, the day dawned, promising a wonderful morning ahead.

Once in the basin, dominated by Peak 2430, we identified a good crossing point over a spur from this peak. From the spur, the long slope to the top came into view. So, onward and upward, after a stop at 2452m, we continued. A steeper section for the last few metres found us on the summit ridge, then a stroll to what looked like the highest point (2598m – according to the GPS) – taking five hours to climb 1400m from the campsite.

We stayed on the top for while, savouring our much earned vantage point. Then down to our camp by 1:30pm. With the sun moving off the campsite, we decided the second planned night would be back in Nelson. Thanks Lynne for your hospitality, and Carole and Mark for another great weekend.

P.S. For access contact Lance Godfrey, Manager Pui Peaks, Tel: (03) 319 5551.



PHOTO: MIKE DRAKE

Te ao Whekere summit > Kaikoura below

Photos can be viewed on the Internet at:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/foodmgmt/TeAoWhelere02#>

23 August - Lookout Point, Opouri Saddle, Marlborough Sounds

Organiser: Jim Maxwell

Despite early rain that appeared to have set in, 12 trampers gathered at the church steps early on Sunday and set off.

Arriving at Opouri Saddle in mist and drizzle was no deterrent to a determined assault on the ridge, where the rocks were quite slippery after the rain. Nevertheless, as we climbed 500 metres, the vegetation was rewarding, with *Astelias*, ferns of all kinds, orchids and other epiphytes demonstrating that the New Zealand forest can be magnificent, even on a rainy day.

After a cold lunch we descended, and were finally rewarded with views of Duncan and Nydia Bays and beyond. Leader: Jim Maxwell. Participants: Dan McGuire, Val Latimer, Mary Wu, Lou Kolff, Christine Kolff, Sue Locke, Mike Locke, Uta Purcell, and guest Nicky Everton.

29 August – Beebys Knob, (off Tophouse Rd)

Organiser: Carole Crocker

Carole was unable to take this trip and it was taken by Jim Maxwell. The weather was overcast for most of the day but not too cold or windy. The route was up the DoC track from Tophouse Road. It was not in good condition underfoot, and washed away in many steep parts. The sun showed for only a short period around lunchtime.

The main group of trampers reached the top of Beebys, but turned back from their route to the hut, because the weather had turned colder. Some visited Tophouse hotel after the tramp and were entertained by the manager with a talk on its history and the murders.

A total of nine trampers came: NTC members Jim Maxwell, Ruth Henry, Mary Honey, Ruth Hesselyn, Jocelyn Winn, Merrick Mitchell, Ray Caird, Jane Dewar, & WTC member Jim Meyer.

5–6 September – Inland Track, Abel Tasman NP

Organiser: Jocelyn Winn

With no real enthusiasm for the longer tramping day, (and extra travelling), of the proposed crossover, we settled for the shorter walk. In perfect weather and plenty of time, we were off to the headland, together with Christine Hoy who was taking her lunch up to Holyoakes Clearing. Behind us, a Motueka Tramping Club group were off to the Anchorage.

Not very far up the hill, we paused for a morning tea break. We were unhurried and laden with weekend packs, so Christine went ahead to meet us again on her way down. Our lunch was

at Holyoakes Clearing too, but somewhat later. Here, we soaked up the last of the view before the track was more bush-covered.

DOC have been busy with track maintenance and we especially appreciated their gorse cutting at Castle Rocks Lookout. Also enjoying the view across the Marahau Inlet were Sebastian and Janine, a young couple from Germany. They were pleasant company at the hut, where we were warmed by a fire, while a crisp frost settled outside. Photos of the full moon were a challenge for some and an inquisitive possum lurked nearby.

Next morning, we reluctantly left the sunny verandah in idyllic weather for the descent. Billies boiled for coffee at Holyoakes, and about three-ish, we lounged around at the Tinline picnic area with the Motueka crowd, also on their return.

On the trip I enjoyed the company of Uta Purcell, Mary Honey and Mary Wu.



Visiting the old Luna Hut

6 September – Thomson Hill, Baton Saddle

Organiser: David Blunt

Our tramp started on top of the Baton Saddle, on the Tapawera-Baton Road. Before setting off, David gave us a brief rundown of the locality including showing us samples of fluorite, a mineral which was first discovered here by A. Thomson in 1889.

We strolled along a farm track then climbed to the top of an open paddock where we stopped for an extended morning tea.

