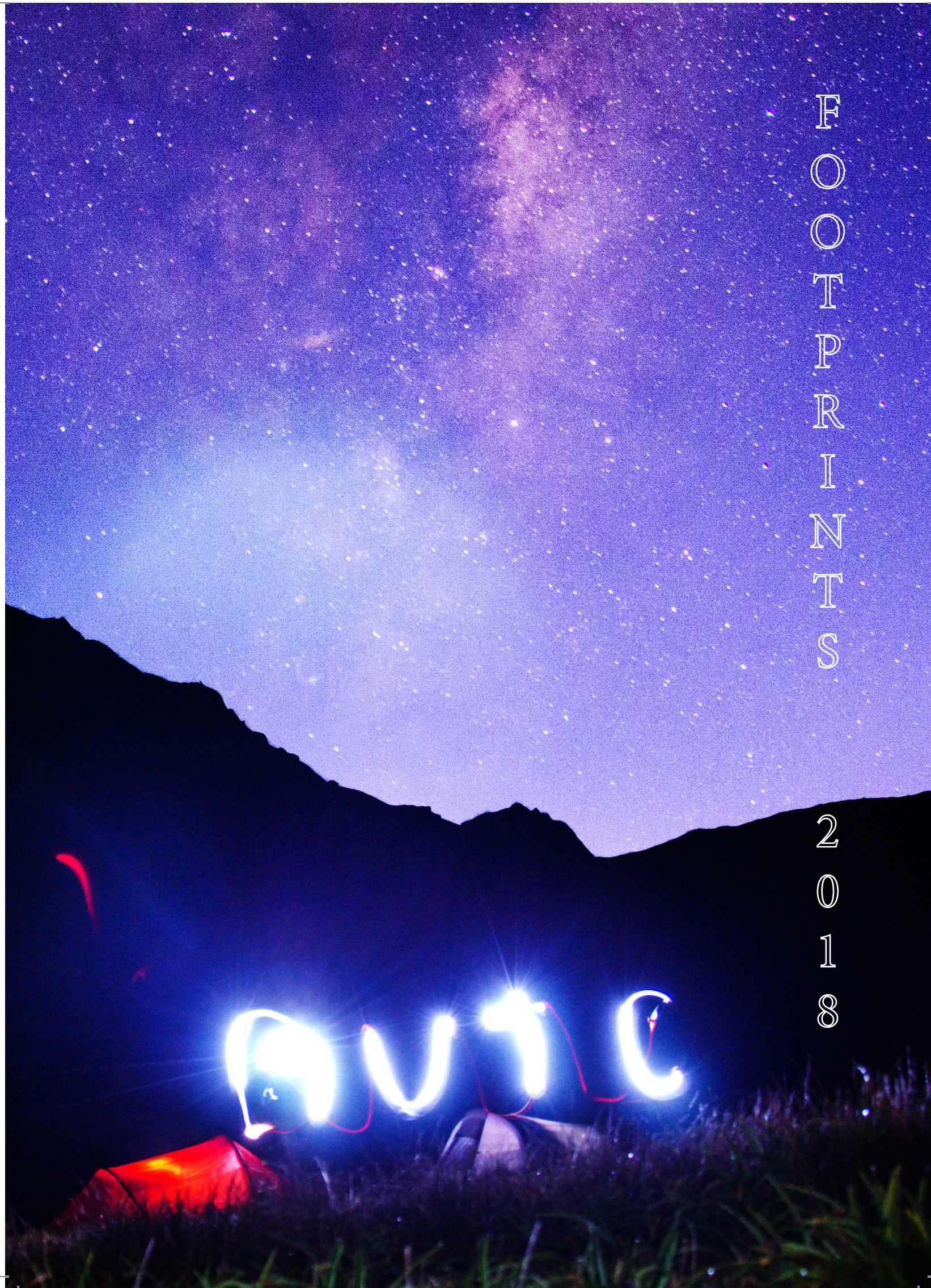


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The Annual Journal of the Auckland University Tramping Club
Volume 72, 2018

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	Sebastian N. Peters	Eder Lee
	Fohn Lakes, Five Passes Trip (Front)	Ruapehu, Beginners Snow School (Back)

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

Collating all of the trip reports from 2018 has been an absolute pleasure. I have no doubt that any reader will gain inspiration from these submissions to share similar experiences within the club. Here is the written proof for how passion for the outdoors and camaraderie go hand in hand in AUTC! Editing these together has allowed me to realise some of the gems that can be found within this great club. The eagerness to venture out into the wild and beautiful parts of New Zealand, good-hearted fun had amongst friends and strangers where jokes range along a pretty wide spectrum; from bog humour, to engineering igloos, to Marxist propaganda. Then there are the practical learning curves and refreshers of Snow School, Bush School and Outdoor First Aid, which have instilled lifelong skills for many of us. Then, of course, the social events!!! AUTC is filled with as many diverse people as reasons there are to be involved with the club. These stories are great reminders of that.

I've received a lot of help with InDesign from Sach, who I owe a lot to for getting me off the track of technological ineptness, as well as general support throughout the year. Sebastian has offered a bunch of useful advice with that program as well, without which it'd have made for a much more tedious/frustrating time!

