

FOOTPRINTS

2016



Mackinnon Pass

Highest Point

Altitude: 1154m



The Annual Journal of the Auckland University Tramping Club

Volume 70, 2016

Project Coordinator: Carmen Chan

Layout & Design: Carmen Chan

Proof-reading and Editing: Anna Luo, Matthew Pearce, Matthew Battley, Carmen Chan

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Disclaimer: The club would like to thank the members of the Auckland University Tramping Club for their contributions towards the publications of Footprints, and other events throughout the year. Opinions expressed in this journal are the views of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the University of Auckland or the Auckland University Tramping Club.



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From the Editor:

Dear Trampers,

I'm not sure where to begin. Back in the Dark Ages of November 2015, I recall taking upon the role of AUTC Publications Officer in a spur of spontaneity. It was for two reasons: Firstly, because I thought that I would have less opportunity to tramp whilst travelling in between placements outside of Auckland. Secondly because AUTC is the coolest club in the world, and I wanted to see if the crazy tales bartered around as club legend were true.

Thankfully, I was entirely wrong on the first point (*it hit me two hours after I moved out, that most of the bush is Outside of Auckland*).

But the second point... Your accounts? I was completely blown out of the duck pond.

It's all true.

The stories that you've sent through to me have been entertaining*, wild, inspiring and downright insane.

(Yep. Matt Battley did do outdoor ironing on Mt Ruapehu. Chris Holyer - I'm impressed by the detail of your 'Tramp Reviews', and Tim Gray...I will not comment further except to say that your article raised such consternation from an editor that they required a subsequent phone call for reassurance and counselling.)

Putting these tales together has been a yearlong journey of article collection, newsletters, Photoshop and a marathon of formatting for publication. We've had 72 trips run this year, and a record setting 42 accounts written amongst these pages for this year's edition. You will see many of the photographs submitted for the AUTC Photo Competition amongst these pages, along with the remarkable reports, poems, sage wisdom and reviews submitted by our trip leaders, group members and AUTC Spirit Challenge winners.

To trampers of the Auckland University Tramping Club: It's been pleasure putting Footprints together for 2016. Thank you for sharing your stories! The size of this journal reflects upon the richness of the year that we've had as a club and your tales from 2016 are now immortalised amongst these pages.

Enjoy.

Carmen Chan

AUTC Publications Officer 2016



"Thumbs Up" - Central Plateau, April 2016

*ft. Carl Barnhill & Fran Osten Report Team

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Pining for the Fjords – Captain’s Report



The Captain.

Well, 2016 seems to have ceased to be, kicked the bucket and gone to join the choir invisible, but what a year of tramping it was!

Continuing to go from strength to strength, AUTC retained over 600 members this year, with members gallivanting off to exciting areas all over the country. We averaged over one trip a week, with 72 trips in total, situated everywhere from Fiordland to Cape Reinga. For this effort I must thank every one of you who led a trip this year, and Bianca, our Trips Officer for the excellent job she did helping members new and old to find awesome places to visit.

Along with week-long trips into the middle of nowhere, social trips continued to be a very significant part of the myriad, with some absolutely fantastic trips like O’Camp, May Camp, the Pinnacles Cook-off and the Cave Party, bringing the club together and allowing us to pass on some of our thoroughly ridiculous traditions. A big thank you to Moira and Mark for organising these trips, along with the head chefs (you know who you are), who always ensured that we had a feast! Meanwhile, Jamie has helped to ensure that the area around our club hut will stay pest-free, with plenty of successful of baiting trips throughout the year.

In terms of instructional courses, I thought we were stretched to the max last year, yet this year we increased them further to a record of 7 Snowskools (5 Beginners’ and 2 Advanced) and both a Beginners’ and Advanced Bush School, all of which were very well attended. I was very impressed by the number of people within the club wishing to up-skill themselves in 2016, and look forward to the types of trips you will all lead in the future with your new-found skills. I’d also like to take this opportunity to extend my utmost thanks to all of the members who volunteered their time and experience to lead these courses – you have all helped to make AUTC a stronger and safer club.

Similar to the sentiments of last year’s Captain (oh wait, that was me :P) I’ve continued to be particularly pleased with the huge variety of trips going out this year – an excellent range from epic explorations through to fun day-walks and some fantastic 3-4 day trips in between. I’d like to thank all of you members for getting out there and leading tramps, without your input the club simply wouldn’t function.

Thanks to careful tramp planning, good decision making by all and an onto-it Safety Team (thanks Sophie et al.) we've had a very good year this year in terms of Safety, with no significant incidents. Tramping in New Zealand is certainly not without some significant hazards, so I'm very glad that AUTC continues to follow careful safety practices.

Significant work has continued on the club hut this year thanks to the organisational machine that is Sarah, with a new wall, piano and paint job among many other great improvements. Oh, and also free Wi-Fi. We'll have to save the astronomy tower for a coming year though.

Big news also this year is that we have a nice shiny new website thanks to Hamish. If you haven't had a look recently, definitely have a look around, as there's some hidden gems like food ideas and lots of info about planning trips.

A personal highlight for me this year (despite the weather) was the 5 Passes trip I did in Mt Aspiring National Park. Properly off the beaten track, we stayed in rock bivvies, visited a glacier, almost got blown off a pass and spent far too long making bad puns. Thanks to the varied NZ terrain and wonderful variety of people in AUTC, every trip is different, and I hope that you've all formed as many fun memories from trips this year as I have.

This year also sees us welcome Mark Battley as AUTC's new President, as John Cater steps down. On behalf of the club, I'd like to extend my thanks to John for his outstanding guidance and dedication to the club over the last 6 years and to Mark for stepping into the role.

Mark has been very active in AUTC the 1980s and responsible for once taking a portable television up Ruapehu (apparently the trick is to keep the batteries warm in your sleeping bag), Mark also works in the office right next to John's, so it should be one of the easiest changeovers in history.

Before I go, I'd like to say a massive thank you to the entire committee, without whom AUTC simply could not function as smoothly and as effectively as it does. . A special mention goes to Louis and Joe as my fellow exec, who were always organised and ready to help - especially as my final year engineering project gradually ate more of my time. I'm sorry that I don't have the space to thank you all personally here, but you've all have done an incredible job this year and it's been a pleasure to have organised the club with you.

I hope you all make use of summer for some epic tramping adventures before I see you all back next year for another year of getting high, wet and wasted. Thanks heaps for putting up with me as Captain for the last couple of years, and I now leave you in the very capable hands of Sophie.

Now go find some wilderness to explore!

Matthew Battley

Captain 2016



Hut Officer's Report

We've done a huge range of things to the hut this year, but the biggest achievement to date is the installation of Wi-Fi at the hut, firmly bringing O'nuku into the 21st century. No longer must we suffer out at the hut without modern technology! I owe a huge thanks to everyone who spent two weekends straight laying out the fibre out to the hut, and also a huge shout-out to Captain Matt for dealing with Chorus and getting us all set up. Although this huge achievement mostly shadows the other things we have achieved this year, we did manage to get a couple of other things done. As most of what I've done this year as Hut Officer is keep lists, the rest of this report will also mostly be a list.



A new cupboard door painted by Kat.

The buzzing AUTC working bee team!



Working Bee #1

- Resurrected the toilet fume chimney
- Added new shelves to the kitchen
- Cleaned everything, including the mattresses
- Scrubbed out the toilet water tank
- Stained the weatherboards which had been replaced in previous years
- Cleaned out and added shelves to the locker
- Fixed lots of things...

Working Bee #2

- Replaced the last section of rotten wall on the front of the hut
- Majestically mounted the whalebone on the wall
- Replaced the door handle with a functional one
- Built a new staircase on the right-hand side of the deck
- Many other things...

Working Bee #3

- Replaced the entire left hand (kitchen) side of the hut – the most wall area ever replaced in a single working bee!
- Built two new outdoor benches
- Kat Collier painted a sweet new mural on the mattress cupboard
- Scrubbed out the main water tank
- And even more...

Working Bee #4

- Installed Wi-Fi
- Brought in a new piano
- Painted the inside & stained the outside of the new wall
- Tidied up all the mess we made at the other three working bees!
- Etcetera...



Repairing O'nuku's hut wall.

New wall complete!



Thanks to everyone who came and helped out throughout the year. It was a big effort to have four working bees and it wouldn't have been possible without all your enthusiasm. Over the year we have achieved an enormous amount, from things as minor as a new plug for the sink all the way up to the replacement of two walls. A special mention is deserved by Sach and Sophie who were the only people to attend every single working bee I ran this year. Thanks also to life member David Gauld who donated the new piano.

O'nuku is the spiritual home of the club and we're lucky to have such a place. It's been an honour to be the guardian of the hut this year. If you haven't been there recently I urge you to visit. As a club member you can stay there any time for free.

Over and out,

Sarah Daniell

AUTC Hut Officer 2016

Social Officers' Report:

Quad Lunches:

This year the weekly quad lunches were hosted by Moira and myself (Mark), your dedicated socials officers. They presented a great opportunity for current and new members of the club to come along for a chat, plan a trip or just catch up on the latest club news.



Matthew Battley and Sophie Jenkins cooking up a trip.

O'Camp:

O-Week camp has always been a club favourite and it didn't disappoint this year, kicking off the year in style. As always it was held at Ōngāruanuku Hut, our much loved club hut. It had been raining during O-week, but thankfully the weather cleared up over the weekend.

As usual, we left from just outside the general library on the Saturday morning and all arrived at the carpark on schedule. The sun was shining and spirits were high as we split into groups depending on each person's fitness and desire to see a range of different spectacles, including waterfalls and outstanding scenic views. The walks were generally relatively smooth except for close to the hut where we encountered what was effectively a natural mud slide, which made for slow progress.

As each of the groups arrived at the hut, groups of people began the short but steep walk to the waterfall close to the hut for a refreshing swim. However, to tell you the truth by the time you had walked back up the hill to the hut you were already sweating again. Once all of the tents were set up at the campsite, snacks and drinks were passed around as the volunteer cooks began making dinner. After dinner the evening kicked off with the classic hut games, including the telephone book challenge and sock wrestling.

In the morning, we did a big clean up and then began our walk down to Piha beach where we had some snacks and enjoyed a well-deserved swim, before driving back to uni.



The O-Camp Crew.

Mt. Eden Wine & Cheese:

After the evening was originally postponed due to bad weather, it ended up happening on a clear Tuesday evening. The walk up to Mt. Eden was good and once we had all got to the top, we opened the selection of box wine, cheese and crackers and relaxed, while sharing stories and general chit chat. The 360° view at the top of Mt. Eden was sensational and everybody took plenty of pictures and selfies. Sophie Jenkins would have got the prize for drinking the most wine and as a result we found out about a whole new side of her. Hint: Make sure you come along next year.

Cave Party:

After Semester 1 exams, a small group of us departed for the annual 'Cave Party' Trip. The trip was based in the south western corner of the Waitakere Ranges. Firstly, we set up our tents at the campsite and had some lunch, before setting off for a day walk.

We walked along the Gibbons track, which took us up to the top of a ridge where we were able to take some amazing photos of parts of the west coast that not many people get to see. We then turned onto the Muir track, which connected to the Pararaha Valley track. At the intersection between these two tracks is a campsite and when we passed through the campsite we ran into, what seemed to be an abandoned hunting dog. We stopped off for some lunch and took down some details and a description of the dog, which we passed onto the manager of the campsite. We then enjoyed a short but deep river crossing and then eventually after a bit of 'swamp' bashing made it onto the beach. We then followed the beach all the way back to the campsite.

The walk took longer than expected and it was already dark by the time we got back to the campsite so we quickly had some vegetarian nachos for dinner before heading off to the caves. We spent the rest of the night having some drinks, playing cards and listening to some great music in the caves.

The next morning, we packed up and headed back to the university, having enjoyed a slice of the unspoilt beauty of New Zealand.



Auckland City at sunset.

Hut Birthday:

This year we celebrated the 72nd birthday of our beloved Ōngāruanuku hut. A few additions were made to the already spectacular accumulation of ‘random’ objects. The weather was on our side, which made the weekend all the more enjoyable. Once set up, the classic hut games began and were accompanied by joyous music and the odd drink. By the end of the night everyone had danced the night away and ready for a good sleep. In the morning everyone helped to clean up and then headed back to uni.

May Camp:

On the weekend after Re-O’week, we went on our annual Re-O’week camp, which is more commonly known as May camp at Waitawheta Camp in the Kaimais. We drove down on the Friday night, had dinner and got settled in and then spent the rest of the evening getting to know any new members of the club and playing the usual club games including sock wrestling and table traversing.

In the morning on Saturday, we had breakfast and then split into groups to do different day walks of varying difficulty. During the walks we were treated amazing views, spectacular waterfalls and insight into the mining history of the area. Once the different groups had arrived back at the camp, we had some dinner and shared stories of what we had experienced that day. People then got dressed in their pink stuff for the pink-themed party. We spent the rest of the evening having some drinks and dancing like crazy to the tunes being belted from the music system. Also later in the night some of us made a fire in the outside fireplace and chilled for the rest of the evening.

In the morning we pack up and headed back to Auckland. This was definitely one of the best trips of the year, thanks to everyone who made it such a success!

This trip has always been the one that everyone looks forward to every year, with this year being no exception. We headed down to Coromandel on the Saturday morning and once everyone had arrived at the Carpark we walked to the hut. We didn’t get started for a while as one car turned up late. After fearing that the worst had happened, we found out that they had just stopped off on the way to get some new equipment. Once at the hut, we unpacked and walked up to the top of the pinnacles, where the view was astounding. We then walked back down to the hut, where in teams of five, we started the cook off. I must say the quality of the meals cooked this year were the best I have ever seen. In the end though, the best main meal went to a delicious pasta dish, while the best desert went to an apple crumble! Each winning team received a respective prize for winning. We spent the rest of the evening having some drinks and playing cards.

In the morning a few of us summited the pinnacles again. Later back at the hut we did a quick tidy up and then headed back home. I was definitely one of the best trips of the year!



Whatipu.

Pinnacles Cook Off:

This trip has always been the one that everyone looks forward to every year, with this year being no exception. We headed down to Coromandel on the Saturday morning and once everyone had arrived at the Carpark we walked to the hut. We didn't get started for a while as one car turned up late. After fearing that the worst had happened, we found out that they had just stopped off on the way to get some new equipment. Once at the hut, we unpacked and walked up to the top of the pinnacles, where the view was astounding. We then walked back down to the hut, where in teams of five, we started the cook off. I must say the quality of the meals cooked this year were the best I have ever seen. In the end though, the best main meal went to a delicious pasta dish, while the best desert went to an apple crumble! Each winning team received a respective prize for winning. We spent the rest of the evening having some drinks and playing cards.

In the morning a few of us summited the pinnacles again. Later back at the hut we did a quick tidy up and then headed back home. I was definitely one of the best trips of the year!



Cooking Off!

Thanks for an amazing year everyone, hopefully Moira and myself will see you guys again on future trips and if you are new to tramping, I hope that we have inspired you to continue tramping and to explore the exquisite beauty of nature, not only in New Zealand but all around the world!

Cheers,

Mark Swarbrick & Moira Dickson, Social Officers 2016

Basic Bushskool

Date: 7th May – 8th May 2016

Location: Whatipu, Waitakere Ranges Regional Park

Trip Leader: Auckland University Tramping Club

A first-time tramper's account of tramping with AUTC!

Swamp. This was the word that captured my attention. Deciding that I wanted to fulfil my dream of being waist deep in mushy muck and goo, I signed up for Basic Bush School.

The black sand greeted us at Whatipu. Caves loomed over us, imploring us to explore them. We acquiesced. We grabbed our torches and squinted at the dark entrance. Someone had been there before us; there were neat tracings made on the sandy floor. I wriggled into a small opening that led to the back of the cave. Cool sand slipped through my fingers and brushed my face as I squashed myself, much like a caterpillar.

With black sand marks on our trackpants, we bade farewell to the caves. A cool stream greeted us, and we laughed nervously at the thought of wading in. Unprepared, it was at this point where some of us got our tents and sleeping bags wet. We hurriedly borrowed pack liners from each other after the minor ordeal.

That was, of course, just the beginning. The real swamp awaited us and, gulping, I plunged in. Being a small figure, the water quickly came up to my chest. It was nothing like how horror movies depicted swamps to be though. In fact, it felt like a pleasant dip in a big bathtub. I could feel my legs getting colder as I reached the centre of the swamp. I stared curiously at tiny bubbles that were being issued from underneath. We soon had to put up a fight against the reeds though, that were resisting our every movement.

Soaking wet, but pleased, I threw myself against the banks of the swamp, struggling to climb up against the heavy weight of my backpack. I looked up, triumphant... and paused. We had found ourselves right in the heart of the wilderness. Flax scrambled everywhere. It was impossible to make out any sort of route, which, we were told, was the whole point of it all. Thus begin hours of bush bashing. In other words, we had to make a heroic attempt to reach our campsite before nightfall – with only our sense of intuition and the compass to guide us.

I did not think much of it when we were reminded that our campsite was located in a valley. But it slowly sank in that we would actually have to climb a hill, with our bare hands, to get there. I had never done that and it thrilled me initially. But as we climbed higher, and higher, I began to have doubts. Rocks rolled down as we climbed and we had to be very careful that they did not hit the others below. Treacherous rocks gave way, feet slipped on loose soil and very soon, I was fearing for my life. At one point, unable to cross a particular branch, I exclaimed in frustration.



Basic Bushskoolers.

'Are you okay?' asked my friend.

'No,' I said wearily.

Unnerving as it was, I gradually found myself having the time of my life. Every grip was a decision to be made, every step had a tremendous consequence on whether I could regain my balance, or not. It became like a puzzle to be solved – should we take this way, or the other? I made friends with the plants, recognizing which would support my weight steadfastly, and which were merely deceiving branches that would snap upon my touch. Not unlike the different kinds of people in this world, I thought. I became lost in the present moment, relishing the climb.

A chocolate bar was waved in my face as I gave the final push to reach the top of the hill. I accepted it gratefully. But the rest was short. We had to make haste as dusk was falling quickly. We had barely made it to the top when the last rays of daylight started to fade. Stumbling into the dusk, we quickly headed off in a vaguely plausible direction.

IS THAT YOU?

We heard cries from the other half of the team, who had taken a different route earlier (one with more swamps, in fact) and had reached the campsite before us. Grateful, we quickened our pace and, lo and behold, we found ourselves grinning at the other half of the team.

I remembered eating a lot of onions for dinner because they smelt so good. Now full, but still cold, it was suggested that we should do 'the penguin dance'. I watched in wonderment as the instructors demonstrated. 'Basically, everyone huddles up and we stamp our feet repeatedly on the ground – left foot then right foot. Furiously.'