It was a beautiful clear sunny day and we already had wonderful views over the Baton Valley

towards the nearby Mt Arthur Range, well-covered in snow.

We continued along a track through scrub and native bush, some parts of which had been cleared by David and others on a previous visit. A bit of a scramble through some mature bush linked up with an old road to the top of Thomson Hill.

Our lunch spot was a perfectly situated clearing with spectacular views over the Clarke Valley towards Mt Arthur in the north, to Mt Owen in the south. It was good to have a different perspective of these mountains.

From here, it was back down to the cars and a short drive to Harry Hancock's farm for a visit to the historic Luna Hut.

This hut used to be situated in the Karamea River headwaters opposite where the Trevor Carter Hut now stands but, when threatened with demolition, was rescued by Harry and helicoptered and trucked to his farm at Glenrae.

The hut now rests in an idyllic spot beside a man-made lake. It was here we had a brew-up and yet another long and leisurely break. A very enjoyable day: a short walk to a new spot for great views and lots of opportunities for eating and talking. Many thanks to organiser David and also to Harry and his family for hosting us on their farm.

This sociable day was enjoyed by: Tom Brown, Sue Davies, Mike & Sue Locke, Alice Patterson, Pam Satherley, Maurice & Katie Cloughley, Lindsay Twine (scribe), Ian Pavitt, and visitor Dan Helm.

Photos can be viewed on the Internet at:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/deebiee.nz>

12 September Cullen Creek, Richmond F P

Organiser: Uta Purcell

This historically interesting walkway is a track cut by goldminers in 1888 across the range between Linkwater and Wairau Valley. It climbs steadily and steeply, offer-

ing views to the rushing creek far below and to the bush-covered ridge at the head of the valley, skirting pine plantations before entering the bush. Up there the track has been rerouted, avoiding the private hut, and taking some of the steepness out of it. All this we saw through misty rain. In the bush on the ridge, the track becomes a tramping track, entering Richmond Forest Park. We negotiated some windfall, dating back to the winter storms of 2008. For our lunch at the Village Clearing on the Waikakaho side, it really rained. The two remaining brick chimneys did not afford us any shelter.

Everyone was in good spirits, though, which saw us through as we retraced our steps with even less visibility down Cullen Creek to the carpark in the former mining town of Cullenville.

Happy participants were Ruth Henry, Nicki Everton (visitor), Julie Marriott (visitor), Jamie Payne (visitor), Jim Mayer (visitor WTC), and Uta Purcell.

12-13 September – Belvedere Peak (2114m), Rainbow Valley

Organiser: Mike Drake

Saturday morning saw five folk trudge up Rainbow Valley, expecting rain (but none came).

A tedious walk provided access to some great country and peaks. Progress up the valley was measured by the diminishing power pylons, and increase in the detail of Mt Iris which dominates the valley.

We crossed a saddle, and the Rainbow River for the last time. About three hours up the Paske Valley we spotted our five-star accommodation: Paske Hut – simple but everything you need of a hut: bunks, open fireplace, cooking area, and great views.

After a brew, we continued on to re-familiarise ourselves with the route up to Paske Saddle. A good fire greeted our return to the hut – thanks Donato. During the evening, the sky cleared, suggesting that the weather was playing out the forecast.

At 05:10am on Sunday morn-



Mark climbs the ridge to Belvedere

PHOTO: PAT HOLLAND

ing we were retracing our steps from our reccy the previous afternoon. Dion had decided to explore valleys above the hut, and enjoy a more leisurely morning. Soon we were cramponing on frozen snow, listening to the pleasant *crunch, crunch* of crampons biting into ice – the only sound in the valley. Life is simple; steady progress, good conditions, perfect weather and a goal in sight.

As previously arranged, Donato would go no further than the saddle. With a steady wind blowing, we wasted no time starting along the 2km-long ridge. Apart from some narrow sections, no difficulties were encountered up to the first high point.

Consultation with my GPS confirmed the summit was still 600+ metres away from this first high point, up a more 'interesting' section of the ridge – steep and narrow. We plodded on, front pointing up a steep section, across easy ground followed by another steep section. We were progressing along the ridge from the 'V' notch. After 40 min from the previous high point we were on the summit, with perhaps a little relief all round.

We reversed the route to the 'U' notch and then headed down the face. By this time the snow had started to turn into porridge, slowing progress. Bearing right, we eventually found a spur



Dan, Tom, Jaimie & Wooded Peak

which took us off the mountain into the valley.