Thanks Max for writing so many trip reports and generally being helpful and quick to respond. James, your ever charismatic character=lots of trips=lots of reports=so many funny stories. Thank you!

A couple of friends, Michael and Connor, generously took some time to come over and draw some illustrations for a few reports and I am thankful to have their sweet drawings in this volume. Blake, cheers buddy for the strategic hand for editing.

Belinda Battley has given me a great deal of inspiration and fascination of Footprints, and I am thankful for her showing me her collection of past Footprints (part of the cover design is inspired by one from the early 90s) as well as sharing a mere fraction of the beautiful stories she'd had within AUTC, many are probably documented! Perhaps these written memories will keep our future memories stronger, flipping through years down the line and being reminded of how much fun many of us had in the club.

A tremendous thanks to Andrew who spent a good deal of time collating for the list of trips and events, an awesome way of recounting the 75 trips that went out this year.

Thank you Abi for showing me the ropes of Publications, and to Fran for offering a great deal of advice.

To every AUTC member who has shared their story this year, thank you. You've all made this year's volume cherishable and invaluable.

Anna Kalatcheva

Publications Officer 2018



Captain's Report

We have completed another year of spectacular tramping and backcountry shenanigans in the wilderness! With over 75 trips across New Zealand ranging from Fiordland to Whangarei, and beyond! This has been another strong year for AUTC.

There has been a very high caliber of trips this year. Some of my personal highlights include: the spectacular O-Camp run by the lads James & Jamie, our fantastic Socials Officers - where 50-odd new members committed to a river bash at a moment's notice; learning to build snow caves through trial and error (not recommended) under the mantra of "work harder not smarter"; and the 2nd reprisal of the historic ~~sunburnt~~ summit luncheon, which can only be described as insufferable, memorable, and well worth repeating! This also feels like as good an opportunity as any to challenge our Wellington Brethren; VUWTC, to a traditional game of summit luncheon beach cricket for the 2019 season; or to surrender the trophy in good faith.

This year has also been an exceptionally good year for our instructional courses with 8 courses run across the Alpine and Bush schools collectively, along with a myriad of external courses arranged and hosted by the club. It is through courses like these and the generosity of all those who volunteered their time to organize and instruct them that we are able to ensure that skills are upheld and passed along within the club. It is rare to have ready access to such a pool of experience, and this is I believe to be one of great strengths of AUTC.

This year has also seen major changes to the Waitakere Ranges and our club Hut Ongaruanuku. Towards the end of 2017 much of the park was closed in effort to combat the spread of Kauri Dieback. Unfortunately, this also included the access tracks to and from Ongaruanuku. As I write this, a little over a year later, access to the hut has not yet been re-established. Conversation regarding access continues into 2019, with the goal of re-opening the hut without compromising the biodiversity of the forest.

Looking back, this is the club's 87th year running, marking it as one of the oldest clubs on campus. Of course, this would not be possible without the work put in by all of the members who help keep AUTC running and have kept our ~~old~~ great traditions alive. To those who have volunteered their time in one way or another for the club, and to those who have organised and lead trips – I say thank you on behalf of all of us; even the smallest actions like helping organize food for a tramp, make a huge difference, and have played a part in keeping AUTC running for nearly 90 years.

Happy Tramping...

Sacha Knight
Captain, 2018



Treasurer's Report

AUTC 2018 – A Brief Overview

With another successful year gone for AUTC, there is another year of spending to account for! Once again due to grants we were able to offer a wide range of educational courses for our club members, including beginners snow school, advanced snow school (which we managed to subsidise even more than previous years!), an avalanche course and a first aid course. Purchased this year was a significant amount of new alpine gear! This included two sets of technical ice axes, snapgate binders, dyneema slings, three probes and two new alpine tents. With the end of 2018 I can report that the club made a slight loss. However, this is due to an increase in spending on educational courses as well as a significant amount of 2017 purchases being paid out in early 2018. The club is in a strong financial position going into 2019. The full financial report presented at the AGM is available on request by emailing treasurer@autc.org.nz.

Fran Osten
AUTC Treasurer 2018



James' Sign-Up Forms

Good to see the sign-up forms finally getting some life as trip organizers realize the potential of the priceless data that can be collected from them. Here are a few gems I have received to share with everyone.

Q) A giraffe is perched on a cliff and has the munchies. Explain and be sure to refer to the last meal you consumed.

A) So this giraffe right, he's sitting there on the cliff, I mean it's a cliff for me but this tall giraffe described it as more of a step, anyway he's sitting there and cranes his big bloody neck to my direction and says "food?" And it's at this point I shit myself because we all know giraffes can only talk when they feel horny. So this horny hungry giraffe is asking me for food and I'm like "damn son, same here, all I have had today is about 5 litres of ginger beer". So the mad man and I decide to go get some pizza, I want sals but this sucker demands Toto's metre long pizzas since apparently giraffes like everything long ;) . Anyway we have pizza and a great time. I offer to get the bill but this legend shouts the meal for me. It turns out he was still horny, so he bought me dinner to try and get ins on me, well one thing lead to another and well, you can guess where it went. I wake up in the morning with a savage hangover and it turns out the five litres of ginger beer was alcoholic. Long story short, I'm not allowed at Auckland zoo anymore.