And so we did, laughing at how hilarious we looked. I leaned back in contentment as we settled on the ground for some serious talk. Survival 101 was delivered to us that night – the importance of EPIRBs and PLBs, the to dos and not to dos of tramping ... I asked a barrage of questions and was grateful that each was responded to in full.

The night was spent shivering for some of us whose sleeping bags remained wet. It was unfortunate that some awoke bleary-eyed the next day but the latter half of the course was not too difficult. An excursion to Tunnel Point, past the sandy dunes, was delightful. Heading back to Whatipu through a steep 20 minutes climb, we were rewarded with the view from the ridges.

'We were there yesterday!' we pointed proudly at the swamps, the messy patches of flax, the streams. Standing at a high point, we could now clearly see the obstacle course we had been through. The crashing waves from the sea were a sight, and I remember sighing at their beauty.

We emerged from the forest in a good mood, ready for some ice cream as a treat. Sinking into my ice cream at the little café we stopped by, I felt satisfied and ready for a good rest. *What doesn't kill you makes you stronger*, I thought. It was an experience like no other, and one that I would not easily forget.



Author: Heng Yi Xin

Advanced Bushskool

Date: 2nd September – 4th September 2016

Location: Secret Place of Doom, Kaimanawa Forest Park

Trip Leader: Auckland University Tramping Club

Trampers: Sophie Jenkins, Will Peart, Helen Liley, Safari Sach, Andrew Battley, Blair Ramsdale, Francesca Ostén, Graham Brodie, Toby Jackson, Zak Stark, Jarden Howard, Shubham Sharma, Taylor “Big Duke” Blyth.

Friday night:

We all meet at 1800 outside the General Library. We all wait an hour for Blair. We drive to Huntley. We order food at the traditional place that has changed its name, so no one knows what it's called. Sophie eats one chip. Will eats enough to feed a small Tibetan village for a month. We continue to drive to Urchin campsite. Arrive about 0130. Helen is still up waiting for us. Go to sleep in random tent.

Saturday morning:

Group divides into two subgroups of about nine. Our group wakes at 0500. Freezing cold handful of gravel for breakfast. The four Yorkshire men would be proud. The other group continue to sleep. We drive to start of the track. Walking by 0600. Trying to keep up with Sach. A quick pause for some people to take off warm layers because marathon running is hot work.

Get to the valley that we're staying the night in about 0900. Go for a short stroll up the valley, at the campsite by 0930. Have a feed for an early lunch. Take tents and sleeping gear out of our packs. Set up tents and chuck stuff we don't need in them. Sit around for about an hour enjoying the valley.

Decide the local peak looks enjoyable to climb. Start trying to navigate through dense bush up a ridge line. We don't get lost because, if you get lost following a ridge, you deserve to be lost. Exit the bush to find that continental drift has pushed the peak up higher than it was when we started. Climb. Climb. Climb.

Reach the peak and find some snow. Will pulls out a bottle of whiskey. We decide to head back down. Try to drop into the nearest re-entrant. Reach the river. Turns into a gorge. No one feels like getting hypothermia. Climb out of the re-entrant and contour it. Try dropping in again. Still a gorge. Walk sideways on a cliff for about 3 hours. Get 2 kms down stream. Re-entrant finally flattens out.

Now dusk. Follow stream for another 2 hours in the dark. Andrew trying to navigate walking through a stream with a torch about as bright as a Kardashian (rather dim). Get 1 km. We find the camp thirteen hours after we started walking.

Blair and Sophie have lit a fire. Blair is cooking steaks on said fire. All is forgiven for Blair being late. Blair shares steaks. Blair is now nominated for New Zealander of the year. Have a cook up and a feed. Finish the bottle of whiskey. Recount day's events to the other group to let them know what they missed out on. Vastly exaggerate the difficulties of the re-entrant and gorge. Throw in some dinosaurs just to make it believable. Sach and Will make the best bivvie in the history of man. Climb in bed and have a nap.



Bivvy in minutiae.

Sunday morning:

Wake at some hour any self-respecting student would find deplorable (aka before noon). Have another freezing cold handful of gravel. Separate back out into the two groups from yesterday.

Start walking up the valley to see what's up there. Decide that if we're to get home we should climb out of the valley and follow the ridge back. Watch the other group pick a spot to climb out of the valley. Laugh at them for a while because they've picked a re-entrant.

Start climbing a spur leading up to the ridge. Slightly dense bush. Climb into the cloud. Now slightly wet, slightly dense bush. Realise that we've been climbing about 30 metres behind a bush line, and clear ground was just two minutes sideways. Pretend it was deliberate to shield us from the wind.

Start walking up the open ground on to the ridge. A gentle 50 km/hr breeze starts to blow. Follow the ridge back and decide to climb another local spot height. Visibility at about 30 metres so we're relying pretty heavily on a map and compass. Find the spot height, admire the view. Drop back into the bush line and reach track end as it starts to rain. Quickly walk 1 km down the road to a shelter. Light a fire and start cooking a hot brew. Starts to really heavily rain. Feel slightly bad because the other group is still in the rain. Not too bad though, because then we couldn't enjoy the hot food and the fire.

Other group shows up. They're slightly damp. We pile in cars and drive to Taupo for Burger Fuel. While eating dinner, decide that the two car loads need a bath. Drive a carload 500 metres from Burger Fuel to the lake. Go skinny dipping on the side of the main road. Do permanent emotional damage to a passing jogger by seeing Blair and Will naked.

Jump back in the car. Drive home to Auckland. Return all the gear. Go home and sleep.

Author: Will Peart



Sach Knight, Thomas Andrews, Timothy Gray and Matthew Battley on Table Mountain

Captain Matt's Education Suggestions

Have you run out of things to watch and read? Trying to understand those obscure references your fellow trampers keep alluding to? In need of some serious silliness?

Here's a list of recommended reading/ watching to get you up to speed with a few traditional AUTC favourites, which seem to have stuck with the club for decades. With each suggestion I'll leave you with a quote or two to whet your appetite:

***Lord of the Rings* – J.R.R Tolkien**

Go on, read the books, you know you want to! Failing that, watch the movies and see them travel from Matamata all the way down through most of the South Island to end up back in Tongariro National Park, less than a 3hr drive away.

Monty Python the 1st: Monty Python and the Holy Grail

Arguably one of the most quotable movies of all time, someone's bound to make a passing reference to this when you come across killer bunnies, swallows, or rude French knights.

French Knight: "Your Mother was a Hamster, and your Father smelt of Elderberries!"

A knight who says 'Ni': "You must now cut down the tallest tree in the forest... With... A HER

RING!!!!!"

Tim: Stop! WHAT is your name?

King Arthur: It is Arthur, King of the Britons!

Tim: WHAT is your quest?

King Arthur: To seek the Holy Grail!

Tim: WHAT is the airspeed velocity of an unladen swallow?

***The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* – Douglas Adams**

You've quite a few options with this one, as it's a book series (7 books long at last count), a radio series and multiple movies. The story follows the misadventures of the last surviving Earthling, Arthur Dent, after the Earth is destroyed by a Vogon constructor fleet in order to make way for a hyperspace bypass.

"But the plans were on display..."

"On display? I eventually had to go down to the cellar to find them."

"That's the display department."

"With a flashlight."

"Ah, well, the lights had probably gone."

"So had the stairs."

"But look, you found the notice, didn't you?"

"Yes," said Arthur, "yes I did. It was on display in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet stuck in a dis-used lavatory with a sign on the door saying 'Beware of the Leopard.'"

Monty Python the 2nd: Monty Python's Life of Brian

“Yes,” said Arthur, “yes I did. It was on display in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet stuck in a dis-used lavatory with a sign on the door saying ‘Beware of the Leopard.’”

Monty Python the 2nd: Monty Python's Life of Brian

“So funny, it was banned in Norway”, according to the Python team when marketing in Sweden. Indeed, many countries banned this film initially due to the themes of religious satire, but they gradually saw sense when they realised most of the jokes were pure silliness. It follows the life of ‘Brian’, a relatively normal man who made the mistake of being born on the same day and next door to Jesus, only to spend his life being mistaken as him.

Brian’s mum: “He’s not the messiah, he’s a very naughty boy.”

Pontius Pilate: “What’s so funny about Biggus Dickus?”

The Princess Bride – William Goldman (book or film)

Another of the most quotable movies of all time, this story features, among many other things, the politest swordfight in history, rodents of unusual size and fearsome battles of wits.

Inigo Montoya: “Hello! My name is Inigo Montoya! You killed my father! Prepare to die!”

Vizzini: “He didn’t fall?! Inconceivable!”

Inigo Montoya: “You keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means.”

Miracle Max and Valerie: “Have fun stormin’ da castle.”

Monty Python the 3rd: Monty Python's Flying Circus

As well as a thoroughly amusing set of movies, the Python team compiled hundreds of skits into this TV show, many of which AUTC members can quote in their entirety. Favourites include:

The Dead Parrot Sketch: “‘E’s not pinin’! ‘E’s passed on! This parrot is no more! He has ceased to be! ‘E’s expired and gone to meet ‘is maker! ‘E’s a stiff! Bereft of life, ‘e rests in peace! If you hadn’t nailed ‘im to the perch ‘e’d be pushing up the daisies! ‘Is metabolic processes are now ‘istory! ‘E’s off the twig! ‘E’s kicked the bucket, ‘e’s shuffled off ‘is mortal coil, run down the curtain and joined the bleedin’ choir invisible!! THIS IS AN EX-PARROT!!”

The Lumberjack Song: “He cuts down trees, he skips and jumps; He likes to press wild flowers. He puts on women’s clothing and hangs around in bars???”

The Four Yorkshiremen Sketch: Eric Idle: “Right. I had to get up in the morning at ten o’clock at night, half an hour before I went to bed, (pause for laughter), eat a lump of cold poison, work twenty-nine hours a day down mill, and pay mill owner for permission to come to work, and when we got home, our Dad would kill us, and dance about on our graves singing ‘Hallelujah.’”

Michael Palin: “But you try and tell the young people today that... and they won’t believe ya.”

***Blackadder* – Richard Curtis and Rowan Atkinson**

This hilarious TV show covered four very different time periods, following the life and times of various Edmund Blackadders through the ages.

Blackadder: “I have come up with a plan so cunning you could stick a tail on it and call it a weasel.”

Re: Baldrick’s cooking:

Captain Blackadder: “Rat au Van, Baldrick?”

Private Baldrick: “Yes Sir, it’s Rat that’s been-”

Captain Blackadder, Private Baldrick: “Run over by a van.”

Private Baldrick: “Yes Baldrick.”



Trampers in Arms.

Author: Matthew Battley

Ramble in the Ruahines

Date: 18th April to 22nd April 2016

Location: Ruahines Forest Park

Trip Leader: Tom Goodman

Trampers: Tom Goodman, Sarah Catley, Sach Knight, Lorenzo Posada Villages

Ever since Christina Fullerton had told me about getting lost in the Ruahines and having to spend a night with six people in the three person tent, the range has had a certain appeal to it- the rugged adventurer, seeking risk and testing his limits against the bare rock. And so it was that, after several attempts and many more 'oh shit that's way too far to drive, let's go here instead' moments, I finally found myself en route.

Our first challenge was actually getting there. By New Zealand standards, this is a long way. Throw in a stop for Cambridge to find lunch (for future reference, there's nothing there), a stop in Taupo for shopping, and missing the turn-off at Mangaweka the first-time around, it is a reaaally long drive. Thankfully we had Peter Dinklage's 'Space Pants' song to keep us entertained – "I am wearing space pants, space pants!"

Arriving at the road-end just as the sun was setting, the first part of the tramp involved walking along the road, hoping to find some markers into the forest. Instructions were minimal- well, non-existent- so it was a relief when an orange track marker was spotting glinting in a neighbouring field. From here it was a reasonably short hour into the first hut, round one of surprise peas with suitable side dishes, and a well-earned sleep.

Day two started by retracing out steps up the hill we had come down, which no one was really looking forward to. Somehow the hill had shrunk in the night, but sadly this had had no real effect on the hill beyond, which had been rather a lot bigger to begin with anyway.

DoC signs suggested three hours to the summit of Wooden Peg, so that seemed like a good spot for lunch. Good joke that, and after a serious 5 hour slog we finally found ourselves standing on top of the Mangaweka Ridge. Fortunately it was well worth the struggle, the views were nothing short of majestic. Did I say we were at the top? Well, no, the top is over there, a couple of hills away..



The "Rainbow Roadies"

Upon reaching Mangaweka trig at 4pm, the general consensus was to have a bit of a scout around to find a spot for camp. This was done in short order, but then Lorenzo pointed out that, really, 4pm was too early to be stopping for the day. Whether they were persuaded by his rationale, or whether they were secretly thinking the same thing themselves, another hour's walking was settled upon as much more respectable. We were then rewarded to a perfect view of the setting sun over the Central Plateau-glorious!

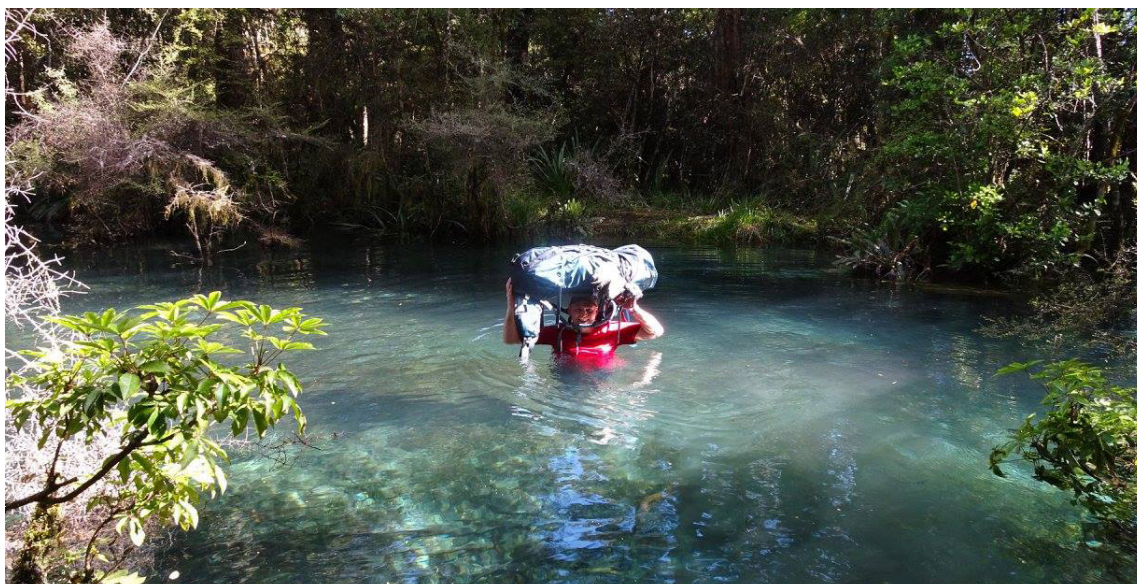
The wind that night howled around the tent, sleep was at a premium, and the following morning it seemed no one was any particular hurry to get moving. Sarah was so unenthusiastic about the prospect that she fell asleep while her rice cracker was halfway towards her mouth, a form of silent protest. Depart we must however, and with Sach scouting ahead, we started making our way into the unknown. The plan to descent straight into the un-named creek was thwarted by bluffs, and instead we settled for the obvious ridgeline, reasoning there was bound to be an obvious route down.

The group was soon presented with a dilemma, to descent the obvious scree slope, or to make instead for the nearby gully of snow-grass. The latter was fixed upon, and the first half-hour was truly a pleasant experience. Then, we entered what quickly became known as 'the shit' - an hour of bashing our way through dense scrub and keeping a close eye out for sudden drops. It was a very happy group which found the creek in time for a late lunch. One final obstacle lay between us and the Kawhatau River- a 10m waterfall. Not to worry, we are used to bush-bashing now. A quick walk up the river, and Waterfall Hut was reached. Tonight, to celebrate conquering an unknown route, a special dinner was prepared- no fewer than two packets of surprise peas were used. And for dessert, Sarah produced a packet of marshmallows, which were roasted on the poker. A good night's work, I do believe.

Past reports of Pinnacle Creek had made me rather apprehensive, but as it turned out, when not filled with snow, the route was reasonably straight forward, and in what seemed like little time at all, we found ourselves looking back out over the Pourangaki River which we had walked up on the first night. However, the ridgeline did live up to its reputation of being truly knife-edged, and we were all grateful it was such perfect weather.



Pinnacle Peak triumphant.



Tom Goodman.

Stopping for lunch, Sach and I discovered our mutual love for all things Monty Python, and attempted to work our way through all the greatest hits collection. Lorenzo and Sarah, meanwhile, looked bewildered at how merely mentioning 'Biggus Dickus' would send either of us into fits of laughter. Clearly they did not find it at all 'wisible'. Comic relief was soon to be found however, when my pack attempted to make a great escape down into the valley below. Gathering up more speed than you would really have fought possible, its tumbling was arrested mere metres before it would have succeeded in taking a short cut to Napier. Phew!

From the top of the ridge, the views over to Sawtooth and beyond drew the eye, and had we had more time, presented a truly tempting prospect. Unfortunately, in our immediate future instead lay a knee-crunching descent to Pourangaki Hut. The hut itself proved to be decorated with a range of graffiti, including of course, the inevitable penis drawing, While Sarah and I admired the artwork over our side of the bunks, Sach was clearly feeling left out, and expressed his disappointed that there were no penises where he was lying. My offer to "come over and take a look at mine", was in hindsight, poorly worded.

For our final day, rather than taking the easy way out along the Pourangaki River, we all decided that it would be a crime to make the most of another day of perfect weather and go along the tops, the absolute absurdity of walking up a large hill just to go straight back down notwithstanding. Four days of walking had clearly done me a world of good, and for the first time on the trip I was almost up with DoC time. Lorenzo and Sach, not to be outdone, halved the recommended track times and spent most of the time sunbathing.

The walk out along the road seemed rather a lot longer than we had remembered, but with thoughts of 'real food', hot pools and warm beds to sustain us, arrive back we did. Even the discovery that we would have to tent another night in Taupo did not dissuade us, and with beer in hand, we found our way to Spa Park for a good soak.

Sadly, when we came back to the car, we found the rear window smashed and all four packs taken. With our tents and all sleeping bags gone, there was nothing for it to drive back to Auckland, in rather more low spirits than the trip really deserved. The downer ending aside, it was a fantastic four days in some truly spectacular countryside. Ruahines, finally done and dusted! And yet, Sawtooth Ridge yet beckons...

Author: Tom Goodman

Womble up Pirongia

Date: 5th June - 6th June 2016

Location: Mt Pirongia Forest Park

Trip Leader: Hamish Chan

Trampers: Carmen Chan, Alexis Montgomery, George Culver, Lyle Cueto, Erika Bouchard, Abi Hill, Ellie Ware, Jesse Perlstein



Wombling up Pirongia.