Walking back, we felt that another day in this tranquil spot would be great. But that wasn't part of the plan, so we lunched at the hut, then tramped out. Eventually, we saw the power pylons increasing in detail as we trudged back down the valley. We arrived back at the car at around 5pm, making for a 12-hour, but very rewarding day.

A great weekend was had by Dion, Donato, Mike, Mark & Pat. Photos can be viewed on the Internet at:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/patrick.holland4/NTCBelvederePkSept09#>

19 September
Bullock Track–Wooded Peak
Organiser: Tom Brown

The plan for this trip was to have a look at the Bullock Track that was built (circa 1855) to haul ore samples from near Coppermire Saddle to the port.

Leaving the Maitai dam at 8.00am, we arrived on Coppermire Saddle by 11.00am via a shortcut that branches off the Dun Saddle track at Grid Ref. 027 403 849. The line of the bullock track is fairly conspicuous on the eastern side of Wooded Peak, below the bushline, but difficult to follow in places because of the overgrown vegetation.

On reaching the bush edge, we climbed straight up on to Wells Ridge, rather than prolong the day. Raymond and Jamie summited Wooded Peak, then re-

Annual Club Photo > 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 nibbles, 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:** Don Pittham

National Competition:

The committee have decided to align our club competition with the national competition. Some categories have changed to suit this. The winners from our club will have their photos sent off to Wellington. Winners will have their photos printed in the *FMC Bulletin*, and receive prizes.

Rolling Slideshow:

Photos must be printed for the judging, as usual. A rolling slideshow will also be held at the club night of pics people submit to Pat Holland by e-mail before 7 December. Images should be no larger than 1024 x 728 pixels. Judging will be from 6 x 4" prints, except for *Peoples Choice*.

New Format:

All photos need to meet the following criteria:

- Prints must be 6 x 4 inches in size.
- Photos are to have been taken within the past 12 months.
- No manipulated photos (except for cropping & sharpening.)
- Person submitting the photo must be person who has taken the photo.
- Entries are limited to three prints / per category / per person
- First Place-getters from each category will receive a prize.
- On the back of the print put the category and the title of the picture.
- Do *not* include the name of the entrant.

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 (a rock in a stream or part of a tree). What's important is that the feel 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

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). Ensure that the shot is as sharp as you can make it, that the subject is large in the picture and that the background is not intrusive. 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 aspect of club life. Black & white encouraged but not essential.

7. Humour (Not an FMC category - just NTC.)

Probably the most difficult area in which to succeed. Spontaneity usually works better than 'set-ups'. But we're often short of shots in this category!

turned via the Wells Ridge track to Coppermine Saddle.

My original intention had been to exit via Sunrise Ridge, but Dan advised that it had not been cleared since the storm, and through binoculars it looked like it had taken a battering.

We arrived back at the dam around 4pm, returning to Nelson with the sun still shining.

The party was: Dan MGuire, Tom Brown, Raymond Salisbury, and visitor Jamie Payne.

20 September Brandy Creek, Dovedale

Organiser: David Blunt

This was primarily a social get together at the lifestyle farm of Peter and Margot Syms at Brandy Creek, near Dovedale.

Before arriving at the Sym's patch, most of those attending assembled at Faulkners Bush in Wakefield for morning tea. After this, a 1.5-hour circuit was made around the Totara Heights lifestyle blocks, where great views were afforded over the surrounding countryside.

From there, it was on to Brandy Creek where Peter took us on a farm tour through his eucalypt plantings and nut trees. While this was in progress, Margot was keeping an eye on the food being cooked in bonfire embers.

The resulting banquet was well worth the wait and greatly enjoyed by everyone in warm sunny conditions.

Those partaking were: Gretchen Williams, Alison Nicholl, Arthur Jonas, Yvonne Kyle, Ruth Hesselyn, Beverley Muirhead, Christine & Dale Hoy, Ken Ridley, David Blunt, Heather Spence, Mike Drake, Uta & Mike Purcell and Rob & Jo Kay.

It was great to see Margot making good progress after surgery. Many thanks to her and Peter for hosting us on their farm.

26–27 September Rocks Hut, Mt Richmond F Park

Organiser: Jo Kay

We left cars at the caretakers house then walked down the side



Contemplating the climb > Kazuhiro & Pat on Mount Arthur

PHOTO: R. SALISBURY

of the dam back to the footbridge and followed the South Branch of the Maitai River to Dun Saddle.