A) CLASSIC CASE OF THE SHAKES AFTER CONSUMING A HIGH FIBRE MEAL AND THEN EXPELLING THE THE GUTS. THE FEELING OF VULNERABILITY LEAVES ONE LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO AVOID EYE CONTACT WITH THE NEXT USER OF THE DUNNY (BILL SMUGS)

Q) What came first, the chicken or the egg?

A) A better question would be whence did the chicken and the egg come? The chicken and the egg are on par with one another, so to ask which came first is trite and plebeian. Rather we should look to evolution, the one true determiner of hierarchical knowledge. Whatever evolved first came first. Now we could discuss the species preceding chickens, but to keep things short: dinosaurs. Dinosaurs came first. That being said, I do like a fried egg.

^To the person who wrote that: Have you heard of dinosaur eggs?

Q) What are you currently procrastinating by answering these questions?

A) I sat on the couch to do this sign up form and broke it. Not sure if I'm procrastinating fixing the couch or going on a diet. Possibly both.

A) MY ENTIRE PHD HELP OMG

A) Dying

A) I have a love-hate relationship with your sign-up forms

Best response from a single person across all questions on a sign up form: The Swamping Mission – covert swamping mission in the Waitakere swamp, highest security clearance required.

What is your code name?

Vladimir

What is your field experience in covert operations?

I am ten years in KGB Russia Secret Service. I were Putin number one assassin since 3 year, I do also operation in US and A to elect supreme soviet Donald Trump to president of United States.

Have you ever been in a situation where you have had your cover blown but still managed to get out and survive?

My first mission were very difficult, I go North Korea to assassinate Kim Jong-Il Leader of North Korea. He very difficult kill, I try three times to kill but bullet miss all time. Captured by Korea secret service after shot are fired and cover blow. Korea secret service very incompetent, speak not Russia language or America language which I am speak fluent. I am escape when I save toothpaste ration for 5 month and make explosive detonation in cell block using toothpaste as explosive. China I am escape and back to Motherland Soviet Union. I am visit dentist in Vladivostok who tell me I no brush teeth since 5 month, I many root canal get and much painful. I after drink vodka and much pain go away.

Have you ever had the above but not survived?

I not survive operation many time. In Tajikistan I try kill Taliban leader he survive I not survive operation. Bullet miss and I arrested for desertion by fellow Comrades of Soviet Union. Firing squad is shoot at me, and I am not survive. In coffin I death and save toothpaste ration since 5 month. I make explosive detonation in coffin using toothpaste as explosive. I am visit dentist in Irkutsk who tell me I no brush teeth since 5 month, I much dentist treatment get and much painful. I after drink vodka and much pain go away.

If you were to pick flowers, which flower would be your favourite to pick and why?

I no pick flowers, flowers sign of be weak. In Russia winter no flowers are. (Pansies).

Pinnacles Sunrise Trip

Date: 11th, 12th, 13th January

Trip Leader: James Judd

Participants: Seb Judd, Sacha Knight, Daniel Scholes, Amy Tuffnell

Video by Seb Judd: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d59bK14ilMo>

Author: Amy Tuffnell

Illustration: Connor Murdoch

Three left the city around about nine
At this point we were mostly on time.
'Least until we went to pick up James
And succeeded in getting ourselves
slightly lost on the way
"Port or Sherry both work the same!"
I just wanted instructions
Plain and clear to understand
(That didn't quite go to plan)

So we picked up the Judds later than anticipated
Due to that convoluted route Sacha Knight created.
Next we had the joy of fitting in the car
(The greatest challenge we'd met thus far)
Five Guys, Five Packs and Me
Not to mention the ironing board, acquired recently.
Said ironing board found its place
between the left seats and the doors
Well, there is certainly no space in this car anymore
To move at all with ease
Sorry about your knees

So by arrival at the road end we were all ready to run
After keeping those cramped positions,
unable to even move a thumb
We pounded up the track
with ironing equipment and packs
And veered right to cross a river,
thinking ourselves very clever

Here begins a new, challenging game
To make others carry rocks
The rules simple and plain
Success is achieved by not being caught
Which had everyone aimed at James' crotch
And his Fanny pack that he shows off a lot

Now Seb decides to push Sach into the deep
Which James takes as a reason to also throw him
The cunt brothers are aptly named
That poor ironing board however
will never be the same
The abuse on the board continued around the corner
Extreme ironing while jumping into
Deep pools of water
Limp particleboard ensues

Not much else to say about the rest of that day
We camped 300m from the car
after walking ...not very far
Next day into Thames for coffee,
iced chocolate and chips
Then up the goat track for more swimming dips

We camped another night, with absolutely no stars
Awoke to wind and rain
before the sun came up again
J'udd tribe found new members
unsuspecting morning hikers
We called for the sun, and sort of found some
Then back down the track with the iron
That's about the end.