Wanting to escape the city for a brief respite during this stressful time of the year, we set off to climb Mt Pirongia for the latter part of Queens Birthday weekend.

Leaving Auckland mid-morning, we drove through a hefty patch of fog before coming out the other side at the base of the mountain. Parking at the end of Gray Rd, it was a steady climb up till we had lunch at the Ruapane Trig Point. The weather held up amazingly, and we were treated to cloudless views over the surrounding Waikato region.

From there the track undulated towards Pirongia summit. The combination of mud from the previous few days' rain turning the track to bog and the chains over the more precarious sections of the track making for some interesting tramping. We eventually reached the lookout tower to mark the otherwise uneventful summit and continued a short while past to reach Pahautea hut.

We were hoping to stay at the (recently rebuilt) hut but as it was already full by the time we arrived so we ended up squeezing into the old Pahautea hut which we then had all to ourselves (which was also still equip with mattress and running water). The remainder of the evening was spent in the hut, eating dinner, drinking wine, and sharing stories before going to sleep.

It was a cool and crisp Monday morning (with the frost on the ground giving a satisfying crunch). The weather was still clear so we made good time descending the mountain.

Walking along the Mahaukura track, we crested over numerous peaks along the undulating ridge top until reaching Wharauoa, where we took a well-deserved break for lunch and soaked in the sights around us. It was downhill from there back to the carpark and before we knew it, we were driving out of the forest park.

We stopped by Hamilton on the way home to grab some food (unfortunately the dumplings house we were hoping to eat at was closed), before battling traffic back to Auckland to conclude this brief but refreshing trip.

Author: Hamish Chan

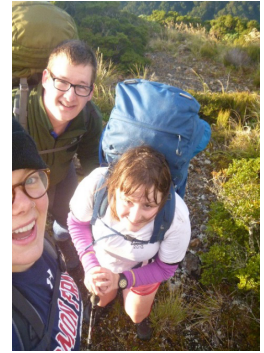
The Curse of Mid King Bivvy

Date: 3rd - 7th March 2016

Location: Tararua Ranges

Trip Leaders: Fran Osten and Carl Barnhill

Third Wheel: Katie Milligen



Day 1:

On Friday the 3rd of March we set off at 5pm into the thick of Easter Weekend traffic. After 4 hours battling traffic we made the 100km journey to Huntly. Such would set the tone of this trip, cursed: the curse of Mid King Bivvy.

Some tramps set out with a purpose; a mission. This was one of those tramps - our mission: to bag Mid King Bivvy, a destitute and merciless place perched just below the mighty Three Kings in the Tararua ranges. Well off-track and only frequented by the occasional hunter brave (or perhaps foolish) enough to make the difficult slog off-track to the bivvy. This bivvy would be the last official hut in the Tararuas for Fran to bag, thus ending a 14-year triumph.

After our KFC stop-off was cut short by a leaky roof, we hit the road again and drove until 2am to Simpsons Domain Campsite just out of Huntville. However, this was not before being held up again at 1am for the queue at a BP station whose location will remain nameless.

Once we arrived we quickly pitched our tent and all fell asleep to the sounds of passing trains.

Day 2:

After a few hours of sleep, we were woken by the Simpsons Domain Rooster, who chased Fran around the campsite while Katie and I packed away the tent.

From there we made our way to the mighty Tararuas. Packing up at The Pines, we tramped through a private farm and along the Waingawa River - one of the most hated tracks in the Tararuas. Upon arriving at Mitre Flats Hut, we snagged the last of 14 beds. The 12 weary trampers from another party who arrived later were not so lucky. They were okay really though, having carried chilly bins full of beer and ice up the river for 5hrs. They had their priorities straight.

Day 3:

After waking up 3 hours later than originally planned we set off for the cursed Mid King Bivvy. The bush was thick as anything and there was no track in sight. I faired okay for the first wee while and kept reiterating to the team my motto "Think like a goat". The thick bush was on a steep angle, beside a ravine over the raging South Mitre Stream. Not long after this I fell, taking several native trees with me in exchange for my first hiking pole.

After an hour we had made it 600m; I had lost one of my poles; Fran had fallen into a swamp with mud past her waist and had required rescue (I laughed for the first 10 minutes before helping her out). Meanwhile Katie had fallen and hit her head on a rock. Something was definitely trying to stop us from getting to Mid King Bivvy.



Carl Barnhill.



Fran Osten.

We found a series of cairns and the occasional pink tape as we ventured further into the bush up to the Bivvy; along a ridgeline into the unknown. Eventually after a few hours of slogging it out we made towards the tops and to Mid King Bivvy. There we rejoiced and broke out our celebratory packet of Tim Tams, before setting off with tea for an early night. Tomorrow was going to be a big day- we were heading up to Mitre; the highest point in the Tararuas! Once heading off to bed we were woken at 9pm by weary trampers who had spoiled our solitude. Luckily they had a tent with them and were able to find a spot to camp.



Day 4 & 5:

The next day we set off to the tops, crawling up an exposed rocky spur and being thrown around in the gale force winds. Fran was the voice of reason and turned the team around (after this she wallowed in self-pity for a couple hours). We bashed back down to Mitre Flats hut again, going through the same punishing routine as yesterday. After reaching the bottom of the ridgeline I accidentally tried to convince the others to walk off a cliff.

Next up was crossing Baldy Creek. It was at this point Fran managed to slip, completely drenching herself and spraining her ankle. It was as if we had come up against the curse head on, but we stared it down and kept going anyway. After crossing the creek, we tried to make it back to South Mitre stream. The thick bush seemed to be winning. Fran attempted to make us climb up the side of the cliff but I wasn't having any of it. Once arriving back at Mitre Flats hut we decided to keep going and tramp out that day. After about 3 hours at the hut and 4 packets of Easter eggs later we decided head off, the lure of beer and hot springs being too strong to stay another night.

We ventured out along Waingawa River again, until Fran heard cries from Carl. "Why me, Why me?? Why?!!!!!!!" Coming around the bend Carl held his pole. Bent. The Tararuas had claimed both of Carl's poles, showing no mercy. Shortly after this Fran was stung by bees. Seemingly the curse was not lifted.

Once at the road end we camped the night at The Pines (of course after consuming a pizza each and McDonalds for dessert).

The next day we stopped at Miranda hot pools to loosen up our stiff muscles, basking in the glory of conquering Mid King Bivvy.

Authors: Fran Osten and Carl Barnhill



Crosbies Hut Trip

Date: 14th May - 15th May 2016

Location: Coromandel Forest Park

Trip Leader: Tiffany Shih

Trampers: Amy Kerr, Sach Knight, Anastasia Nenarokova, Erika Bouchard, Timothy Gray, Nicole Reed, Emily Hurley



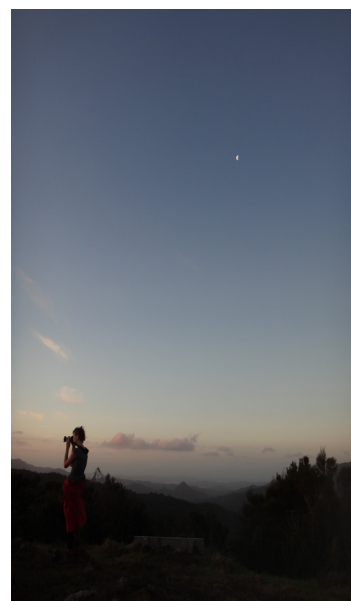
Crosbies Hut.

A great weekend trip to the Coromandel forest park where we stayed in a modern DOC hut that sleeps just 10 people. It's pretty popular and requires pre-booking, however on this occasion we were lucky enough to have the hut to ourselves.

We left Auckland on Saturday morning and drove to Thames (about 1.5 hours), parking at Karaka road end. The beginning of the Karaka track starts up a driveway before entering the bush. We set off just before 12pm, the sign at the beginning promising 4-5 hours to Crosbies hut. The track is fairly easy and not very steep, although mostly in bush. About three hours later we made it to the first intersection (Karaka/Waiotahi). From here we continued on towards Crosbies hut, arriving at the second intersection (Jam Tims) about one hour later. At this point the track seemed to be taking longer than it should and we begin to think we had nearly arrived, when we come across the third junction (Main Range/Kauaeranga) with the sign saying still 30 minutes to go! Determined to make it to the hut before sunset, we powered on and arrived at the hut about 5.15pm; just in time to take some photos of the disappearing sun. We spent the rest of the evening cooking dinner, toasting marshmallows and telling ghost stories before heading to bed.

On Sunday we left at 9.30am, heading back the way we had come. The crater lookout side trip is good if you have the time, and has a nice view of the area. We had a short break here before heading back to the main track and taking the alternative Waiotahi track back to Thames. This track is a bit more interesting than the Karaka tramping track with more views along the way and some old mining tunnels. We exited to the road at about 3.30pm and headed to our cars, about a 30 minute walk through Thames.

Author: Tiffany Shih



This crew made an awesome tramp video! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70A2kzlvXS4>

Daly's Clearing Tramp

Date: 10th – 11th September 2016

Location: Kaimai Range

Trip Leaders: Carl Barnhill and Fran Osten

Trampers: Taylor Frost, Alex Shuttleworth, Flynn Parrish, Lisa Yang, Jeannine Cheong, David Wong, Mustafa Al-Haidar

On Saturday the 10th of September nine terrified trampers amassed at the University of Auckland General Library, mystified and frightened by the reputation of Fran and Carl and their epic trips. With time they would learn that all of the rumours were true.

The team headed off at speed to the Kaimais, zooming out of Auckland at 8am like a bat out of hell, with Carl trying his utmost not to jinx Auckland traffic.

After a detour to Bombay for Carl's daily Mac-Attack, we shortly arrived at Franklin. To the perils of Fran and Carl, the parking lot was full. Cars were everywhere as far as the eye could see. With no tents and only a 16 bunk hut, our group of 10 people and no tents went into crisis mode, scrapping the planned lengthy walk for the day in order to secure beds for the night. Flynn was sent ahead, running like a madman to Daly's Clearing Hut, taking the most direct route: Kauri Track up to the Dalys clearing hut.

An hour later we arrived at the hut. All that could be heard was an "F*** F*** F***" coming from Carl when he went around the bend. An army of people was at Dalys clearing hut - close to 100 people if I were to guess. "We'll have to fight them all" cried a distant voice, shortly after Flynn emerged from the crowd. "Don't worry guys, they're only Duke of Ed; they're not staying the night". Carl's bloodlust was not sated that day.

After settling down for a lunch some of the group went down to the river to explore. They came back to a freshly cooked and delicious vegan tofu curry put on by Fran and Carl but prepared earlier by a friendly German national who shall remain nameless.

Later on in the night, the team got a fire roaring. They then roasted marshmallows and played a hilarious game of Cards against Humanity while numerous toxic beverages were consumed. All was well in the world.

Shortly before bed the shrieks and hisses of an Animal were heard from the Hut. Cautiously the group ventured outside to witness two things. Firstly, the local possum had taken up residence in the recently put out fire pit. Secondly, Fran was hiding in the bushes practising her bloodcurdling screams (much to the annoyance of the two school girls camping nearby).

The following day we set out early, snaking through flat trails encompassed in thick ponga. After a short walk and a few photo-ops we arrived at a farm which the DoC track went through. After a few selfies with some baby lambs, we finally made it back to the carpark. We then set off for the infamous Lemon and Paeroa Café where we all savoured the legendary Lemon and Paeroa ice cream.

After this, we took up some much-needed R&R in the Miranda hot pools, soaking up the sun and the heat before all meandering back to Auckland. Yet another mission accomplished by Fran and Carl.

Authors: Carl (Overlord VP) and Fran (Lord Madam Secretary)



Kaweka J and Hotpools

Date: 3rd April – 6th April 2015

Location: Kaweka Ranges

Trip Leader: Hamish Chan

Trampers: Annie Cao, Bianca Freytag, Kathryn Vessel, Hayley Ware

It was a great way to spend the long Easter weekend – exploring the stunning ridgelines of the Kaweka ranges followed by a soak in the relaxing Mangatainoka hot pools. Apart from Annie over-sleeping just a bit, the trip got off to good start, as we were able to get out of Auckland early enough on Friday morning to avoid most of the traffic as all of Auckland went away on their Easter adventures. Nevertheless, it was a gruelling 7 hour drive to the Makahu Saddle Carpark (with a short stop in Taupo for lunch); it was well into the afternoon by the time we arrived. Walking south towards Mackintosh Hut, it was fairly smooth sailing apart from the steep valley crossing across Donald River; with fallen trees on the ascent adding to the difficulty. We still made good time, and we arrived at the hut before nightfall, giving us plenty of time to cook dinner and relax for the rest of the evening.

Saturday's walk was to Studholme hut via Rogue Ridge, and after several doubts about our exact location, we finally reached the turn off to climb up onto the ridge line. It was a fairly long and gruelling climb, but once at the top we were treated to fantastic views of the rugged Kaweka ranges (with no sign of civilisation in sight - except perhaps the pine trees that were lined up a bit too neatly in the distance). The visibility was great, though the howling winds reminded us of the need keep moving, and after passing the totally-inaptly-named 'The Tits' (I mean seriously, they could have so many other names), we were heading down in the valley west of Studholme saddle where tonight's destination was located. Some precarious moments followed while sliding down the scree but it wasn't long till we arrived in the cosy hut. We soon had a small fire going in the open fireplace which was also used to cook some of the dinner. Supposedly there was a total lunar eclipse that night, but at 1a.m. (time of totality), the valley was sadly completely clouded over, dashing our hopes of viewing this event.



Tramping along the Kawekas.

We awoke to a very misty Sunday morning, and our ascent up to Kaweka J was shrouded in cloud, before suddenly we had arrived at the underwhelming summit. The war memorial signalled the top and then we followed the Makahu spur all the way back down to the car. It took about an hour to drive the windy roads up to carpark at the north end of Makahu road, and it was a leisurely walk (well, in comparison to yesterday's steep hills) to Te Puia lodge, where we encountered other people at the hut for the first time this trip! After reserving our bunks it was a short walk to the Mangatainoka hot pool where we spent a decent while soaking trying to relieve our aching legs. We were all fans of the ingenious piping system to fill up the tubs and the small, numerous faces carved in rock around the water source. Eventually, we made our way back to hut for our final night of this trip. (Note that Hayley enjoyed the hot pools so much that she went back a second time after dinner!)

Boosting along the track on Monday morning, we quickly reached the cars and again somehow managed to avoid the majority of the traffic returning to Auckland (while enjoying a decent sing-along) to actually return home at a reasonable time. All in all a fantastic trip, with (fairly) good weather, great views and even better company.



Outside of Te Puia



Hamish taking a selfie.

Holdsworth Jumbo Circuit

Date: 29th January – 1st February 2016

Location: Tararua Ranges

Trip Leader: Fran Osten & Carl Barnhill (Crisis Management)

Trampers: Jeannine Cheong, Torsten Schmidts, Kirsten Hauschild, Lance Cueto, Günther Höfler , Pauls Davis

Prologue (As written by Lance)

Let me just say that I did not plan this trip, nor led it, but due to the unforeseen circumstances I feel obliged to write about the 4th Tararua Ranges trip planned of the year. Seriously, the previous trips were led by Daniel S. (26th of Nov. – 30th of Nov. 2015), then Fran O. (30th of Nov – 4th of Dec 2015), then Daniel S. again (3rd of Jan – 7th of Jan 2016), then lastly Fran (29th of Jan – 4th of Feb 2016).

Only they have trips in that region. My high Praises to them for making plans; but...

Is there a territorial rivalry agreement between those 2 which involves them visiting the same region, but ensuring that they are not on coinciding dates?!

Gause's law of ecological niche:

“Two species cannot compete for the same resources co-exist, and sustain a stable population, one will be better advantaged than the other resulting in a competitive relationship where one species will predominate.” – Wikipedia



Jan. 29, 2016 – Day 1

Bright eyed and eager, eight souls huddled around the general library early on a Friday morning. After a bit of banter and chat about the route we hit the road for our long drive down to Masterton. Our first stop-off was Taupo - a lunch stop and some food shopping. From Taupo we headed down to Masterton. Somehow one car managed to be 2 hours behind the other. It was thus decided that the group waiting in Masterton should head to Lone Star for a classy dinner before the ‘hard’ tramp ahead. The eventual arrival of the other car was much to the relief of those who were stuffing their faces with ribs and chucking down margaritas. At about 8.30pm the tramp finally began. It was a short tramp into the first hut Atiwhakatu, so at about 10.30pm we all arrived. Lance briefly managed to get everyone lost along a river but we found our way back to the track.



Carl Barnhill + pack.

Jan 30, 2016 – Day 2

The next day started early. A night of snoring by three men (who will not be named) kept everyone up. We were then informed that the annual Jumbo-Holdsworth trail run would be happening and we should get a move on before being run over on the hill. After getting ready as quickly as possible, Fran managed to leave half my breakfast and phone at the hut (thankfully Jeannine picked it up on her way out).



The alcohol stash.

Our first stop was at Jumbo hut. The drinking started at this point (namely Lance), while games of cards were played as we waited for the weather to clear a bit so we could get views as we headed along the tops. On the way up to Jumbo a couple of old AUTC members from the 70's were seen; excellent banter was exchanged before heading onwards. After walking through the fog and mist for a couple of hours we finally reached the summit of Mount Holdsworth. This is where the real party started, with Alcohol being drunk left, right and centre. Luckily we still managed to make it down to Powell hut in one piece. There card games were played late into the night.

Jan 31, 2016 – Day 3

After waking up relatively early, part of the group headed back up to Mt. Holdsworth in an attempt to get a view. Yesterday's cloud cover had prevented us from seeing further than 20 metres in front of us.

It was decided at this point that part of the group wanted to head down to Wellington instead of going to Totara flats as there wasn't enough sun. Carl was adamant that he needed craft beer in order to survive. The other group decided to stay and carry on with the plan to Totara Flats. The tramp back to the road-end was relatively uneventful. However, rumour has it the rest of the group had a more eventful time finding their way down to Totara flats hut. Nonetheless, all managed to survive the tramp down to the hut and with a bit of hesitation made it across the swing bridge without being thrown into the Waiohine river. When asked how his night in Wellington was Carl responded with "It was all Barnhill from the Tararuas".