The first part up to Maitai Cave turnoff wanders through mature beech and fern forest. Crossing over the river, the vegetation changes to scrubby open areas where the new well-graded track zigzags uphill.

We reached Rocks Hut just on cuppa time. Jamie spent the rest of the afternoon 'having fun with the axe', producing enough firewood for many more nights.

Lee, Uta and I had a wander up to the lookout where we could see the famous rocks.

We settled in for a convivial evening of telling lies and playing cards.

On our way back, Lee, Marijke and Jamie scrambled up Dun Mountain for views, while Uta botanised and I read.

Lee and Marijke swam in the river at the caves turn-off. We found Jamie catching a few zeds further along the track

I was thrilled to complete the

tramp, having suffered a dodgy knee for several weeks. The new Leki poles proved their worth and in fact, my knee has improved!

Members were: Jo Kay, Uta Purcell, with visitors Lee Nixon, Marijke Boers & Jamie Payne.

27 September

Mt Arthur - Kahurangi N Park

Organiser: Pat Holland

The scheduled long day trip

to North Twin changed into a reg-

ular day on the hill for the party of four. The first day of daylight saving, and soft snow conditions, took their toll, so discretion ruled.

An hour's climb from Flora car park saw us at Mt Arthur Hut in the sun. The offer of a brew from Raymond was declined in favour of pressing on while it was still cool, but to no avail—the breakable crust was already softening when we reached the Gordons Pyramid turn-off.



So, after some flourishing of ice axes and a steady plod to the summit, lunch was eaten in bright, mild conditions. There were excellent views across the route to the Twins.

It was a relief to see Ruth finding a return to form as she bounded across the snow. Lassitude from the soft snow dispelled thoughts of a side-trip to Winter Peak.

High cloud edged across as we made our way back down the ridge, preceeding the scheduled rain front. However, the clear weather was maintained to the carpark (ca 8hrs). We were the only people on Mt Arthur that afternoon — mountain, hut and track.

Climbers were: Ruth Hesselyn, Kazuhiro Abe, Pat Holland and Raymond Salisbury.

3–4 October

Lake Caslini, Murchison

Organiser: Gretchen Williams

Day 1: Lakes Caslini & Cliff

Good things about tramping in the rain: The sandflies don't bite, you don't get sweaty and smelly, no need for sun-block, it's cosy sitting under a tarpaulin when eating your lunch, the waterfalls are more magnificent, the bush glistens, and colours are richer.

Access to the area was through private farm land and the way through the bush was more a route than a track—we were glad of Tony's navigational ability.

We walked around Lake Caslini and stopped on a raised spit for lunch where Gretchen showed thoughtfulness by providing a fly sheet to shelter in, plus chocolate brownie to keep our energy and spirits up.

We followed a compass bearing, sidling up until to the base of a large rock bluff. We followed this around, arriving at Lake Cliff for more chocolate brownie.

This lake is surrounded by cliffs, so not suitable for circumnavigating but very picturesque. An easily traversed ridge led us back to the cars.

Day 2: Blackwater fumaroles

After a cosy night at Kiwi Holiday Park in Murchison, we travelled north to the Mangles Valley and turned down Blackwater Road, where access to the fumaroles starts on private farm land. Emus and their chicks were protected by the male emu booming at us.

The route is well-marked, following the Blackwater Stream then veering off to arrive in a small gravelled clearing with about 50 small flames coming out of the ground. Toasting forks, pans and grills were hung over a branch to complete this natural bush-kitchen. We toasted crumpets, grilled sausages and brewed billy tea for lunch, while curious robins and fantails looked on. With the bush sparkling from the previous day's rain, a blue sky and with full tummies, Tony summed it up "Ah, it's a good life".

Members of the party were: Gretchen Williams, Tony Had-don, Alison Nicoll, Yvonne Kyle, Arthur Jonas & Jo Kay.

3–4 October

Mt Chittenden (2205m)

near Nelson Lakes N Park

Organiser: Ruth Hesselyn

To go or not to go, that was

the question. The Saturday forecast for Nelson Lakes was showers then snow flurries down to 700m, then clearing on Sunday.

Five of us plus gear squeezed into Dion's (and Barry's) large 4WD and headed to Connors creek, the last boggy and rut riddled stretch to the hut being negotiated with a bit of nifty 4W driving.

Five minutes into the tramp, the drizzle started, then the snow. My original intentions of camping in tussock country opposite the climb quickly changed to the bush-covered flats at the head of the valley.