Five Hobbits

Walk the Five Passes (accidentally six)
with seven meals a day (if we could get them... well, most of the time)



*And so begins our ten day intrepid journey casual stroll,
Through National Parks where waters flow
Over passes and down into valleys.
Through the beech forests we dilly dally.
Along Olivine Ledge, under a bright sunny sky.
Over stone, grass, moss and ice, the time did fly.
In all weather, the earth damp and heavy,
We rested in wilderness camps and small rock bivvys.*

The Five Passes

Selected specifically for its number of rock bivvys, epicness and its potential to provide a completely miserable time.

Day One: The Dart to Split Rock Bivvy

In which we leave Queenstown, cross a river, walk for eight hours and sing our hearts out.

*"Far over the misty mountains cold
To dungeons deep and caverns old
We must away ere break of day
To seek the pale enchanted gold."
J.R.R. Tolkien*

We set off from the start of the Rees Dart heading towards the Beans Burn as a group of eleven from AUTC. Five of us to do the Five Passes, the other six on an expedition to the Olivine Ice Plateau. The expected weather for the trip was... well ... there was some weather expected (only a small cyclone). We crossed the Dart with little issue as it was very low and began on our eight hour hike up to Split Rock Bivvy. This merged the first two days into

one after cutting out the lower section around Lake Silvan. High spirited and with heavily laden packs we marched along the river's edge on soft dirt tracks singing songs from childhood in multiple languages.

"Is this the real life, is this just fantasy, caught in a landslide, no escape from reality..."

The air was full of that intense energy of enthusiastic anticipation for the trip ahead. By late afternoon we had reached Split Rock Bivvy, which consists of an intriguing network of passages. Here we were regaled of stormy nights spent in previous years. Simon, Sebastian and Max found themselves places

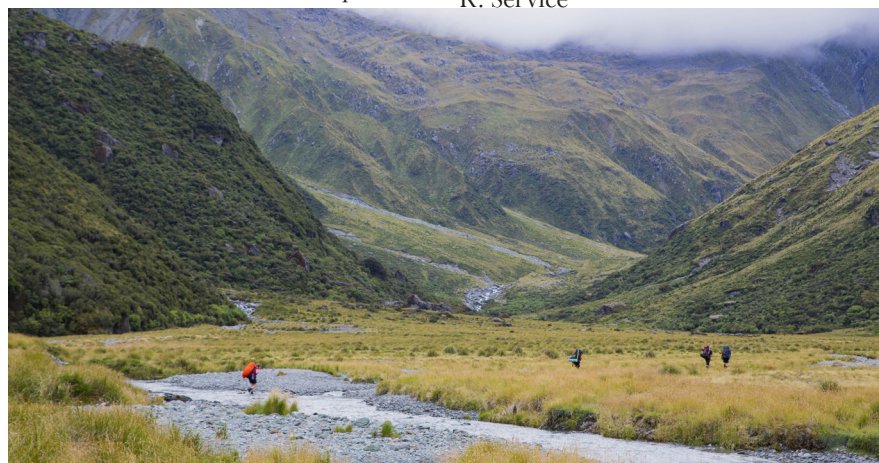
to sleep in some of the passages, while Melanie and I pitched a tent. The other group of six from AUTC also joined us here. We charmed them with our extravagant dessert of Deconstructed Black Forest Pudding with Fresh Cherries and Whipped Cream.

It was a near cloudless night. We could see stars outside the tent, and I was lulled to sleep by the soft gurgle of the stream as they twinkled in the distance.

Day Two: Fohn Saddle

In which we climb a hill and it starts to ... rain, and rain, and rain, and rain.

*"Let us probe the silent places, let us seek
what luck betide us;
Let us journey to a lonely land I know.
There's a whisper on the night-wind, there's
a star agleam to guide us,
And the Wild is calling, calling . . . Let us
go."
R. Service*



We began our day around a leisurely 10am and wandered our way up the river and through a couple of dense sections of bush. By midday and after a short food break we were at the base of the climb below Fohn saddle. The weather was already beginning to turn. Big grey clouds of rain were rolling into the valley at an alarming pace.

The next section was - straight up - very straight up...

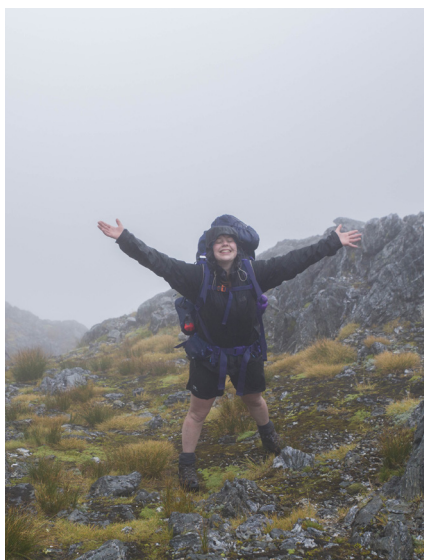
Sebastian, who bounced up our route (the dry river bed) with dogged determination and the agility of a mountain goat, cruised ahead. Max similarly breezed by. Melanie and I found (with our much shorter stature) that this was to be much more of a scramble / climb / chin-up with full pack and eight days of provisions sort of ascent. Grilling, but at the same time greatly satisfying (post the experience).