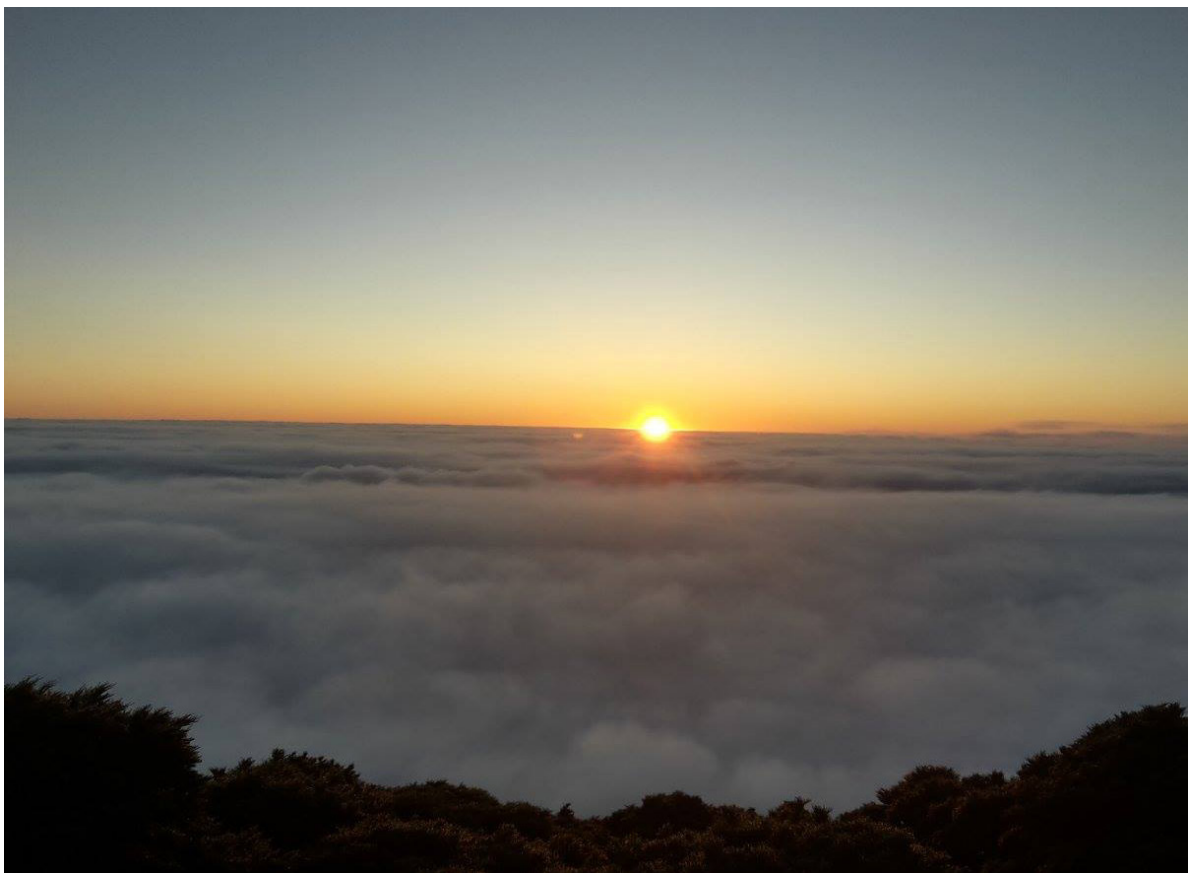


Jeannine Chong, Lance Cueto, Torsten Schmidt, Carl Barnhill (Left - Right)

Jan 31, 2016 – Day 3

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Viewing the dawn from Mt Holdsworth

Feb 1, 2016 - Day 4

After making it back to the Hostel at about 3am we woke up at about 9am to head back to Auckland, though not before a quick stop-off at the National Police Headquarters where Carl had a social call to attend to. We made it back to Auckland in time for tea. The rest of the group somehow managed to make it back to Auckland at 4.30 am after escaping the Tararuas.

Authors: Written by Fran with help from Carl (Prologue: Lance Cueto)

All Good Microbes

“An easy stroll through the Whirinaki forest!” – Past Member, 2016

Date: 25th – 27th March 2016

Location: Whirinaki Forest Park

Trip Leader: Matthew Battley

Trampers: Andrew Battley, Cameron Brown, Ana Blakelock, Bren Clark, Flynn Parrish, Jesse Perlstein, Bex Chrystall

It wasn't.

In the dead of the night, something crunches through the undergrowth, under the protective embrace of a native podocarp forest. Stars peek through the prehistoric cover, glancing off the protective layers surrounding the creatures that prowl the forest floor. Tearing free of the encumbering shrubbery and layers of stinging nettle, the pack bursts into a clearing, relieved to be in the open air again. “The track!” One exclaims. “This'll do for a campsite.”

It's 8:30pm on the first day of our “easy stroll”, and we're only two thirds of the way to Mangamate hut. It seems that Mangamate Stream Track stopped listening after the first two words, and decided to just become one with Mangamate stream. Since the track itself was a little damp, we decided to make our own way, bush bashing our way up the true right of the stream. Highlights of this section included: Everyone getting a hi-five (for some, in the face) from the friendly neighbourhood Ongaonga (stinging nettle), and tripping through the dark bush after realising that there's a reason tracks are made. Thankfully, the good company makes up for the nettle. Hi-fives all around. (Or maybe not).

Awaking the next morning with the prospect of additional bush bashing to simply make it to our first hut, we are relieved instead to discover that the stream has receded a little, making crossings possible; and proving the (up to this point doubtful) existence of a proper track. On our way, we go in search of some shrubbery. Instead, we find a natural water fountain (a stream), and refill our water bottles. Thankfully we have someone who knows their stuff, assuring us that though there may be some residue in the water, they're “all good microbes”.

Making good time on the miraculous apparition that is a track, we make it to the hut for morning tea, a mere 17 hours late. This is followed by a joyous walk/swim down the “track”, before a short luncheon in a clearing by some tree stumps. (Matt kindly contributes another stump by knocking a tree onto my lunch at this point. If anyone ever asks you whether it's a good idea to take crackers for your lunches on a tramp, remember this moment)

Moving on... (quite literally) towards Central Whirinaki hut, we revel in the fact that this stretch of the track genuinely is a track, and the fact that all around us is a truly beautiful forest, full of ancient native podocarps, and marginally younger Ongaonga. This lasts a few minutes, (The track, not the forest) before we start wading again. But with fuller stomachs and emptier waterways, we stream on.

Pausing only to sleep, eat and recruit passing UoA students in Central Whirinaki Hut (A HUT!), we continue our adventure the next day. What was perhaps most remarkable about this day (aside from the fact that we spend most of the day on a real track) was the appearance of an unknown construction, called a “bridge”. Apparently some tracks have these to cross waterways. By this point none of us can quite see the purpose of a bridge, having grown accustomed to the relative wilderness of our journey so far, but grudgingly accept their assistance, rather than walking around them on principle.

These bridges and remarkably well maintained tracks bring our great group (with the exception of the Whio we meet on the way, who decide to stay in the stream) to the relative civilisation of a car park, and before we know it, our stroll has come to an end. With highlights like twilight bush bashing, lunch crushing shrubbery and even a human shaped Easter bunny, who couldn't enjoy such a trip into the forest? And even better, no one got sick, so those microbes really were all good.

Author: Andrew Battley



Energised by the microbes.



Hunting for the microbes.

Here lives great microbes.



Karangahake Gorge

Date: 25th April 2016

Location: Karangahake Gorge

Trip Leader: Tiffany Shih

Trampers: Jerome Clavel, Timothy Gray, Nicole Bladen, Joanne Low, Melody Tang, Reinna Hassall, Nicole Reed

Eight people and one dog. The mission? To explore Karangahake Gorge and conquer the summit.

We set off from the carpark at 9.45am, well equipped and more prepared than the ordinary folk milling about. First up, the summit! After nearly three hours of uphill walking, we make it to the trig and are rewarded with great views. We have a chat to some locals and a bit of lunch before finding a more direct route back down. After some gorse and cutty grass, less than one hour later we find ourselves back at the beginning.

Next up, the Windows Walk. Here we followed an old railway line to a tunnel where our torches came in handy. Several “windows” along the tunnel provide a great view of the gorge below.

Last but not least we explored the railway tunnel loop. Starting off along the river we cross a bridge and then into a loooooong tunnel. This one is lit, albeit gloomily. Be sure to watch out for the cyclists whizzing past.

After emerging from the gloom we loop back around and arrive back at the carpark by 4pm. Mission accomplished!

Author: Tiffany Shih



Moeraki Boulders - Photographed by Mohammad Ali Muttaqi

Backcountry Botox

Date: 22nd -25th April 2016

Location: Kawekas

Trip Leaders: Carl Barnhill and Fran Osten (aka 'Hugglepuff')

Trampers: Torsten Schmidts, Jeannine Cheong, Andrea Escobar, Toby Jackson (Chief photographer), Flynn Parrish, Danica Shipton, Anya Yang, Helen McCartney

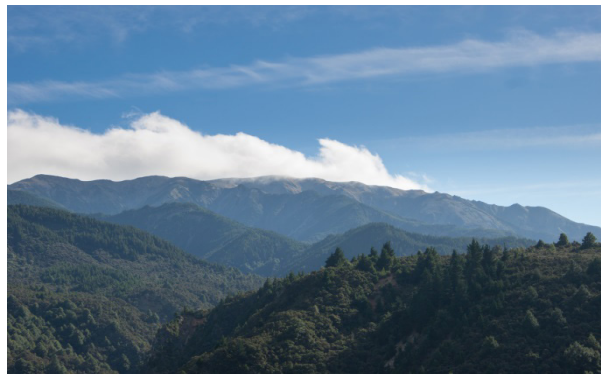
Day 1:

One balmy Friday afternoon ten enthusiastic souls gathered around the general library for yet another hearty tramp led by Fran and Carl (Led here used in the loosest sense). This one was promised to be 'flat' and 'easy'. Hmmm....

After some quick banter, we set off (somehow Fran had managed to con Torsten into buying her Starbucks??!), with the promise from Carl that we would all meet up in Hamilton for dinner. After battling ANZAC weekend traffic, we were past the Bombay hills. Carl decided that this would be a race and without alerting the situationally unaware Fran set off down SH2; through Cambridge and Matamata. The other car did not realise until Cambridge, much to Fran's dismay and berating of Carl.



The Crew.

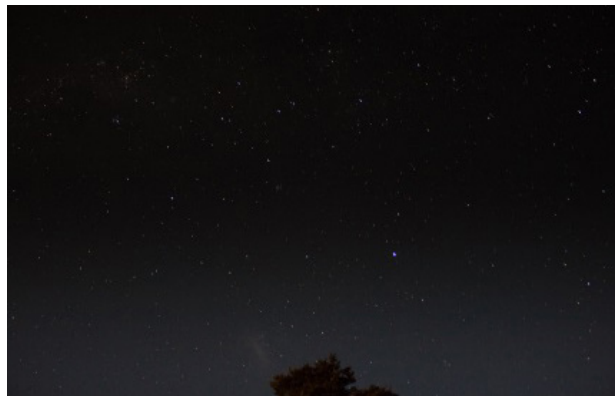


The Kawekas.

In the end the 'shortcut' backfired, with Carl arriving 5 minutes after the last car at the secluded Glenfalls Campground, just off SH5. Here Fran attempted to peddle her home baking, which could only be described as sludge (apparently it was meant to be peanut butter slice). Carl found a rubbish bag and disposed of the sludge almost immediately but not before innocent Flynn had taken a few bites and declared it was 'alright'.



Cairn.



Starry, starry night....

Day 2:

The next day we set off to the Kawekas bright and early, arriving just after a breakfast stop in Napier. A pie, coffee, and a pack of croissants later we set off to Kiwi Saddle Hut, though not before Fran had her turn at driving. Putting on her Rally driver hat, she sped through the gravel forestry roads of the Kaweka's (everyone survived).

After a little climbing, we popped up onto the ridge line, following it around to Kiwi Mouth Hut. Fighting the ever-earlier sunset, we made it to the hut just before dark, though not before a mob of trail runners delightfully told us the hut was full and out of water.

Once at the hut we saw the water tank had been precariously levered up upon a series of planks so that the very last of the water could be salvaged.

The hut also featured a resident racist dog. Taking a particular hatred to our Asian companions, it set about barking, growling and just generally being unimpressed with Anya and Jeanine. Once we had set up camp outside the hut, copious amounts of cheese and crackers were consumed, with Toby occasionally giving the cheese longing glances as he tried in vain to restrain himself.

Day 3:

The next day was D day; up, up and over the tops. We had been wary about the weather and had set off in strong winds that blew everyone around, however as forecasted by midday these cleared. This gave us spectacular views as we reached the tops. Here we met the fittest among us; Toby and Flynn, who had left at dawn in order to summit Kaweka J.

Just before lunch, disaster struck. Going through a patch of highland bush we encountered... WASPS! Fran as the last in our group was the least lucky, encountering the full force of the wasp swarm we had disturbed. Not one, but two wasps were caught in her hair. Crying out, Carl rushed over and quickly squished the two wasps as fast as he could before they could sting.



Possible example of an IgE reaction.

However, this was too little too late. One wasp stung Fran directly in the head and another in the thumb as we were fleeing the scene. Thereafter she was referred to as 'Hugglepuff'.

From here Fran's forehead began to swell up over the course of the day, making her eyes puffy and the skin around it full of fluid. This gave her face a full, firm, plump look - the look that the likes of the rich and famous pay thousands upon thousands for.

Eventually, we made it to Mackintosh Hut only to discover it was overflowing with people (20 people in an 8 person hut!). Once again camp was set up outside the hut and copious amounts of cheese and crackers were consumed along with mac and cheese. Mafia was played well into the night. Eventually, everyone stumbled into their tents and fell asleep, with Torsten snoring like a chainsaw heard by others 2 tents away.

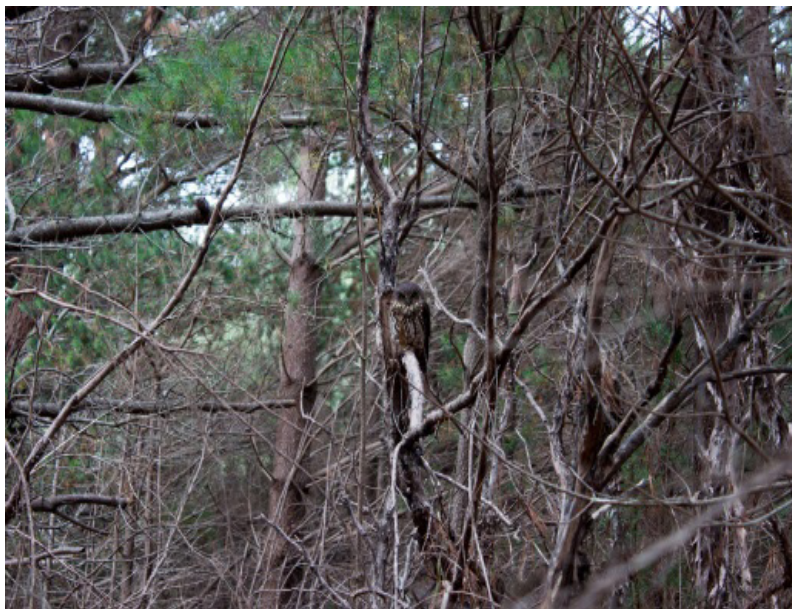
Day 4:



“Going for a stroll”

The following day Carl went to inspect Fran’s eyes, asking her to open them. “But my eyes are open” she replied. Over the night, the swelling had worsened. She could barely see a metre in front as the swelling pressed her eyes together. Multiple attempts were made for Fran to give her gear to others to carry however her response was always ‘But I’m not weak like Carl’. It was later discovered that Carl’s cooker and Torsten’s tent and cooker were no longer being carried by Fran and attempts had been made by her to pawn off her kg of emergency porridge.

After a round of painkillers and antihistamines, we quickly got moving over the ‘mostly flat’ section of track. Down 400m and up 400m. In Carl’s mind $-400 + 400 = \text{zero incline} = \text{flat}$, which was met by anger, dismay, and ultimately frustration from the group.



Spy something in the trees?

Once out we said goodbye to the other cars and headed for Hawkes Bay hospital. After a four hour wait and a bout of steroids followed by Hells Pizza, we were finally set; hitting the road back to little old Auckland.

Authors: Carl Barnhill & Fran Osten

The Rainbow Roadies do T'Walk 2016

Date: 21st - 22nd May 2016

Location: Lake Heron, Canterbury High Country

Trip Leader: Tom Goodman

With: Eirik Børstein as *Toad*, Miles Buob as *Princess Peach*, Sarah Daniell as *Yoshi*, Thomas Goodman as *Dr Mario*, Eva Lichtenberg Cloo as *Shy Guy*, Mark Swarbrick as *Waluigi*, Abi Wittmeyer Hill as *Luigi*

When I told my friend about T'Walk, and that it involved walking through the countryside with the same people for 24 hours, she said that she imagined it would involve a lot of DMCs. Well, no - it turns out you talk a lot, and I do mean a LOT, about poo. But really, that's incidental.

Under the gloriously blue sky of the Canterbury high country, the Roadies were confident that their carts would provide the much needed boost off the starting line. And indeed, the speed out of the starting blocks was in defiance of their aerodynamics. All good things must come to an end however, and soon Mario and his team found themselves in the dust of faster vehicles. After a kilometre of walking on the flat, the team encountered their first real obstacle- a small hill. From here, it was really a matter of how long before each individual team member ran out of patience and decided that wearing a cardboard box around their waist was no way to participate in what is, essentially, a race.

Not at all perturbed (or perhaps just a little), the Roadies pressed on. And if the odd control was not entirely where it should have been on the map, this troubled them not. Spirits were high, and the snowy tops were no match for full 4WD. Upon reaching the Hash House after leg one, it transpired that they weren't even in last place - cue much amazement.

Starting leg two as the sun was setting, our Roadies got off to a fine start when they got lost 100m from the Hash House, to Sarah's great bemusement. Fortunately, this was a mere hiccup, and controls came thick and fast. Here the team tried to raise the level of discourse, in the form of such hypotheticals as 'what is the worst thing you would do for one million dollars?', and 'should there be more penises on Game of Thrones?' Meanwhile, Abi talked about bears. Beers were much missed.

The team had been sold on the idea that while leg two was torture personified, leg three was a breeze, and that they should find most of the controls without difficulty. So it was with some degree of consternation that they found ourselves standing out there at 1am, having failed to find the first control, and in the process of failing to find the second. Not a good start! But what's this? A control! Hallelujah!

After deciding to skip the only real hill on the whole leg, it was clear that missing any of the other controls was not an option. Upon the sun rising, however, that large patch of bush on the map which separated us from controls 15 and 16, materialised into a band of that old foe, matagouri, aka gorse on steroids. Finally admitting defeat, the Roadies decided that actually, those two points weren't really important after all...

The last couple of kilometres into the Hash House passed in a bit of a haze of sleep-deprivation and disorientation. Somehow Sarah managed to find the energy to cross a fence and inspect a pile of rocks 20 metres away from the road (to this day we do not know how). Of course the control wasn't even there, but at least the other teams were just as confused.