But, we zapped by these and were halfway up the south branch before I realised the mistake. After a quick discussion then decision to carry on, packs were left at the bush edge while we explored.

The first obstacle was a huge

pile of avalanche debris (the result of last years' record snow fall). We then checked out possible sites: acutely-angled bush clearings, bumpy tussocks and exposed flats, but given the weather, nothing appealed.

A hasty retreat to somewhere near the originally-intended campsite ensued. After tents and tarps were erected, clammy clothes changed and hot drinks consumed, it almost seemed enjoyable. In any case, the walk would have been too short without the campsite hunt. As it was, Grant (the newcomer) went for a wander while the rest of us retreated to our bags.

The camp awoke at 4am to Mike's "wakey, wakey". A peek out of the tent revealed stars-great! So it was all on.

By daybreak we had started up a steep gully. Route finding on Chittenden can be tricky and it wasn't until we had climbed partway along the adjoining spur that travel looked straightforward. Despite the previous day's snowfall, conditions were good, so crampons were donned and the up-hill plod continued.

But, oh no... the clear skies gradually clouded over, the tops disappeared, then it started snowing. We continued on to the base of a steep gully and reassessed our situation.

Mike's GPS indicated that we were 150 vertical metres from the summit. It was tempting to peek over the next ridge but, with decreasing visibility and rapidly-fading footprints, I opted for retreat.

Back at camp, lunch and a hot cuppa were enjoyed under the now snow-encrusted tarp. After a quick pack-up it was back down the valley, with the snow still falling.

Thanks to the following for an enjoyable trip: Dion Pont, Grant Standing (visitor), Mark Stevens and Mike Drake.

5 October

Club night: Ken Ridley entertained us with photos of his cycling & kayaking tour of Vietnam & Cambodia.



DOWNLOAD FMC NEWSLETTERS

If you are interested in the finer details of what our Federation are up to, you can view the monthly newsletter on-line below:

[Newsletter download page](#)

[August Newsletter](#)

[September Newsletter](#)

The FMC are involved in advocacy regarding mining, damming wild rivers, land tenure, public access. Plus promoting wilderness, preservation and conservation values.

WANTED! Lively Tramping Photos

We would like to have fresh photos of our member clubs to use as banner photos across on the FMC website. (see example above.) If your club has a photo that you think might be suitable please email it to: webmaster@fmc.org.nz

Shots must have a very wide format (croppable to a ratio of 4.3:1). We are looking for lively shots in interesting locations with club groups with four or more people!

TOPO50 > New NZ Topo Map Series

On 23 September 2009 the NZMS 260 Topographical maps were replaced by the Topo50 series.

- The scale is still 1:50000 but the sheet size is a smaller A1. It will now take 452 x new maps to cover NZ, versus 297 x NZMS 260 maps.
- Geographic coordinates will change by approximately 200m, 190m in a north-south direction, and 10m in an east-west direction.
- Grid coordinates will change by a significant figure, avoiding any confusion between the NZMS 260 & the Topo50 coordinates system.
- Search & Rescue will be using the new coordinates system from 23/9/2009.

FMC are offering a one-off deal for a bulk purchase. One order per club. FMC will not be reselling Topo50 after this order.

If a clubs' order exceeds 60 Topo50's the price will be \$5 each versus \$7 for 6-20 maps.

Orders need to be in by the 29th October 2009. Payment by the 5th November. (Final prices depend on the clubs final order.)

Please provide: **Name, Contact Phone No. & Map Code.**

Flat maps can also be ordered at an additional \$15 for postage. Incorrect orders cannot be returned.

Refer to the LINZ website for the map index. The tramping club has not been provided with an index for map codes.

Recommended reading:

www.linz.govt.nz
www.fmc.org.nz

Email orders by end of October to: **Marguerite** (from NTC.)

twodefine@xtra.co.nz
Telephone: **(03) 548 5944**
(Call her if you don't get a response within a week).

Shewee – for women only

That title will ensure I have men's attention, which I do not really want – but still...

After my accident which rendered me unable to crouch, I suddenly found myself heeding maxims I had always ridiculed, like 'never go past a public toilet' – at least in the outdoors.

Then, a female cousin trampler visited showed me this device she had bought called a 'Shewee'. Suffice to say it allows a gal to pee standing up. "And it works," my cousin informed me, without giving a demonstration.

This sounded like the answer to a compromised maiden's prayer, so I added one to Peter's shopping list. (Not through a morbid sense of humour – I was not yet up to shopping.) The male shop assistant told Peter that they sell a lot of them to blokes – one must assume that, in the absence of a spate of nasty male accidents, men are seeing this as a way to get their girls out into the snow.