By the time we'd made it up the steepest section, the rain and wind had completely settled into stay and we were forced to continue on in the hopes of getting out of the worst of it, especially as the wind was now quite strong.

It was however much easier going on the rock rather than compacted dirt and slippery grass so we were making good time. By this point, we had all been walking for a fair number of hours.

Then we reached the saddle, where wet, cold and hungry we took a short 5-10 minute detour...

"Make sure you keep right!" states Max.



"...How right?" "Which right?" "This right?" "Map says... Over there!"

... stumbling around in the rain and wind

"This is too right! We've come full circle, and a very tight circle at that, we're back on the saddle again..."

It was only a minor navigational hiccup finding the exact route down. One short circle, and a somewhat snakey route following a GPS later we were at the lake edge. Then a fortuitous accident had us reuniting with the other AUTC group (Sach found us in the fog) and we camped in a sheltered spot by a small cave that provided a cave cooking.

Day Three: Fohn Lakes Camp

In which we wake up to rain and made the unanimous decision to go nowhere.

Dori: "Mr. Gandalf, can't you do something about this deluge?"

Gandalf: "It is raining, Master Dwarf, and it will continue to rain until the rain is done. If you wish to change the weather of the world, you should find yourself another wizard."

J.R.R. Tolkien

Fohn Lakes are beautiful, and well worth a visit if you feel you can brave the hill between it and your easiest access route. By midday the weather had cleared enough that we were out and about exploring the larger lake and taking many many photos. We built a wall of small stones to improve cooking efficiency in the 'cooking cave' while Sebastian explored the waterfall. Finally, we had an epic dance party on top of a large rock.

Sebastian introduces a 5 star based WA-

TERFALL SHOWER RATING scheme (WSR for short). Fohn Lakes Waterfall receives '0 stars - only accessible with full climbing gear and an iron stomach.'

Stomachs fully stuffed we began 'Public Reading' of the Lord of the Rings before bed for our planned very early start for the next day.

"I really want some KFC" - Simon, day three of ten.

Day Four: Fiery Col and Cow Pass

In which we wake early to perfect stars (and take the AUTC Footprints cover photo).

"The rain has moved on and left a new day, nothing seems to move everything is still. It's just a perfect day"

Miriam Stokley

Awake at 4:45am and up before dawn to clear skies, stars and the milky way we were out and about taking photos, packing up and preparing to set off on the brisk and cold morning (around 7am) from Fohn Lake over Fiery Col, Cow Saddle and then down Hidden Falls



Creek either to a bivvy or a campsite, depending on the state of each. A Kea curiously greeted us as we packed down our tents.

The weather decided to play ball and we had a near perfect day (dampened only slightly by my phone dying due to water damage...). This was my favourite day by far, we wandered down onto the Olivine Ledge, where we intimately got to know some grass. We slid down the grass, threw ourselves through grass, fell into grass, were attacked by grass, were routinely tripped up by the grass... the list goes on...

The grass was tall enough to completely
DINNER

Riz sauté grecque de Sebastian

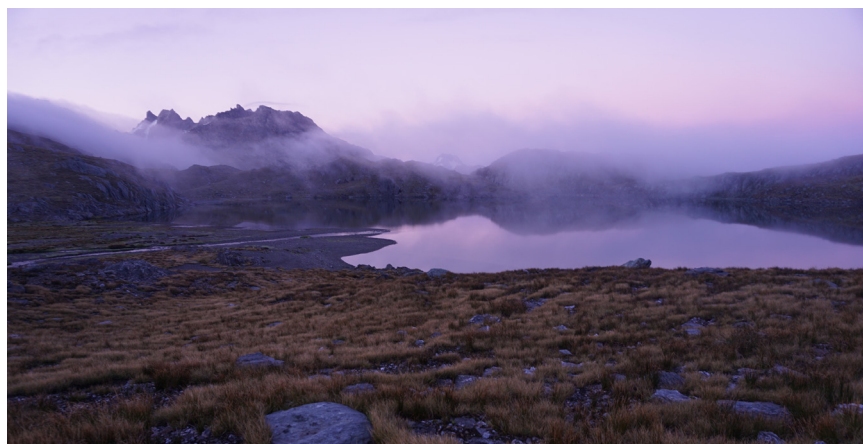
Un mélange sensationnel de légumes frais de saison, aromatisé d'une huile d'olive de première qualité et parsemé de cubes de feta délicatement déposé sur un lit de riz

Purée de pomme de terre aux airs Mexicains

Une purée de pomme de terre épicée truffée d'un cheddar affiné dix mois.

Un fameux dessert Américain revisité sur feu de bois

Chocolat Manjari 63% fondant reposant sur une mousse de guimauve légère et ses trempettes de biscuit malté



obsure you, and we were identifying each other (especially Melanie and I) by orange beanie, which was truly fantastic especially for far into the distance identification. Throughout the day we watched helicopters buzz their way along below us and parallel to the ledge in the distance, where it drops into a valley.