Big thanks to my fellow roadies for an epic 24 hours, proof if ever any was needed, that indeed no road is long with good company!

Author: Tom Goodman

Nelson Lakes Adventure

Date: 15th to 22nd November, 2016

Location: Nelson Lakes National Park

Trip Leader: Timothy Gray

Trampers: Duncan Milne, Amy Tuffnell, Simon Yu



Obligatory Pre-Tramp Photo (left to right, Duncan, Amy, Simon, and Timothy)

One terribly rainy Tuesday morning, four intrepid trampers set out from Nelson for the start of a week-long adventure. The adventure began before we'd even left Auckland; that night a magnitude 7.8 earthquake that had struck the top of the South Island, not too far away from our destination! A couple of decent sized aftershocks also rattled us in Nelson later that evening, when we heard reports of severe damage to nearby areas.

Undeterred by the lack of stable ground to walk upon, we began our adventure. The first day we took a water taxi across the lovely Lake Rotoiti to begin our first eight hour tramp up the Travers Valley to Upper Travers Hut. Surely a rather beautiful journey if it wasn't raining almost all the time! At this hut we discovered that the firewood was rather damp; this became something of a theme, which continued at most of the huts in the area.

The second day had been of some concern for us, as it involved crossing the Travers Saddle in less than perfect conditions. After a steep climb, we noticed that it was a bit nippy up the top, especially so for me as I had neglected to pack over trousers. Unwilling to sacrifice my only pair of thermal leggings to the dampness, my knees were exposed to the rain on the saddle, now falling sideways as little pellets of ice. Other notable events that day also included finding the remains of someone's gear who we later found was rescued several months ago, and the damp firewood at West Sabine Hut.

The inability to start a fire using either conventional means or more unconventional means (e.g. the use of flammable Dettol and insect repellent) led to an executive decision being made to burn a book someone had left behind. This provided us with just enough warmth to survive the night, and dry our undies from "sopping wet" to "damp". We can't remember the name of the book.

Day three was an exciting one for us, as we would be visiting the Blue Lake, the clearest lake in the entire world, with visibilities very close to that of pure water. The four hour tramp there was marked by the weather getting considerably better (though still pretty cold and snowy at the hut), and also by the fact that a huge boulder had smashed its way onto the track at some point rather recently. We stopped to wonder whether this was from the recent earthquake, then promptly moved on out of the danger zone!



The beautiful Blue Lake from the Moss Pass Route

The Moss Pass, which connects the Blue Lake to the D'Urville Valley was by far the most tricky part of our trip. A relatively nice climb to the base of the pass led us to getting stuck between a rock and a hard place; the rock being a sharp, rocky section which looked rather dodgy, and the hard place being a steep snowy slope that we couldn't ascend safely without proper alpine gear. We chose the rock, and the result was several hours of very slow rock climbing, pack passing, and physical and emotional stress. On the other side, more enjoyment ensued as we passed under some possible avalanche terrain, and we hoped that there would be no aftershocks while we were there! Needless to say, we were pretty exhausted by the time the day was over, but in hindsight the views from the top were amazing!



Left: View of the D'Urville Valley. Right: The Dreaded Moss Pass.

The next couple of days were spent following the D'Urville River down to Lake Rotoroa, ending up at Sabine Hut. We saw just five other people in total during this section, something of a novelty as we'd been alone on the trip so far. A fairly easy river crossing led us to getting slightly lost, then coming across a detour labelled "Dry Undie Route", a route which unfortunately didn't live up to its name. Other events of interest during this section were the sandflies, which came out in force as we descended. Armed with a Swiss Army Knife and a candle, I attempted to commit genocide against them one night. However, I soon realised that my attempts to eradicate the species would be futile. It was also about this point in the trip that my fellow trampers discovered that I was living pretty much solely on chocolate (manifesting itself in various forms such as brownies and biscuits) having traded my salami for another bar of Caramello.

Our final section involved a 1300+ metre climb up to Angelus Hut, a nice new hut in a stunning location next to a beautiful lake high up in the mountains. We had stunning weather for the remainder of the trip, and, although we were pretty tired by the long climb through the bush, the views once we got above the bushline made it all worth it. A dash of snow by the lake made for an amazing sunset on our final night on the trip, and the stars that evening were as bright as you could ever hope for. A feast of chocolate mousse, chilled in the snow outside provided a perfect end to the day.

Author: Timothy Gray

The Pinnacles

Date: 14th May – 15th May 2016

Location: Coromandel Forest Park / Kauaeranga

Trip Leader: Ella Huber

Trampers: Molly Joslin, Freya Park, Mark Swarbrick, Abi Wittmeyer Hill, Elena Perry, Ray Li, Jason Guey, Yi Xin Heng, Tom Goodman, Meera Patel, Michael Tabachinik, Michelle Lee, Andrea Escobar, Lola Gorell, Kecia Painuthara, Ellie Ware, Lucy Bingham, Melanie Hardiman, Astrid Watson

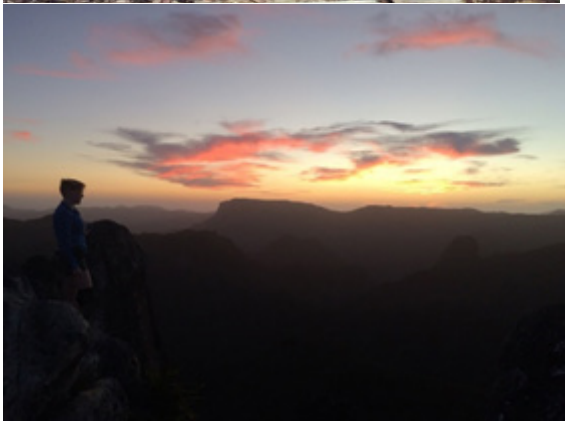
The trip began at the usual library spot, and made our way to Kauaeranga valley road end car park, where we ate lunch and then began the uphill trek. Tramping from there involved a few suspended bridges, plenty of “au natural” stairs, and a nice open view of the pinnacles until we reached the hut. Housing 80, this serviced hut offered a rest stop before we headed to the peak to see the sunset. After climbing the many stairs, ladders, and rocks, we spread out, perched amongst the peak, taking in the 360 degree view of glorious mountains. After dinner and some cheeky card games, notably intense rounds of mafia, we headed to bed so that we could wake up in time for sunrise. In typical ‘Fiddler on the Roof’ fashion we wanted to see both the sunrise and the sunset, so we got up at 6:00 am in the morning to hike the 45 minutes to the peak.

Unfortunately, it was a cloudy morning, but the descent brought us back into the early light. Despite it being early as hell, it was a beautiful sight to see the mountains basked in the early glow of morning. Heading back to the hut, we ate breakfast and did our part to make sure that the hut was left clean and tidy (luckily we had such a great group of people to help out with this) and had a nice chat with the hut warden.

Heading down the mountain, we took an alternate route, the Billygoat Track, which gave beautiful mountain views. It was, however, a little muddy, but we only lost *one* to the mud. We had a mild but wide river crossing towards the end. The lucky ones managed to keep their boots dry!

Getting back to Auckland was a breeze after our adventures tramping, and many snoozed from a satisfied exhaustion. We had such a great group, and this hike ended up fulfilling all different levels of skill. The ascent was rather steep, but very doable with breaks, and our descent had some historical railroad tracks which were pretty cool. Only being a few hours away from Auckland, this would be a great weekend tramp for the future. Thanks to our trip leader Ella, who did a superb job making this happen!

Author: Ellie Ware



(Attempted) Pouakai Circuit

Date: 9th – 11th September, 2016

Location: Egmont National Park (ish)

Trip Leader: Abi Hill

Trampers: Joseph Griffiths, Niels Galloschi, Lorenzo Posada

Sometimes a trip is outside your control. Regardless of how much you plan and prepare, in the end you must always bow down to the weather. The following saga of plans A, B and every other letter of the alphabet is a good reminder.

Before we left the trip had already been pushed back a day and a second route had been planned. I was told that there was half a metre of snow on the section of the circuit closest to the mountain but that the rest of the tracks were fine.

Less than 24 hours later we were at the iSite in New Plymouth looking at real-time images of the mountain. The weather had gotten a lot worse overnight and now there was snow down to 500 m and the visitors centre (the lowest point on our proposed circuit) had at least half a metre. No tramping for us.

Then came the process of figuring out what to do. We saw a strange dancing sculpture, checked out a hostel and decided to attempt the road up to the visitors centre. We made it up, played in the snow, went on a short, slow and snowy walk and spent the night in the lodge behind the visitors centre.

It was so cold that even with five people and tissues stuffed in the cracks at the top and bottom of the window we woke to a 3 degree room. We all had a cold night and the weather didn't appear to be improving so we decided to head back a day early. Of course, half an hour after we left the mountain, the fog and clouds mostly cleared away. Oh well. We made it back to Auckland later that night after stopping at a lake, getting fish and chips and detouring through the wops to watch the sunset and stargaze on the west coast.

So, all in all, a trip that absolutely did not go to plan but one that we made the most of and enjoyed nonetheless.

Author: Abi Hill



Taranaki plains from the Pouakai Circuit

Powell Hut

Date: 15th – 17th July, 2016

Location: Tararua Forest Park

Fearless Leaders: Fran Osten and Carl Barnhill

Trip Members: Flynn Parrish, Alex Macdonald , Markus Henke ,Quinn Menton, Haowei Zhu



The Moon.

The tramp started out with six eager souls huddled around the general library ready to go (with Carl hiding in his new car, paranoid about leaving it unattended as Wendy's tried to tow it the day before). After checking if everyone knew where we were camping, we headed off. After driving into the early hours of the morning we eventually made it to camp for the night but not before driving past a head on crash along the desert road. We set up the tents quickly at Simpsons Domain racing to beat the rain. Making it to bed just before 2:00 am with the sound of rain pitter pattering on the roof of the tent.

The next morning everyone awoke bleary eyed and tired. To the sound of trains in the distance. As we packed up our gear a neighbouring camper (Smokey McSmoke Smoke) decided to pack up and nearly choke Flynn on his cars exhaust smoke. We set off about 7:00 am in order to reach Holdsworth at a reasonable time. It was planned that we would stop for breakfast along the way. However, this meant being at McDonalds for an hour in order to wait until 10:30 so Carl could order a McDonald's Create Your Taste® burger. After consuming a burger that Carl struggled to fit in his mouth and being judged by everyone (including the staff) we made the final journey to Holdsworth road end. Everyone put on their warmest gear including mittens and multiple thermals in order to protect ourselves from the predicted -8 degrees and snow flurries that were meant to arrive. After tramping for about half an hour the sun was out in full force causing us to stop and take off our extra layers.

Shortly after we got tramping again the moans of Carl could be heard, "I think I'm going to vomit", "why did you let me eat that burger, I'm going to die". Eventually we made it to mountain house just a few hundred meters below Powell hut, where everyone had lunch (except Carl who was slowly dying). After mountain house the temperature began to slowly drop as the we increased altitude. After arriving at Powell hut in good time we headed up to the top of Mount Holdsworth. The -8 and snow flurries were never seen and the snow that had been there mere weeks ago had melted away.



Enroute.

Thereafter, large amounts of cheese were consumed at the hut. Unfortunately, everyone was too full to eat the two cheesecakes made and there was a whole one left over much to Carl's irritation (who was unfortunately in charge of cleaning). More and more people kept arriving at the hut throughout the night until it was overflowing and the only space left was on the floor. A group of enthusiast trampers come chefs who arrived early afternoon somehow managed to spend seven hours 'cooking' (or attempting to gas the hut) their dinner. At about 8:00 pm everyone decided that they were slowly dying and needed to sleep before passing out.

On Sunday morning we managed to leave the hut by 8:00 am and speed down the mountain, making it to the carpark before 10:00 am. On the way into Masterton we witnessed a car crashing into a Caltex petrol station, subsequently causing the entire roof to collapse. The whole car was extremely excited about this for some reason and wanted to stop and get pictures. After Carl stopped for more food, he managed to pry the goss out of the local Subway employees. Turned out the man was still on the run and had fled police on a domestic violence matter. Somehow managing to escape his car during the police chase and escape on foot.

The rest of the trip back to Auckland flew by with copious amounts of Pizza consumed.

Authors: Fran and Carl

Photos taken by Markus and Alex



Armed Tramping in the Pureora Forest

Date: 26th - 28th March, 2016
Location: Pureora Forest Park
Trip Leader: Blair Ramsdale
Trampers: Blair and Taru Naug

Having sent the email to the club only 10 hours earlier, it seemed no sign ups were to be had, so our two hunters left Auckland by themselves for a weekend in the bush for a spot of armed tramping. The standard of navigation for this trip was foreshadowed, had either of us bothered to heed this omen, by taking about three or four drive-pasts before locating the start of the track.

Regardless, in the late afternoon (because early starts are for suckers), our intrepid hunters set off on the couple of hours walk into the hut. As usual, this walk was accompanied by a constant monologue, this time on the finer details of some very specific aspects of military technological history.

The hut was reached just before dark, and was found to already have five occupants, two hunters, a man with his young son and an American guy walking the Te Araroa. A quick skim of the hut book showed a distinct lack of AUTC. Regardless, dinner was had, and the hunters set in for an early night, to be up early the next morning.

Everyone slept in. Hey, it was the weekend, who wants to be up early, right? The hunters eventually roll out of bed, feed themselves, arm themselves and prepare to head out. The two pairs of hunters, ourselves and those already at the hut, compared plans to avoid hunting areas overlapping. It was decided that they'd head west, while we headed south east.

Our goal was to hit a clearing marked on our map, and see if we could roar anything in. It was early in the season, but we'd heard the deer were already getting active elsewhere, so it was worth a shot. [Ed -Tee hee] We started off heading down the track, until it came close enough to the river for us to cross. Jumping down into the river, we walked through and clambered up the other bank, passing up the rifle. For this trip, the rifle of choice was the Tikka T3, chambered in .308, with a suppressor fitted. This was a good choice for hunting across clearings as marked on the map. As would come to pass, this probably wasn't the best choice...



The Boom Sticks themselves.

We began our walk through the bush to the east. With no visibility out through the trees and mostly flat ground, navigation was mostly by a good sense of direction, with a compass used to check our bearing at various points. Eventually we located a rise in the ground that was large enough to put us on the map, and realised that over the last four kilometres we had strayed about 50 metres from our course. Not a problem, we could correct for that now. That also put the clearing another kilometre or so from our position along our present heading.

And then we heard them, the roars. The stags were at it alright. We froze. Up until this point, we had been seeing tonnes of pig sign, but no sign of deer. Suddenly the deer were announcing their presence all across this area of the bush. We could hear three of them from the direction of the clearing, and one some ways off to the north. Then we froze even more (and that takes skill), as a roar echoed out from just south of us, no more than 100 metres up the hill. Cue a game of cat and mouse, us roaring out to him, him roaring back, down to an estimated distance of around 40 metres, judging by the roars and the sounds of him moving through the bush. Unfortunately, the visibility in this bush was around 20 metres or so, so this kept him out of sight. Eventually, the roars stopped. We could still get a reply from the deer in the clearing, but our friend in the bush had gone to ground. After a short discussion, it was decided to push on to the clearing, to set up for dusk and find some good overwatch positions.

And this is where the curse of the cartographer struck. This clearing was not a clearing as we would know the word, but was instead impenetrable bush, three metres high, that deer would have trouble moving through, let alone people. In any case, getting longer range shots of deer in the open wasn't going to happen. Instead, it was decided to drop down to the stream and follow it back out to the river, then from there to get onto a track back to the hut. So that is what happened. A slog along the stream, a quick river crossing, followed by a quick march down the track and we were back at the hut. Surprisingly, the other hunters, a local guy with his Auckland girlfriend, were already back, and not seemingly on speaking terms. Seemed like they hadn't had the best morning, and domestic troubles excluded, they hadn't found any sign of deer. Looked like we had picked the better direction to head after all.



“There are deer in them thills. And trees. Lots of trees” – Blair Ramsdale

The other hunters decided to walk out that night, bickering as they went. The quote passed to us by some trail runners who came by not long after was “My boyfriend is being a dick”, so obviously that one hadn’t improved any since they left.

After that morning, no one seemed to be too keen on heading straight out again for the evening, so instead we settled in for a relaxed night instead, which eventually devolved into another explanation of a custom pen and paper role playing game setting, and recounting stories set therein. Eventually, the soothing tones of my voice (because it was definitely those and not boredom) had everyone asleep, so the remainder of the stories had to wait for morning and I too fell asleep.

Waking early the next morning, we set out to return to where we’d chased the deer the previous day and poke around for the morning, before walking back to the car that afternoon. It was at this point that we decided the Tikka had not in fact been the best available rifle choice, if only because the AK-47 would have been more compact in the tight bush, adequate at the sort of ranges available in the bush, and much more amusing to wander around with.

Alas, while the area from the previous day was quickly located, and even the obvious resting place of multiple deer located, with sign abound, no animals could be found, and any roars were more distant, to the north. With afternoon rapidly approaching, it was decided to head back to the hut. Using the same navigation method used to find the hunting area, the hut was located to within about 50 metres, which landed us back on the track, and got us back to the hut for some lunch before packing up our gear and heading out to the car. This time the walk was accompanied by the remainder of our stories from the night before, followed by a brief explanation of the design rationale behind the infantry fighting vehicles. This is an aspect of hunting they don’t warn you about, the danger to hearing from constant monologues.

While the deer had survived for another day, it had been an enjoyable hunt, and good recce of the area, and had given us plenty of plans for when we return.

Tramping vs Hunting

	Tramping	Hunting
You are carrying your main pack...	The whole way	As little as possible
You need all the gear...	On the AUTC gear lists	On the AUTC gear lists, plus your boom stick
Walking off track is...	Slow going and avoided by many	Normal? Where we’re going, we don’t need tracks.
The middle of the day is....	Prime walking time	Nap time
You want to finish the trip...	With a lighter pack than you started with	With a heavier pack than you started with
You will...	Not shoot anything	Probably not shoot anything



Author: Blair Ramsdale

Rangitoto

Date: 26th March, 2016

Location: Rangitoto Island

Trip Leader: Christopher Holyer

Trampers: Jason, Brittany, Ella, Kayla,

Gene, Raymond, Kate, Jack, David,

Maja, Michael, William, Quinn,

Jazmine, Karen Ervin, Danica, Gypsey

Ashleigh



Early morning on Saturday 26th March, 20 trampers ventured over to Rangitoto Island. The intention was to explore all the best parts of the island. To start the tramp we headed up the summit track, going via the caves, before reaching the summit. The weather was near perfect, so unobstructed 360 degree views of the Hauraki Gulf were enjoyed. We then made our way down a track on the north eastern side of the island heading for secluded Wreck Bay. To get to the bay we had to take a track that meant walking over lava fields. This was a fun track, however it was hot as the majority of the track was in the open and the lava rocks we were walking on radiated the heat back at us. We stopped for lunch at Wreck Bay, then headed back to the main track and made our way to the Motatapu/Rangitoto causeway and then to the Islington Bay wharf. From there, we made our way back to the Rangitoto wharf, following a coastal track. Along the way we took a detour down a side track, to visit the ruins of an old World War 2 mine controlling base and gun emplacements. After, this detour we then continued back to the Rangitoto wharf, to catch the ferry back to Auckland.