I tried it out at home – "and it worked". So I felt able to tag along on the club's Cable Bay Walkway trip. I did my own super-easy version, without having to fret about whether there was a toilet.

The only bad feature is the colour of the case it comes in – shocking pink hardly lends itself to discreet carrying.

I will admit that one has to learn the reality of expressions like 'splashing one's boots' and 'pissing into the wind'. But such little boys' lessons are soon learnt.

Available in Nelson from the *Altitude* store, Montgomery Square.

Price: about \$30 with case, less without.

See the website:

www.shewee.co.nz

Margot Symms

NEWS + NOTICES >

Upcoming Clubnights

(put them in your diary)

Details: 7:30pm Nelson Intermediate School, Tipahi St. Gold Coin.

Monday 7 December:

Annual Photo Competition & Supper. Prizes & fun galore!

Monday 8 February:

Show & Tell evening. Book your slot - contact Lawrie Halkett.



OUTDOOR SAFETY RIVER SAFETY COURSE >

< NZ Mountain Safety Council >

We have 6 places reserved and first 6 members to book with MSC get free registration courtesy of the club coffers. **See Pat Holland.**

Participants will:

- Understand basic river dynamics and hazards.
- Assess whether it's safe to cross a river or stream, and where.
- Organise clothing and equipment for river crossing.
- Learn an approved method for solo crossing.
- Learn an approved mutual support method.
- Be able to float and recover if swept away.
- Be able to self-release from a trapped pack.
- Be able to safely retreat during a crossing if necessary.

LOCATION:

The course will be held at the Nelson/Marlborough Fish & Game rooms, 66 Champion Rd, Richmond, & at local river venue.

COST INCLUDES:

Theory & Practical Session.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Tramping Pack (must have a waist belt), waterproof liner & some gear in it.
- Two changes of clothes.
- Boots.

There is no formal qualification You get a certificate of attendance.

COST: \$15.00

DATE: Sunday 8th November

TIME: 9.30am

REGISTER AT:

www.mountainsafety.org.nz

FURTHER INFO:

Nelson Admin Officer:

Evelyn O'Neill

nelson@mountainsafety.org.nz

Tel: 03 546 3784

Nelson Bushcraft Co-ordinator:

Justin Morrison

justin.morrison@fasteners.co.nz

Tel: 03 547 3306

DOC UPDATES >

Richmond Forest Park:

Right branch of the Wairoa:

Landowners have permanently withdrawn access. DoC cannot maintain the track or the Right Branch Wairoa Hut, and are considering options.

Loss of access has also meant the closure of the Bishops Cap access from Lee Valley (and therefore the Alpine Route). Also the Lee Valley-Starveall access.

Hackett-Starveall Huts route:

Wind damage is so bad the DoC are considering re-routing this track around the damaged area.

New Red Hills hut by Christmas.

Nelson Lakes National Park:

Angelus Hut will be closed this summer while a new hut is being built. Booking system being considered. Limited camping available.

Kahurangi National Park:

Tracks in the Wangapeka and Karamea catchments reopened. Lake Matiri valley track cleared.

WEB-SITES >

NZ Trampler:

This comprehensive internet site should be bookmarked and used by all keen trampers. Based on Web 2.0 technology, users can post route information, photos, or chat in forums about anything tramping-related. Advertise for walking partners, download GPS waypoints, search for 500+ huts - it's all there under one virtual roof.

www.tramper.co.nz



Peak Bagging NZ:

Modelled on the UK idea of 'Munro-bagging', an English couple have decided to introduce a similar concept to NZers.

On this web site, users can maintain their personal 'tick-list' of hills they've climbed, or debate in forums on the merits of mountains which could be included in the official list.

www.peakbagging.co.nz

Travers-Sabine Anyone?

Club member Ross Price is planning a 7-day trip in Nelson Lakes NP in late Nov-early Dec. Sabine and Travers valleys, plus passes. Phone **538 0064** if interested.

COMMITTEE >

President, Gear: Mark Stevens

Vice President: Lawrie Halkett

Correspondence Secretary: Pat Holland

Treasurer: Gillian Arbuthnott

Minutes Secretary: Jo Kay

Programme Team Rep: Uta Purcell

Committee: Bob Janssen, Dion Pont, Marguerite V, Merrick Mitchell

Newsletter Editor: Raymond Salisbury

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