Through grasses taller than my head, our intrepid team was led - 'Hi! An orange beanie!'

The route up to Fiery col is spectacular and involves crossing several small river valleys a couple of short steep traverses. Lunch was consumed on top of Fiery

Col where we sat and watched the world a while, enjoying the sunshine.

"There's the smart route and then there is the fun way. Straight down!" - Max Jenkins

We descended Fiery Col to the theme of "They're taking the hobbits to Isengard" and were bombarded at the bottom by icy snowballs courtesy of Sebastian and his trusty hat. Another brief wandering, another long stop to enjoy the scenery, and then eventually down and onto cow saddle dropping into a new river valley.

"Do we want to go on another kilometre down to a campsite?" Max inquires. "Nah, Fuck That!" exclaims Simon. And so it was decided that we would stay in the rock bivvy as a weather report had also come through on the satellite phone. Thunderstorms ahead!

The campsite provided a great swimming/submersion location (although very cold) and it was nice to get in the water again. I succeeded in not losing my best socks. I fell asleep to the reading of the Lord of the Rings. We were somewhere into chapter two. At least I wasn't the only one, Melanie was snoring. I didn't wake up for another twelve hours.

Day Five: Cow Pass Bivvy

In which more rain sees us stay put yet another day.

*"Food, glorious food!
We're anxious to try it
Three banquets a day --
Our favourite diet!"*

Extracts from Amy's Diary

Thursday 15th Feb
It's cold, wet and rainy

I have learnt is that it is possible to fit my tapered sleeping mat inside my sleeping bag, and this stops it from slipping off the groundsheet and having holes poked into it. The downside (or a further upside depending on how you look at it) is that it also appears to increase the overall total warmth.



Sebastian woke to find a huge rock under his sleeping mat; his only response to this conundrum was “It’s ok, I slept around it!” Much to our great amusement.

Melanie and I braved the rain to collect water and washed everything from the pasta-mania of yesterday. We’ve decided to hang tight, the river is raging and we have a day to spare. I will make fancy bread for today’s lunch. We will spend the day resting and building up the bivy making it properly watertight, adding internal kitchen facilities. We have already finished improving the wall in the front to block the driving rain.

An Update from 11:30am

“We are stuck in the cave . . . We cannot get out. A shadow moves in the dark. We cannot get out.”

Melanie Invents a Snack beyond what you call High Energy Spread malt biscuit with equal parts peanut butter, Nutella and honey and garnish with diced gummy snakes. 10/10 for flavour, texture and appearance.



Simon has brought out his phone again for more musical soundtrack jamming. It has been awesome, as the rain and wind drive past outside. Sebastian has updated us on the weather: What was one waterfall is now three! This is consistent with the fact we can now see the water in the river that is foaming a good

couple of hundred metres below us. Conclusions of Sebastian and Max’s Wind Creators Theory

Watching the wave peaks of the falling rain, we come to think there has to be a great guy waving up and down with a towel and we can calculate the frequency with which he’s doing this as

$$\begin{aligned} \text{velocity} &= \text{frequency} * \text{wavelength} \\ \text{frequency} &= \text{velocity} / \text{wavelength} \\ f &= v / \lambda \end{aligned}$$

We estimate the wavelength ($\lambda = 5\text{m}$) by estimating distances between rocks on the other side of the valley. The velocity is given by our weather news from the sat phone (light storm, $v = 70\text{km/h}$). That is to happen if you lock up engineers and scientists in a rock bivy.

$$f = v / \lambda = 70\text{km/h} / 5\text{m} = 14000 * 1/\text{h} = 3.88 \text{ Hz (which is quite a high speed waving!)}$$

Melanie Makes Us Caramel Popcorn!

With a break in the weather, everyone except me dashes out to take photos and videos. I am knitting my hat, it’s nearly done!

Max’s bag acquired a hitchhiker - Boris the caterpillar

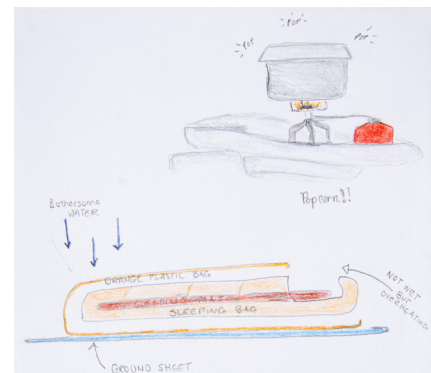
More Food - We Are Truly Hobbits. Melanie makes Coconut-Condensed-Milk-and- Pineapple-Truffles.

We are still sitting tight and enjoying not being wet. (Aside from a ‘small’ indoor water feature that has made its presence known inside the bivy). To avoid getting my sleeping bag wet

from this, I have adopted a mat, bag, drybag system [see diagram] - seriously not breathable but better than getting rained on.” Getting in and out also requires a great deal of wriggling like a snake.

“Like Superman but without his skin-tight pants” - Max going to the loo.

Dramatic Reading Continues. This time Sebastian and Melanie fall asleep while I read.