It was a great tramp, nobody got lost and everyone survived the trip, although tired by the end of the day.

Author: Christopher Holyer



South Island Adventures

Date: 23rd of April to 29th of April

Location: The South Island, New Zealand

Trip Leader: Mohammad Ali Muttaqi

Trampers: Sarmed Syed, Jesse Perlstein, Leo Gonzalez

The journey began with a drive from Auckland to Wellington, catching the very first ferry out from Wellington to Picton the following morning.

We arrived in Picton on the 23rd April to an overcast day (New Zealand weather doing its tricks once again), and drove down to Nelson Lakes National Park hoping that the weather would get better, but no such luck. Later in the afternoon we started heading towards Punakaiki to be met with a massive storm and heavy rainfall. We couldn't even see two feet ahead of us while we were driving. We were a little disappointed but hoped that the worst was behind us.

The next day we started driving towards Franz Josef Glacier and luckily our predictions were correct as we were met with a nice sunny afternoon. We chose to do the Franz Josef Glacier walk which takes about an hour one way and has you walking across a dry river bed with views of the glacier in the distance. Getting to the glacier gives you some amazing views, although it would have been nicer if we could get even closer to the glacier.

After Franz Josef we headed to Fox Glacier, but the weather started to get a little disagreeable once again. The Fox Glacier walk was roughly of the same duration as Franz Josef. On a sunny day this would look really nice as you walk along a stream created by the glacier.

On the following day we made the mistake of relying on Google Maps which told us that the Rob Roy Glacier was only an hour or so away. Turns out it was about three and a half hours. Once again we were met with a nice and sunny day so we decided to climb Mount Roy in Wanaka instead. It is highly recommended to do this trip around the same time of the year. Entering Wanaka gave us some amazing views of yellow, red and golden trees all around. The hike at Mount Roy is a constant uphill climb for about two and a half hours but the panoramic views at the end makes it well worth it.

After a night in Wanaka we decided to get an early start for the Rob Roy Glacier track. This is a 30 km drive over gravel road so make sure you have the right car. This was probably one of the most amazing places I have seen in New Zealand as you drive through part of Mount Aspiring National Park right through the middle of the valley. The west and east Matukituki valleys provide some amazing views of the mountains.

Luckily, I ended up making a mistake and instead of walking the Rob Roy Glacier track, I started walking towards the Mt Aspiring hut. I saw green valleys with a river running through the middle and mountains in the backdrop. Definitely worth visiting even if you aren't doing the complete tramp.

We headed towards Milford Sound from Queenstown on the 27th of April. Once again driving through the Fiordland National Park is a real visual treat. We decided to do the Lake Marian track which is about one and a half hours one way. It is amazing how well the nature has been preserved with the track. The end of the walk is quite rewarding as you get to experience a serene and secluded lake with snow covered mountains in the back drop.

In the morning we went to the Milford Sound cruise and got to see some really interesting views. It is definitely quite windy and chilly in the morning. On our way out of Fiordland National Park we decided to do a casual tramp through Gertrude Valley. Once again this provided views which wouldn't surprise you if you saw them in Lord of the Rings or Game of Thrones.

After driving over the world's steepest street in Dunedin, we spent the night in Moeraki and saw a brilliant sunrise over the Moeraki boulders, and we began our drive back towards Auckland.

Author: Mohammad Ali Muttaqi



Punakaiki - Photographed by Mohammad Ali Muttaqi



Milford Sound - Photographed by Mohammad Ali Muttaqi



Fox Glacier - Photographed by Mohammad Ali Muttaqi



Mount Roy - Photographed by Mohammad Ali Muttaqi

A Voyage to the Table of Doom

Date: 10th to 11th December 2016

Location: Kauaeranga Valley

Trip Leader: Timothy Gray

Trampers: Timothy Gray, Sach Knight, Tom Andrews, Matt Battley, Sophie Jenkins

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, a great prophet/tramper wrote this verse in the tramping scripture:

The World's Worst Tramp:

The Kauaeranga Valley-Table Top Tramp involves hard physical toil in unrelenting mud. This trip has no highlights, no rewards, and no views. Your most poignant memory will be of returning to your car after about 8 hours grovelling... If you want a view, take a ladder.

Spurred on by the utter misery promised to us by the sacred text, five crazy trampers set out one Saturday morning to take on the legendary Table. This is the chronicle of that great adventure; to maintain the PG rating of Footprints, some of the events of the trip have been censored.

Starting from the carpark, we charged our way up the Moss Creek track whilst recounting past adventures and misadventures. We charged up the track at full speed, with time to spare for a swim at the bottom even. Upon reaching the top, we discovered that there was a hut at the Moss Creek Campsite! It was an unimpressive hut; two bunk beds and a folding stretcher. First impressions were that it seemed extremely unhygienic, only had 2 bunks, and had a written note above the sink saying "Do Not Drink". Despite having spent some time setting up our tents, we decided to stay here for the night instead.

Oh Chasseur!

The most memorable parts of the night were spent with our good friend, Chasseur. Chasseur was a 3 litre goon, purchased earlier that day at Pak n' Save Thames. It had a full bodied flavour, a blend of classic white wine varieties. Matt had two just glasses before he was completely gone. Sophie followed soon after, shortly followed by Tim and Sach. Tom was late to join the devastation, but he was good enough to cook our dinner first.

Our pasta and eat food dehydrated mince was devoured while looking at the hut book. This was a lot more explicit than most; among the many phallic images were several highly detailed drawings demonstrating "skiing", amongst a variety of other deviant sexual activities. Multiple parties commented on the great sex they'd had in the hut, and under the influence of Chasseur the true aphrodisiac nature of the hut was revealed. That night, xxxxxxx and xxxxxxx fisted each other on the bottom bunk, xxxxxxx and xxxxxxx had great sex inspired by the Kama Sutra and Mein Kampf on the top bunk, and xxxxxxx had great fun with a sock on the stretcher.

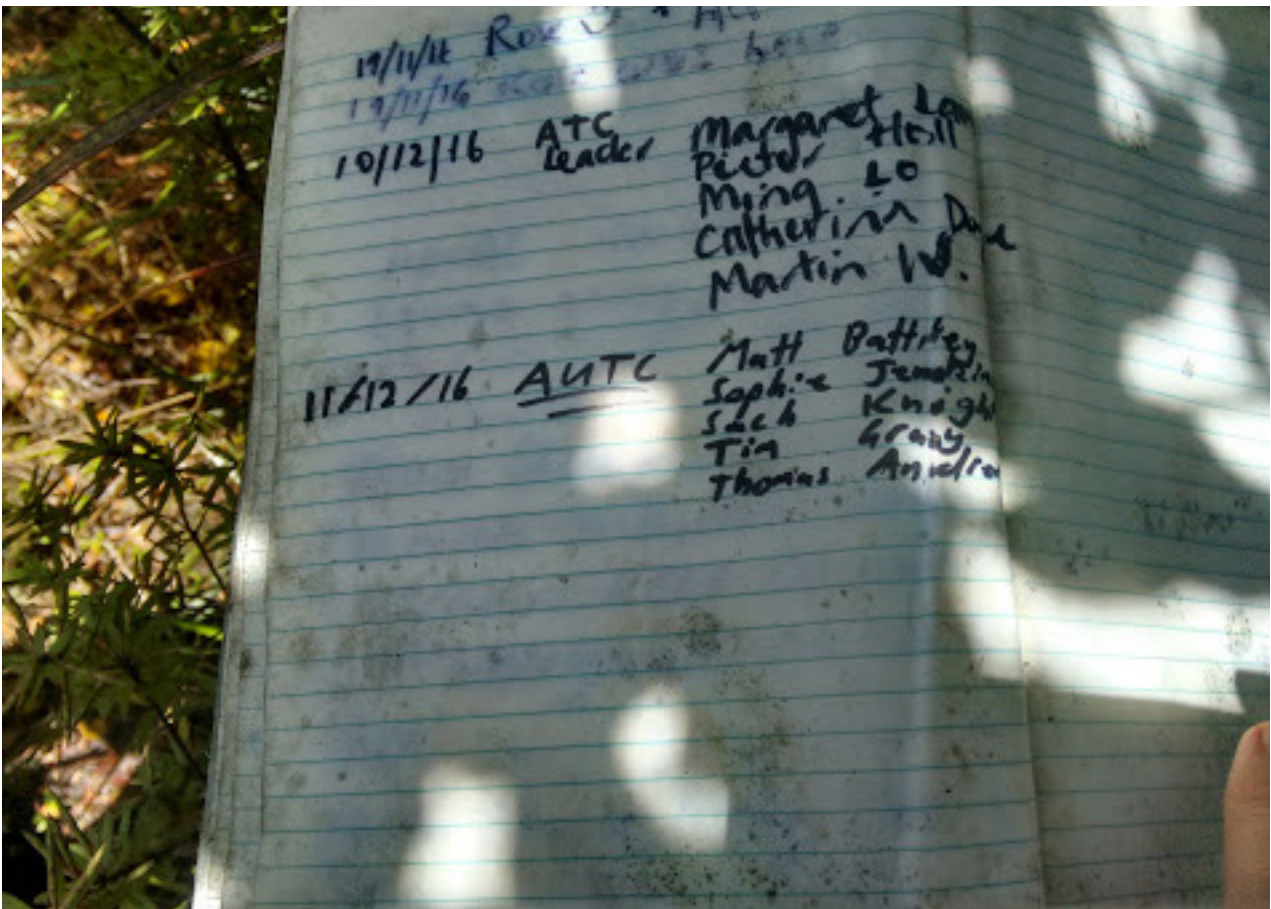
The actual assault on Table Mountain the next day was fairly average. A marked track led up to Mt Rowe, giving us an actual view of the valley, and out to the sea on the other side. Continuing onwards, the Table itself had an annoying piece of string marking the entire route, which led to disappointment that we weren't going to be just setting a bearing and bushbashing our way to the other side. The mud was only knee high despite the downpour the previous night, and Matt only face planted 10 times.

It took us around six hours in total to bag the summit, find the mountain visitors book, and return to the car. All in all, a rather disappointingly pleasant affair. If you're looking for pain and misery, look elsewhere, because this is just far too nice!

Author: Timothy Gray



Table Mountain - Photographed by Timothy Gray



The Elusive Table Mountain Book - Photographed by Timothy Gray

Last of the Summer Sun, Tawhitokino

Date: 9th April - 10th April 2016

Location: Tawhitokino Regional Park

Trip Leader: Tom Goodman

Trampers: Thomas Goodman, Sach Knight, Erika Bouchard, Tim Gray, Nina Buzby, Ben Mansfield, Louis Christie, Quinn Menton, Tanya Peart, Cassidy Bummer, Viktor Herskind, Ella McKenzie, Ray Li.

In the weeks preceding this trip, the challenges seemed insurmountable. There was the lack of drivers, an absence of any beach-friendly sporting equipment, and – just to cap it all off – up until Friday morning it looked like it would rain all weekend. Finding myself parked at the road-end, with 12 other weather-be-damned types, under a blue sky, seemed to be a rather unlikely outcome! But so it was.

After a quick scramble round the rocks (which was both longer and more challenging than I remembered, and involved several unpleasant encounters with oysters), the group found themselves at the most perfect little beach in the whole world. And what did they do when they got there? They played board games.

Or rather, some of them settled into board games. Some of them leapt in the water and declared it not too bad. Meanwhile, the truly dedicated set to work on untangling the volleyball net. This was not easy. Neither, it transpired, was pumping up the volleyball using a standard hand-held bicycle pump. But eventually, the stage was set. And, after a couple of hours of hurling ourselves round the sand, most of us were capable of getting the ball over the net at least some of the time.

Night came, bringing with it an opportunity to explore our inner-tribespeople, and a fire was duly lit. Marshmallows were toasted. Various drinking games were proposed, but eventually the consensus was that there was insufficient alcohol to make any of them truly memorable, so the group settled down for an evening of trying to make a litre of vodka stretch as far as possible. In true AUTC tradition, a skinny dip was enthusiastically seized upon, complete with the added bonus of watching the glow of bioluminescent plankton- ‘I swear I was just looking at the plankton’.

Sunday morning came, and Sunday morning went. The engineers built a dam in the neighbouring creek, and then built a bigger dam just for kicks. The non-engineers played a game of soccer, and kept an eye on the engineers. Eventually, the rain came, and with it the end to the festivities. A trip to the dairy for ice-cream, pies, and chips, and Tawhitokino was farwelled – until next year...

Author: Tom Goodman



Chris's Tramp Reviews

Review Rating Criteria: (Rated out of a possible 5 stars)

Track terrain: = (higher rating is better) how interesting the track is, i.e. mud, river crossings, steep/flat, rocks, grass etc. Track with lots of variety will rate higher than that which is monotonous.

Points of interest: = (higher rating is better) sights to see/views, things to see, structures, wildlife, rivers/streams, historical sites, landmarks etc.

Difficulty: = (higher rating means harder) How difficult of a bush track is it, gradient, rocks, mud, river crossings are taken into consideration. Walking time and distance per day is also considered.

Access: = (higher rating is better) how easy it is to get to the start of the track.

Accommodation: = (higher rating is better) the quality of accommodation for staying overnight.

Overall experience: = An overall rating of how enjoyable/memorable the tramp is.

- These reviews are based on my experience and feedback from some other members on the tramps.
- The reviews are based on tramping in bush and should not be compared with alpine or city walking.

Rangitoto Island Tramp

This was a day tramp that took place in spring. This tramp involved visiting all the main points of interest that Rangitoto Island has to offer therefore included walking around over half of the island. The views from the summit of Rangitoto were amazing. Places that we went to/passed of the tramp included the lava caves, a secluded beach called Boulder Bay and a WW2 mine controlling base historical site. The tracks varied in terrain. The main tracks are easy and included walking on a gravel road for about an hour which was not very exciting. However, some tracks involved walking over fields of lava rocks which was more interesting yet also more difficult. In general the walking was quite easy. The only steep section was walking near the summit of the Island and the rest of the day's walking was flat with a few undulations. This tramp is good for anyone who is fit and would like to do a day tramp very close to Auckland.

Track Terrain: ★★★★★
Points of Interest: ★★★★★
Difficulty: ★★★
Access: ★★★★★
Accommodation: N/A
OVERALL : 3.5/5

Tiritiri Matangi Island Tramp

This was a day tramp that took place in spring. This tramp involved walking around the perimeter of the entire island to visit all the main points of interest Tiritiri has to offer. These places included the lighthouse, caves, sandy beaches and lookout points. There is also a large amount of bird life to appreciate on the island as it is a Bird Wildlife Sanctuary. The tracks around the island are easy. There are some short steep sections to ascend and descend, however for the most part it is an undulating grass/dirt track. The access to the island is by an hour ferry trip from Auckland, which can get quite rough in bad weather.

Track Terrain: ★★★
Points of Interest: ★★★★★
Difficulty: ★★
Access: ★★
Accommodation: N/A
OVERALL : 3.0/5

Waitakere Ranges Tramp

This was an overnight tramp that took place in winter. This tramp involved walking a series of tracks to the AUTC Hut. The first day had about 6 hours of walking and the second around 5 hours. The first day's tracks were mostly in the bush and there were few views, however there were a number of stream crossings. On the second day we walked across the Waitakere Dam and were able to get some good views. The track terrain varied over the tramp. The track had some short very steep sections however, there were also some easy sections where you are basically walking along a road. In places the tracks had quite a bit of mud however, most of it could be avoided if you wanted to and even when walking through it was never deeper than the height of a boot. It was easy to get to the Cascade carpark where the tramp began and finished. The AUTC Hut was a good place to stay the night. This is a good beginner's overnight tramp.

Track Terrain: ★★★★★
 Points of Interest: ★★★
 Difficulty: ★★★
 Access: ★★★★★
 Accommodation: ★★★
OVERALL : 3.5/5

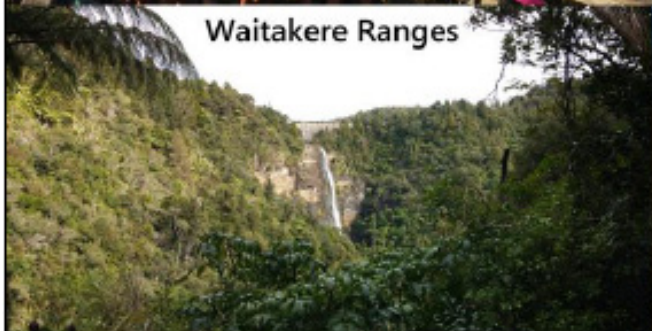
Rangitoto



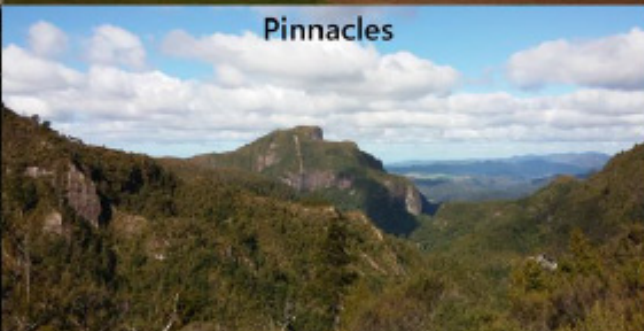
Tiritiri



Waitakere Ranges



Pinnacles



Pinnacles via Moss Creek Tramp

This was an overnight tramp that took place in winter. The first day of this tramp was to walk to the Pinnacles Hut via the Moss Creek track. This track should only be attempted to be completed in one day if you are very fit. This track has many steep sections where you will likely need to use your hands to help yourself to climb/descend the slopes. There is also a large amount of mud/bog you have to walk through for over an hour, and it can get up to knee deep in places. You are guaranteed to get wet feet on this track. On the second day the final climb to the pinnacles was made. The views from the top are worth the effort to get there. Returning to the carpark via the Webb Creek track is easy, however, I would not recommend the track if you have weak knees. A few stream crossings keep the track from becoming too boring. Staying at the Pinnacles Hut is very comfortable and is one of the best tramping huts in New Zealand, for the price. This is a good tramp for those who would like a challenging overnight tramp.

Track Terrain: ★★★★★
 Points of Interest: ★★★
 Difficulty: ★★★★★
 Access: ★★★
 Accommodation: ★★★★★
OVERALL : 4.0/5



Thunderbolt in Winter

Date: 4th July – 8th July 2016

Location: Kaimanawa Forest Park

Trip Leader: David Zeng

Trampers: Jacob Neville-Smith, Tim Bulmer, Sam Lancaster-Robertson, Daniel Scholes, Bevan Dobbs

A group of lads braved the cold and went for a wonder up thunderbolt. The sun was out but the guns stayed in because it was too cold for them to come out.

Everyone should give winter tramping a go, it's one of the most rewarding things you can do!

Author: David Zeng



Tiritiri Matangi Island

Date: 16th April 2016

Location: Tiritiri Matangi Island

Trip Leader: Christopher Holyer

Trampers: Jason, Brittany, Ana, Laura, Jesse, Max

On Saturday 16th of April eight trampers set out to Tiritiri Matangi Island, Bird Wildlife Sanctuary in the Hauraki Gulf. The intention was to walk around the entire island and visit points of interest along the way. The journey to the island was rough due to large swells and it was almost impossible to stand on the ferry. However, we all arrived in good shape at the island to begin the walk.

Firstly, we made our way from the wharf to the Tiritiri lighthouse where we were able to get a view of almost all the islands in the Hauraki Gulf, including Great Barrier. From the lighthouse we made our way along the eastern side of the island to Fishermans Bay. Next to Fishermans bay we explored some caves called the Arches. From the caves, we made our way to North East Bay for lunch. After lunch, we then continued to the most northern point of the island and then started to head down the west of the island on Ngati Paoa track and Kawerau track. On our way we passed a pa site and then arrived at Hobbs beach. From here, we then headed inland towards the centre of the island on Cable track and then back out to near the wharf on Hobbs Link track.

Before arriving back to the wharf we visited the penguin boxes and saw blue eyed penguins, a great way to finish the day. Throughout the day we had seen many other rare birds, including Takahe, Saddleback and Robins. We then caught the ferry back to Auckland, the return sailing smoother than the morning.

Author: Christopher Holyer



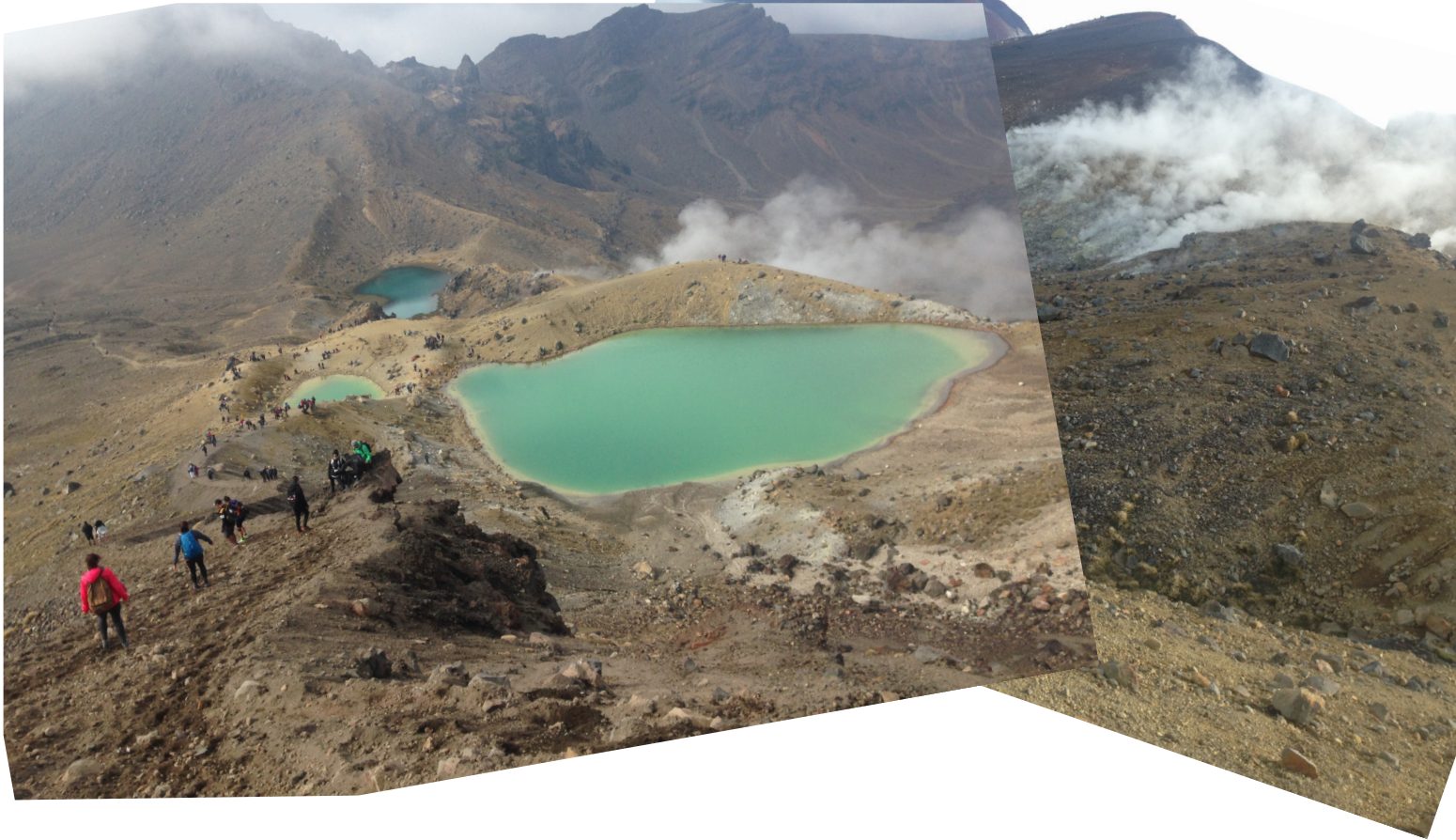
Tongariro Northern Circuit

Date: 15th April – 18th April 2016

Location: Tongariro National Park

Trip Leader: Viktor Ingemann Herskind

Trampers: Carlotta Schipplick, Joel Webber



Our plan was to do the Northern Circuit over the course of four days, sleeping in tents one night at each of the three huts; first night at the Mangatepopo Hut, second night at the Oturere Hut and third night at the Waihohonu Hut. We started our hike Friday around 3 pm from Whakapapa Village, leaving our car at a parking lot right at the beginning of the track. The first thing to take note of is the sight of Mount Ngauruhoe, which the Northern Circuit goes around, causing the view of the mountain to be almost ever-present during your trip, giving a great sense of progress.

The hike includes a number of side trips, most of them worthwhile, including especially Taranaki Falls on the first or last day, the peak of Mount Tongariro on second day and Lower Lake Tama (we did not have time for the hike to Upper Lake Tama). While staying at the final hut, it can also be recommended to take a quick dip in the nearby stream, to which there are signs. Second day will provide the greatest physical challenges, as the climbs between Mangatepopo and Oturere can be physically challenging, however it is amended by the gorgeous view on the way to the top.

All in all, the Tongariro Northern Circuit is a must-do for any hike-enthusiast in New Zealand. It is do-able for all ages and skills (amongst our many fellow hikers during the circuit were a group of children, traversing the track with a greater ease than us) although it is recommendable doing the hike as a group. The landscape is wonderful, and the fact that Mount Ngauruhoe was used as the scenery for the famous Mt Doom in Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings movies ensures that your friends will even have a slight idea of the view, when you inevitably try to describe your trip to them afterwards.

Author: Viktor Ingemann Herskind

Waitakere Ranges

Date: 9th July 2016

Location: Waitakere Ranges, Auckland Regional Park

Trip Leader: Christopher Holyer

Trampers: Jason G, Brittany, Kirsten, Andrew, Ella, Jason H, Ngaio, Mera

On Saturday the 9th of July nine trampers set out for a two day trip through part of the Waitakere Ranges. The plan was to start from the Cascade Carpark and walk a combination of tracks for about 6 hours to reach the AUTC hut where we would stay the night. On the Sunday we would then check out Browne track and then head back to the carpark via the Waitakere dam. The weather for the trip was perfect, however as the tramp took place during the middle of winter there was plenty of mud to keep things interesting.

The following are the tracks we took to reach the hut: Whatitiri Track, Long Road Track, Wainamu Bush Track, Smyth Ridge Track, Sisam Track, Simla Track, Ridge Road Track. Once at the hut we quickly got a fire going, then chilled out for the rest of the evening.

On the Sunday we headed out to walk Browne track. Browne track is one of the few route tracks in the Waitakere Ranges. (A route track is a track that is unformed and natural, may be rough, muddy or very steep. The track has markers, poles or rock cairns. Expect unbridged stream and river crossings.) This was a short, but fun track.

After Browne track we then headed back to the AUTC hut and then back to the cascade carpark via the following tracks, which included visiting the Waitakere dam on the way. Tracks taken upon return: Ridge Road Track, Fence Line Track, Waitakere Tramline Walk, Anderson Track, Auckland City Walk

The total walking time for the Sunday was about 4.5 hours. Everyone enjoyed the tramp, the only complaint being that the AUTC hut should get new softer mattresses.

Author: Christopher Holyer



Whatipu Navigation Trip

Date: 10th April 2016

Location: Whatipu, Waitakere Ranges, Auckland Regional Park

Trip Leader: Carmen Chan

Trampers: Michelle Lee, Anya Yang, Elaine Chien, George Culver, Tom Ma, Jacob Burte, Ella Ding, Jiao Chen, Jason Herbert

In summary, a quick half day trip to explore Whatipu beach and practice some compass and map.

The trip included a good explore of the Whatipu marsh and beachlands, some due diligence over the Whatipu caves ahead of cave party and a little stroll up Mt Donald McLean for lunch with a view, before the drive home.

Favourite triangulation markers included Cutter Rock, Paratutae Island, Sargeant Point, Kaitarakihi Point and various parts of South Head.

Of the eight on the trip, six were new to Whatipu and we hope that Waitakeres' remotest beach left an impression of some kind!

Highlights included:

- ✓ New friends (Everyone)
- ✓ Ornithology facts (Carmen)
- ✓ Swimming across very deep streams (George)
- ✓ Getting exchange students car-sick just a little (Michelle, Jason)
- ✓ Iron sands and magnetic fields
- ✓ The completely reversed compass
- ✓ Learning new things

A good time was had by all.

Invoiced by: George Culver (Taxation Expert)



Kaweka Hot Pools: Field notes

Date: 1st October – 3rd October 2015

Trip Leader: Carl Barnhill

Trampers: Chandelina Toala, Fran Osten, Carmen Chan, Carl Barnhill

Deciding that we needed a break from exam swatting, we decided to hit the hot pools for the week end. The journey to the Kawekas began with driving for seven hours until we reached the ford entering the bush. Then, it ended just around here:



“So what happened to the bridge?” – Carl Barnhill

Contrary to hopes reinforced by crossed fingers, it appeared that the ford had flooded just outside of Te Puia. We checked the weather and found it forecasted for more rain on Saturday. After spending some time convincing Carl, that insurance would probably view that an “attempted river crossing” in a sedan as an attempt to write off his car in the river, we decided to re-route to a ‘nearby’ area and made a route for Waikaremoana (go figure).

Trip Summary to Lake Waikaremoana 1st – 3rd of October, 2015

Drove another 5 hours into Waikaremoana

Dropped into the Ngāi Tūhoe Information centre at Aniwaniwa

Then tramped into Sandy Bay Hut at Lake Waikareiti and spent our time at the waterfront.

The paucity of words on this report comes from the fact that we chilled, ate a lot of food, practised yoga on the balcony, wrote poetry, and slept.

Quote of the Tramp:

“So, did they offer you didymo at school?” ~ Carl Barnhill, in response to a “Say No to Didymo sign”

Waikaremoana

Imagine dewdrops dripping

Lightly onto silver ferns

The stillness of the forest

Broken

Only by the tramp of footsteps.

Soft chuckles of the riroriro

Weave amongst the air and

The pillars of ancient kauri are

Garbed underneath an emerald sheen.

Draped epiphytes and carpets of moss

Line their timeless presence before

The majesty of the Lake Waikaremoana.

The 5/6-ish Passes

Date: 21st February to 1st March 2016

Location: Mt Aspiring National Park

Trip Leader: Matthew Battley

Trampers: Sach Knight, Hamish Buckley, Tom Goodman, Sam Lancaster-Robertson and Sir Not-appearing-in-this-story

'twas the week before Uni and all through the hills

Not a (sensible) creature was stirring, not even ones with a bill;

The socks were hung by the rock window to dry,

In hope that the water would soon cease to fly.

The trampers were nestled all snug in their biv,

While visions of passes danced in their heads;

The weather was shocking, just for a change,

There was little hope for ascending the range.

As Kea complained and Hidden Falls Creek rose,

The trampers huddled 'neath a rock with peanut butter on their nose(s).

But how did we get here? How did we get out?

Sit back and relax – that's what this story is about:



Tom: "Sam is deeply suffering from a case of new pot syndrome"

Day 1: Queenstown – Sugarloaf Pass – Rockburn Shelter

Pausing only briefly to intercept Sir Not-appearing-in-this-story at the airport, those of us who flew down from Auckland early in the morning quickly picked up the peanut-butter machines Sach and Hamish (who had already spent ~3 weeks tramping near the area) from Queenstown and caught the shuttle to the Routeburn Shelter.

Thankfully although we started with the army of tourists on the Routeburn we turned off the Great Walk less than 1km in to begin the climb up the first of our 5-ish passes: Sugar Loaf pass. Stopping most of the way up for a bite of lunch, Hamish cleverly lightened his pack by losing his fork, and thus had to eat with sticks for the remainder of the trip. Reaching the top of the pass we gained our first view into the Rockburn Valley, and captured the first of our pass selfies with the aid of some sugar and the bread for the 1st night.

Like the climb, the descent didn't mess around, so we lost 350m in the bush from the 1154m pass in fairly short order. We were however surprised how long the remainder of the track took down to the shelter, though happily still arrived before dark for a feast of roast chicken, bread and veges. A superb moon-rise over Mt Earnslaw followed as we gratefully retreated to our tents.

Day 2: Rockburn Shelter – Beans Burn – Split Rock Bivvy

We had a comparatively flat Day 2, starting only 460m below our goal. Beginning with a very pleasant womble North on the true right of the Dart river, we waded to richer people in their fancy jet-boats and eventually found ourselves at the bottom of the Beans Burn Valley. A goblin forest greeted us as we began the steady climb through the archetypical South Island beech, filled with curious robins, almost curious enough to eat peanut butter off Sach's spork. The track up to the main clearing was well marked and seemingly quite well marked and seemingly quite well trodden, spitting us out into an absolute gem of a view up the valley towards Poseidon Peak.

Following this clearing (which is a superb lunch spot), the track gradually disappeared, though realistically there was quite a decent ground trail until much further up the valley. As we climbed, robins and bush gave way to more open rocky/shrubby land, with numerous waterfalls becoming apparent to the East below Cosmos peak. Such bodies of water coupled with finding an excellent swimming hole in the river somehow persuaded us that swimming was a good idea, despite the fact that it was glacier fed. Needless to say, the swim was somewhat short-lived.

A combination of rock-hopping and tussock-bashing led to our final destination for the day – Split Rock Bivvy - the first of the rock bivvies on our trip. The rock field in which it was situated wasn't hard to find, however upon closer inspection the actual bivvy proved somewhat elusive. As it turned out the entrance was to the North of the 'split rock' and so, as darkness fell, we uncovered our mansion – two connected large rooms coupled with all number of nooks and crannies. This 5-star accommodation also included a cooking platform, quaint pebble wall and handy water source. Pasta lovingly crafted by our sous-chef San Remo made an appearance with bacon this night, before we hit the hay (quite literally – it really was 5-star).

Day 3: Split Rock Bivvy – Fohn Saddle/Lakes – Olivine Ledge

Regretfully leaving our four-poster beds behind, Day 3 began much as the last day had finished, with a combination of rock hopping, chilly river crossings and shrubbery as we found our way almost to the top of the valley. Ducking off to the true right of the Beans burn higher up, the relatively mild valley gradient gave way to a gloriously steep climb up to the 1506m Fohn Saddle, with superb views back down the valley. Most routes up are as 'easy' as the others in the vicinity of the saddle, but the official route heads up a rock gut to begin, with the odd cairn to guide the way.

Upon cresting the saddle and being rewarded with our first view of the Olivine wilderness area, we decided it was high time for both another summit selfie (finding reception with our fohns) and lunch (where Hamish and Sach pulled out beer and bow-ties in a show of true class). A giant boulder field paved our way to Fohn Lakes, as we looked towards the red-rocked Sunset Peak and we discovered that staying high until you are just to the West of Mt Fohn helps to avoid hidden bluffs. Crossing the main divide did however have the traditional effect of worsening the weather, so as we descended to the larger Fohn Lake the clouds began to encroach. Following the guidance of Moir, we crossed the outlet of the greater Fohn Lake in order to descend, at which time Tom decided he was fed up with his boots and instead began descending over the dolerite desert in his jandals.



Unattributed tramper: "No matter which way I turn, I'm bumming someone"

As we dropped further into the proto-valley we noted some intriguing holes in the cliffs where parts of the mountains in the form of huge boulders appeared to have fallen off the walls, hinting at the power hidden in the formation and evolution of the Main Divide. From here, we followed to the true right of the steadily filling stream, finding ourselves quickly onto the Olivine Ledge.

A short wander North along the ledge deposited us in another rock garden, with this bivvy thankfully less hidden than the last. This Olivine Ledge biv was quite a different piece of accommodation to Split Rock, about sitting-height or less high inside of the 'atrium'. However it was cosy enough given the increasingly heavy rain outside, if you excused the slight leaks.

Day 4: Olivine Ledge – Fiery Col – Cow Saddle – Hidden Falls Creek

“Most unpleasant” is about the nicest any of us could say of this day. I don't recall that it stopped raining even once. However, there were a couple of interesting passes.

Starting from our drippy hole in the ground, we poked our noses out into the rain on Olivine Ledge. We proceeded to follow this ledge South-West, slowly climbing above the Fiery creek cliffs (with only a mild 'scenic detour' thanks to the variable visibility). Crossing at the fork, we then followed between the two Fiery Creek tributaries onto the increasingly red rocks from which Fiery Col draws its name.

Despite the slight feeling of déjà-vu Tom felt climbing over large loose rocks, Tom thankfully refrained from breaking his leg this time, and we found our way onto the top of Fiery Col in the middle of a cloud. Stopping for only long enough to pull out a lighter for our third pass-selfie, we quickly descended down the other equally red side of Fiery Col. Somewhat surprisingly, the cairned route then took us down the steep stream gully for a short time, before taking us out to a more gradual descent to Cow Saddle.