Day Six: Park Pass

In which we didn’t get lost. Such disappointment!

*“A great while ago the world began
With a hey ho the wind and the rain” -*

Shakespeare

It’s still raining, very rainy.

Extracts from Sebastian’s Diary

“We walked along the river until at some point we turned left up to the Park Pass. It is foggy, rainy, wet and the track goes up quite steeply. At the tree line we took a short break, ate a bite and I did some push-ups and squats to get warm. Melanie also did some push-ups - that really makes an impression! ;) On the pass I wore my beanie with the

hat on top of it. With the strong wind, my hat is always threatening to fly away - I need a hat string! The Main Divide is windy as always!

Up on the pass I took cover with Max for a few minutes behind a rock until the others caught up. A momentary reprieve from the driving wind and rain!

Then it's downhill. First, I was aiming for the wrong rock, but Amy leads us down to a very big one. It's got a bivy on its left side and a big overhang towards the valley. The overhang has room for both tents and an amazing instant water feature - we don't even have to walk the 10m to the creek because the water drips down from the moss! It's a really cool rock!"

WSR of Hidden Falls Creek Waterfall (by rock cairn where the track turns into the bush): 5 stars

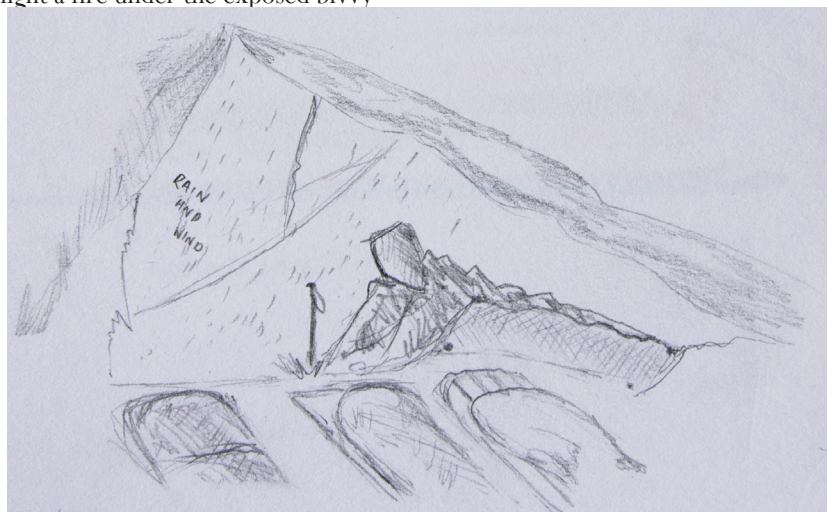
- Two Taps
- Sheltered Cave
- Easy Access
- Full Immersion Pool

WSR of Park Pass Bivvy 'Waterfall': 4 stars

- Requires Torrential Rain
- Water flow less than adequate
- Very accessible (closer to the tent than my bathroom at home)

THE THUNDERSTORM!

Our original plan for this day was to detour to Park Pass Glacier. As the weather packs in again and rumbling roars of thunder echo through the valley, we light a fire under the exposed bivvy



rock instead and toast marshmallows and drink tea. The wind was whipping across the pass with waves of icy rain. Moirs describes this bivvy as a large rock exposed to the South, fortunately the wind was blowing in from behind us. It also offers the most amazing view of the river valley. We are surrounded by water, like a small island. We build yet another long clothing line to attempt to dry out our now re-saturated gear.

We won't get to do Nerine Lakes this trip either, those mysteriously elusive lakes with their taunting beckoning call. Max, Sebastian and Amy try to scope the route from below. It's certainly a traverse for fine weather.

Day Seven: Park Pass Glacier

In which we voluntarily climb an extra hill.

*"Gissa smile Sun, gissa yr best
good mawnin' one, fresh 'n cool like
yore still comin' - still
half in an' half outa the lan'scape"*
Hone Tuwhare

It's yet another Morning of Rain! Rain, rain and more rain!

Further Extracts from Sebastian's Diary

"Sometime around 5 o'clock in the morning I'm already awake, but no wonder, I was in bed at 22:00 and fast asleep. It's cold and raining. Only the huge rock protects us from the wind.

Breakfast consisted of Muesli with apple (yes, fancy fresh hobbit-apples on day 7!), Nutella and peanut butter, plus a vitamin tablet, thanks to Amy. It's still cold and raining. We're going back to the tents.

10:30 am: It starts to clear up.

11:15 am: Melanie shouts: 'Pencake Time' (but we will do it later). And it's going to be sunny. Everyone leaves. I'm last up onto Park Pass because I take some useful stuff like first my aid kit and awesome face paint! Also, I'm tinkering with one of my spare red laces to create a hat string against the wind. Now the hat stays on my head!

From the pass, a path marked with cairns leads up. Max is already up on or behind the hilltop, I'm in the middle, the others far behind me. I decide to follow the cairns to the left. Crossing one or two shallow streams on the very smooth and beautiful rock. Then I come into a small protected valley (this might be useful for some further glacier exploration) with a fat stone in the middle. This would be a good place for camping if you wanted to go to the glacier. There's a couple of hares on the left.