Cow Saddle marks the start of both the Olivine River (heading North) and Hidden Falls Creek (heading South), and I managed to 'gracefully' face-plant in them both. We embraced our inner cows at Cow Saddle proper, taking a minute to eat grass on all fours, before racing down on the true left of the beginnings of Hidden Falls Creek.

We were originally planning to camp near the bottom of Park Pass, partway down Hidden Falls creek, but feeling completely drenched we elected to first investigate the nearby rock bivvy just in case. We didn't hold out huge amounts of hope for this bivvy as according to Moir's Guide it was “now largely filled with avalanche debris, and would need considerable digging to make it inhabitable again”. However, miraculously upon arriving there, we discovered that some kind souls had evidently begun the excavation in the past, leaving room for 3, or a tight 4. Being a party of 5 in serious want of some dryness, we thus elected to spend the evening digging and interior designing, extending the floor, throwing rocks around like cavemen and digging out a higher sleeping platform. By the end of the day it was in a state which would happily sleep 6.



Selfie Time!

Day 5: Hidden Falls Creek

The previous day's miserable weather got even more miserable on Day 5, causing the usually serene section of Hidden Falls Creek below us to completely flood its banks. It was clear that we weren't going to go anywhere, so we settled in for a day of cards, re-explaining the rules of Balboa (many times), eating, sleeping and generally watching the rain pour down. After our hard excavation work of the day before we had a surprisingly comfortable spot in the Biv, even with a built in water feature. Probably the most exciting occurrences for the day were the thunderstorm-adventures, or to quote Sach's journal - "All of us went for a dramatic shit today" - literary genius, Sach Knight 2016.

Day 6: Hidden Falls Creek – Park Pass – Head of the Rockburn Valley

As the weather started to slowly improve, we observed that the flooded torrent of a river from the day before had returned to a more creek-like appearance, and hence we elected to make a break from our hole-in-a-rock to Park Pass. There's a reasonably cairned ground trail down the first part of Hidden Falls Creek, just with the odd hairy section depending how high the river is when you need to cross it.

One must be wearier than us when getting closer to Park Pass however, as after hearing that there was a reasonable track up to Park Pass from the valley floor we managed to take one track too early and had to bush bash for a kilometer or so to regain the track proper. We were quite happy when it did eventually appear, as we didn't altogether fancy missing it and being stuck in the lower reaches of Hidden Falls Creek, as apparently these are dense enough to hide helicopters.

Sam: "Is your trowel from Macpac?"

Tom: "I don't know"

Sam: "Well it has Macpac written on it"

Tom: "Well I guess it's from Macpac then"



"Er, guys....what's going on?"

The real track was indeed pleasantly easy to follow compared to what we had grown used to of late, and so we sped up the gloriously steep climb to the clearing, beginning about 100m below the 1176m Park Pass. What we hadn't quite realised during the climb through the bush was just how ridiculously windy it was up near the pass. Gale-force winds greeted us upon clearing the bush, so we were very glad that the main pass was nice and wide/difficult to fall off. Parking our pack-car behind a rock for our final pass-selfie, Tom eloquently summed up our group feeling in his video – “So ah, this is everyone at Park Pass, and how are we feeling... [inaudible yet sarcastic replies from everyone else thanks to the wind]... And I'm feeling fucking shit!!”

After throwing more expletives to the wind, we made a break for the Park Pass bivvy, partway down to the upper Rockburn valley floor. When Moir's described it as “rather exposed from the South” we were somewhat bemused to discover that it actually meant “this bivvy is quite literally a massive boulder on a lean which you can sort of hide under provided the wind isn't blowing the storm right in from the South”. We ended up snuggling 5 people under an Olympus tent fly within the bivvy in order to stay dry.



Sach feeding the locals. (Spot Hamish)



Hidden Fall's Creek Bivvy.

Day 7: Head of the Rockburn Valley with a side-trip to Park Pass Glacier

Sach: "HOW IS THE WEATHER STILL SHIT?"

Despite grand plans of carrying on to Nerine Lakes and eventually dropping down into the North Branch of the Routeburn via North Col, it was inherently clear that the weather was not going to play ball on this day, so we'd have to sit tight. Much like our previous rest day, we spent most of the morning resting, eating and playing cards (/explaining the rules of Balboa again).

Here and there the rain would briefly stop, so we'd go out and climb some of the boulders or look at the waterfall, but by lunchtime Sam and I were going pretty stir-crazy. However, there was a remedy to such a malady as the Park Pass glacier was only about 2km away and 600m above us! Leaving the decidedly less keen folks behind, the two of us ascended the dramatic spur above Park Pass and emerged over the top of the 1588 peak, gifting us an incredible view of the glacier and its terminal lake. Thanks to the summer heat and other environmental factors, it had retreated about 1km from its marked position on the map, so we decided to wander a bit further for a closer look, eventually getting up right beside the edge of the glacier and peering into its blue depths. A rare burst of sunshine and blue sky snuck through the clouds for a minute or two as we admired the glacier, which gave us a brief respite from the chilly wind. However, once that once again retreated we followed suit, following a handy route around the North of the 1588m peak, and back down the spur to our sleepy comrades. Such a brief adventure was sufficient to rid Sam and me of our stir-craziness, thus leaving us only as crazy as the rest of the group.

Discussing the options for the remainder of the trip that night, we came to the decision that even with the possibility of comparatively nicer weather on Day 8, it was unlikely that the slippery snow-grass along the reasonably steep ridge to Nerine Lakes would dry sufficiently for us to complete the original route (especially given Moir's warning against attempting it in the wet). Thus we decided that we'd escape down the Rockburn Valley instead, which had been luckily also recommended as a beautiful valley. Rest assured Nerine Lakes, you haven't yet escaped – we'll be back!



Chillin' in Hidden Fall's Bivouac - Photography by Hamish Buckley

Day 8: Rockburn Valley – Sugarloaf Pass (again) - Queenstown

As luck would have it, the sun FINALLY decided to show its face again on the final day of the trip, after another thoroughly impressive thunderstorm echoed through the valley overnight. A well-marked ground trail began from less than 1km down from the bivvy, so the going was reasonably easy. Halfway across the bush saddle before Theatre Flat, we came across a very odd sight – other people! As we'd last seen people halfway up the Beansburn (Day 2), I think we may have talked the ears off this group before wishing them better weather than we'd had.

We stopped for a snack/power-nap in the sun at Theatre flat, and looked around for the rumoured swing. It wasn't immediately apparent at first, but we eventually spied it on the Eastern Side of one of the larger groves of trees. Hamish gave it a try and awarded it his seal of approval. At the Eastern end of Theatre flat, some more people appeared, disgorged from another odd occurrence – a maintained DoC track! From here the walk was a breeze – a reasonably gradual descent through the Rockburn valley with a handy skinny-dipping spot in the river halfway down.

Only one obstacle remained between us and civilisation: our old friend, Sugarloaf Pass. Our final challenge was a battle with the reception-gods from the saddle, as we attempted to get the shuttle to pick us up a day early. Not knowing whether the message had got through quickly we raced down, knowing that the last usual pick-up time was 4pm, which was looking disturbingly close. We had a promising sign on our descent however, as passing our lunch spot from Day 1, lo and behold, there was Hamish's fork! Miraculously our correspondence had made it through to Queenstown, though we didn't find this out until I had run 5km down the road towards Glenorchy to try to get some reception...

I'm fairly confident that we all smelt like animals on the way back to Queenstown, but the Shuttle driver was kind enough not to say so. Our accommodation for the night was a handy-dandy freedom camping spot outside Queenstown itself, as scoped out by Sach and Hamish after their trip directly before. It was a superb spot, right on the beach, and only slightly prone to having waves break onto tents when the wind-generated 'tide' came in...

So, what does one conclude about a trip like this? Great company, great scenery, fantastic passes and 5/8 days of absolutely crap weather – guess it must be tramping in the Southern Alps.

Author: Matthew Battley

Hamish: "I was good on the strip-per pole, I could jump up and spin around, but I was told my best feature was my eye contact"

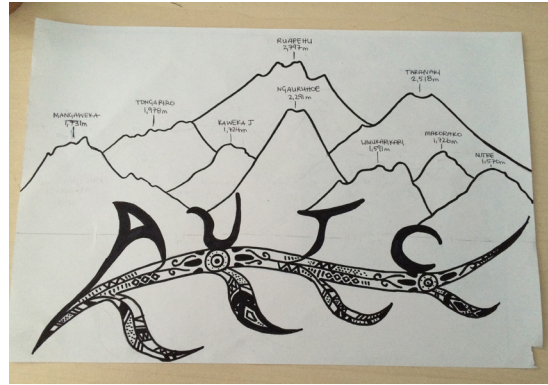


Rockburn Valley at Dawn.

AUTC T-Shirt Design Competition 2016



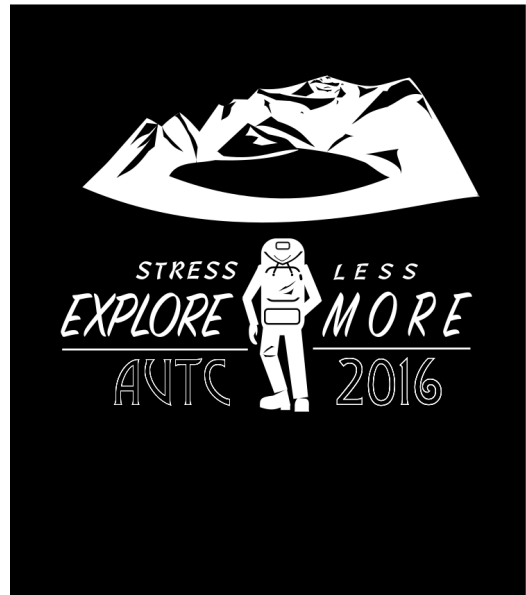
“Kiwi with a Frickin’ Laser Beam” - Tim Gray



“Named Peaks (Back)” - Abi Hill



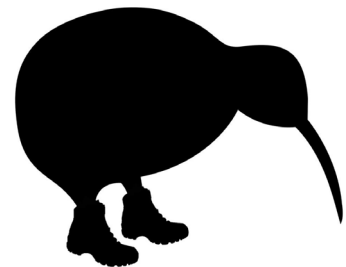
“Named Peaks (Front)” - Abi Hill



“Stress Less” - Jazmine Ho

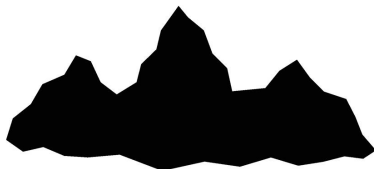


“Name the Peak” - Bianca Freytag



AUTC 2016

“Kiwi” - Louis Christie



“Peaks” - Louis Christie

AUTC 2016

The Spirit Challenge Award Winners 2016

The Spirit Challenges Awards were created in 2015 to recognize members who had distinguished themselves as trip leaders for the Auckland University Tramping Club, and to encourage the spirit of leadership and adventure. Trampers who join on AUTC trips send nominations of their trip leaders to AUTC via an online portal. Those who are eligible for the award typically organise and run more than four AUTC club expeditions per year, and also contribute reports of their expeditions to Footprints. You will find many stories of their adventures within the pages of this magazine.

Congratulations to our Trip Leaders:

Christopher Holyer

Spirit of the Leopard

Francesca Osten

Spirit of the Dolphin

Carl Barnhill

Spirit of the Bear



Spirit Challenge Awardees 2016: Carl Barnhill (Left), Francesca Osten (Middle), Christopher Holyer (Right). [MC: Carmen Chan]



“Misty Mountains” - Sarah Daniell, Above the Bushline

AUTC Photo Competition Winners 2016

“From Sky to Sea”, Milford Sound - Sarah Daniell, Below the Bushline



“Mt Rolleston” - Shamini Mahadevan,
Above the Bushline



“Camouflage is all you need”, Goat island -
Ruth Bauer, Comedy Winner

“Frozen Campsite”, Kaimanawa Forest Park -
Bevan Dobbs





“Matukituki River West”, Mt Aspiring National park - Graham Brodie, Below the Bushline Winner
“Corner Creek Campsite”, Wellington - Markus Henke, Camplife Winner





“Mine!”, MacKinnon Pass - Sarah Daniell, Comedy Winner

“Kea at Work”, MacKinnon Pass - Sarah Daniell, Native Flora and Fauna Winner





“Globlin Forest”, Manuoha Te Urewera - Graham Brodie, Native Flora and Fauna Winner

“Arthur River”, Milford Track - Sarah Daniell, Outdoor Landscape Winner





“Glacial Camping”, Twizel - Gerald Collins, Outdoor Landscape Winner

“West Matukituki” - Photographed by Mohammad Ali Muttaqi



AUTC Expeditions 2016

Trip Name/Location	Date	Organiser(s)
Tararua Ranges	3 rd – 8 th Jan	Daniel Scholes
Holdsworth/Jumbo Circuit	29 th Jan – 1 st Feb	Carl and Fran
Lake Waikareiti	6 th – 8 th Feb	Bianca Freytag
Mt Aspiring National Park	31 st Jan – 19 th Feb	Sophie Jenkins
Ruahines	20 th – 22 nd Feb	Fran and Carl
5 Passes, Mt Aspiring NP	21 st Feb – 1 st March	Matthew Battley
O'Camp	6 th - 7 th March	Committee
Hut Working Bee #1	19 th – 20 th March	Sarah Daniell
Tarn Ridge, Tararuas	24 th – 28 th March	Carl and Fran
Whirinaki Forest Park	25 th – 27 th March	Matthew Battley
Tongariro Northern Circuit	25 th - 28 th March	Nikki Reed
Rangitoto	26 th March	Christopher Holyer
Pureora Forest Park	26 th – 28 th March	Blair Ramsdale
Tawhitokino Beach Bonanza	9 th – 10 th April	Tom Goodman
Whatipu Navigation Practise	10 th April	Carmen Chan
Tongariro Northern Circuit	15 th – 18 th April	Viktor Ingemann Her- skind
Tiritiri Matangi	16 th April	Christopher Holyer
Thunderbolt Ridge, Kaimanawas	16 th – 17 th April	David Zeng
Ramble in the Ruahines	18 th – 23 rd April	Tom Goodman
Taranaki Dawn	19 th – 21 st April	Ray Li
Tararua Northern Crossing	20 th – 23 rd April	Matthew Pearce
Kaweka Ranges	22 nd – 25 th April	Fran Osten
South Island Adventures	23 rd – 29 th April	Mohammad Ali Muttaqi
Karangahake Gorge	25 th April	Tiffany Shih
Hut Working Bee #2	30 th April – 1 st May	Sarah Daniell
AUTC Baiting trip	1 st May	Jamie Corkill
Basic Bush School	7 th – 8 th May	Sophie, Matt and Sarah
Pinnacles Hut	14 th – 15 th May	Ella Huber
Crosbies Hut	14 th – 15 th May	Tiffany Shih
T'WALK 2016	21 st – 22 nd May	Tom Goodman
Mangamate Loop	27 th – 29 th May	Torsten Scmidts
Rogaine Series	May	Sylvie Admore
Neill Forks – Cone Saddle	3 rd – 6 th June	Fran and Carl
Pirongia	5 th -6 th June	Hamish Chan
Hunua Ranges	5 th -6 th June	Nikki Reed
Taranaki	12 th – 14 th June	Cherlyn Chan
Pouakai Circuit	18 th – 20 th June	Tanya Peart

AUTC Expeditions 2016

Cave Party	28 th – 29 th June	Mark Swarbrick
Beginners Snow School #1	30 th June – 3 rd July	Stephen Waite
Thunderbolt in Winter	4 th – 8 th July	David Zeng
Beginners Snow School #2	7 th – 10 th July	Stephen Waite
Waitakere Ranges	9 th – 10 th July	Christopher Holyer
Beginners Snow School #3	14 th – 17 th July	Stephen Waite
Advanced Snow School #1	July	Stephen Waite
Advanced Snow School #2	July	Stephen Waite
Powell Hut	15 th – 17 th July	Fran Osten
May Camp	22 nd – 24 th July	Committee
Hut Working Bee #3	29 th – 31 st July	Sarah Daniell
Hut Birthday	20 th – 21 st August	Moira Dickson
Tongariro Moonlight Crossing	20 th – 21 st August	Felix Hirling
Kauaeranga Valley/Pinnacles	27 th – 28 th August	Christopher Holyer
Waikaremoana – Waikareiti Circuit	30 th August – 4 th September	Daniel Scholes
Beginners Snow School #4	1 st – 4 th September	Stephen Waite
Advanced Bush School	2 nd – 4 th September	Sophie and Helen
Pouakai Circuit	8 th – 10 th September	Abi Wittmeyer Hill
Beginners Snow School #5	8 th – 11 th September	Stephen Waite
Daly's Clearing Hut	10 th – 11 th September	Carl and Farn
Pinnacles Cook Off	1 st – 2 nd October	Mark Swarbrick
Kaimanawa – Umukarikari	1 st – 2 nd October	Hamish Chan
Pouakai Circuit	21 st – 24 th October	Fran and Carl
Cape Reinga	22 nd – 24 th October	Ruth Bauer
Pouakai Circuit	4 th – 6 th November	Carmen Chan
Lake Waikaremoana	12 th – 15 th November	Tiffany Shih
Nelson Lakes	14 th – 23 rd November	Timothy Gray
Hillary Trail	15 th – 18 th November	Bevan Dobbs
Hut Working Bee #4	19 th – 20 th November	Sarah Daniell
Kahurangi National Park	1 st – 5 th December	Hamish Buckley
Pinnacles	3 rd – 4 th December	Christopher Holyer
Table Mountain	10 th – 11 th December	Timothy Gray
Waiheke Island	11 th December	Christopher Holyer
Mt Ruapehu	16 th – 18 th December	Thomas Andrews
Waitakere Ranges	17 th December	Christopher Holyer

72 Trips in total in 2016!

Compiled by: Matthew Battley

Raindancing up the Umukarikari

Besodden lover I am –
To climb your ridgeline for the
Promise of stars and be doused
In your frigid maelstrom.

Yet. You shatter me with your
Beauty and whilst I totter and slip in
My descent, my cheeks remain
Kissed by your biting rivulets.

Star cross'd we may be not.
But as you send me home drenched
Your silent prescience remains timeless.
To nearly touch glory is to feel subalpine
Clouds condense into rain.

E kore e mimiti te aroha mōu Aotearoa.

Date: 30th September – 2nd October 2016

Location: Kaimanawa Forest Park

Trip Leader: Hamish Chan

Trampers: Una Bratlie, Anna Ulvensøen, Anna Luo, Craig Smith, Pernille Wiersholm, Carmen Chan

Poem by: Carmen Chan



AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY TRAMPING CLUB