We continue to the foot of the glacier with a large loud waterfall that feeds the lake. Here I notice that the others did not follow me to the left but probably went up to the top of the pre glacier hill. From a smaller hill closer to the glacier I make myself visible and wave with my orange rain cape. Amy says later she saw me. At that time I wasn't sure because Max and Amy or rather 'a tall and a small person' were mainly looking the other way and down. Then a helicopter comes and takes a ride above me. I'd better get going to make it clear that I don't need any help. At the lake directly at the waterfall, you can cross the river quite well. Behind the next hill, it is already a little more rapid and I let the others, who come just at this moment, cross it rather than me. It looks cold.

We walk to a rock laying half in the lake on the right shore in front of the glacier. There we relax in the sun, paint our faces (orange and green) and take pictures.

Then we go to the waterfall (WSR is not so good, because you can't really shower under it) and down from the glacier via my path - it's praised!

Back at camp, we have dinner: Noodles with satay sauce. Then Melanie and Amy make pancakes with plum, chocolate sauce and cherries."

Day Eight: Sugarloaf

In which we start our sombre walk towards civilization.

"But who wants to be foretold the weather? It is bad enough when it comes, without our having the misery of knowing about it beforehand."

Jerome K. Jerome

RAIN RAIN GO AWAY COME AGAIN ANOTHER DAY

Further Extracts from Sebastian's Diary

"Middle-early we leave our sheltered rock. It is cloudy and drizzly. My socks are dry and warm until after 3 minutes when we cross the river. Amy and I do this more professionally than the other three, who almost fall over. Then follow the river down the valley for a long distance. There is another rock bivy comparable to ours, only narrower and it has less overhang.

The weather is still windy and rainy. Finally, we reach the Theatre Flats, where there also is a wind-protected campsite.

After some lunch and a look at the map, we examine the left side of the valley (looking down). If you followed one of the rivers uphill, Lake Unknown



would be up there! Doesn't look impossible. The lake fascinates us and me in particular. Why should it be named "Unknown" if it was not super cool?

In the further course of the day (the path, unfortunately now with markings) we come to the topic of school and teachers, which amuses us for at least an hour.

On the Sugarloaf Pass, we have ice-whipped rain and strong wind again. You can look down to Glenorchy now. A rainbow shines over the flat land. After a stupid, steep descent which my knees didn't like, we are on the Great Walk (Routeburn) and are looking for a secret campsite."

Something we might have found somewhere... But we aren't telling you.

Day Nine: Rain and Routeburn

In which we read to many baffled 'Great Walkers'.

"Old Tom Bombadil is a merry fellow; Bright blue his jacket is, and his boots are yellow."

J.R.R. Tolkien

Further Extracts from Sebastian's Diary

"At about 6 o'clock the alarm rings for the first time. The rain is pattering on the tent. Nobody wants to get up. At about 7 o'clock Amy comes over and tells us to pack up and leave. She's al-

ready packed everything. We'll be pretty quick. When crossing the meadow, the still wet shoes get wet again. The way to the hut (Routeburn Flats Hut) is flat, boring and barren. It's raining and we're getting quite wet. We only stop briefly at a toilet (OMG!) - everyone is fascinated!

There is a tank under the toilet. We make an estimate of when the tank needs to be emptied: 1m³ tank volume, 100cm³ shit volume, i.e. 10,000 visitors possible, before the tank needs to be replaced via a fancy rail device.

We also seem to cross another pass: I forgot the name, but there was a sign along the way. (Later I looked for it because it would make the saying "5 Hobbits, 6 passes, 7 meals a day" perfect, but I can't find it on the map or in Google Street View - rather a Great Walk View).

The rain is pelting in the hut again. We make breakfast and tea. I'm mixing an Earl-Peppermint because I only have one Earl Grey left, but multiple Peppermints. Amy thinks it tastes interesting, you'd notice a trace of Earl Grey. Then Max suggests Public Reading and we read while other people (tourists) come and go. The Hobbit bath song is quite mean in our situation (we all pretend to cry).

It clears up after an hour or so. We want to walk the Routeburn Northern Branch. From the hut, it goes to the of-

ficial camp space. Then we understand the way in such a way that we have to cross the river (quite well swollen). That makes our feet wet again.

We walk along two bends of the valley until we reach a nice big grassy place, where we pitch the tents, hang up socks to dry and hang out a little... until good weather and sandflies! Then we continue along the valley with lighter luggage. The mountains on the right are nice and snowy, straight out should be Lake Nerine (we didn't walk there because of bad weather), but it hangs in the clouds. We find another Rock Bivy. Then back and have dinner: Fried potato particles in vegetable soup. Then I read 2.5 chapters from Tom Bombadil's house to the street outside Bree."

Dessert: Hot custard with melted chocolate, marshmallow and malt biscuits.

Day Ten: Our intrepid journey ends

In which we saw Lobelia Sackville-Baggins with Otho, and Simon finally gets to KFC.

*"Roads go ever ever on,
Over rock and under tree,
By caves where never sun has shone,
By streams that never find the sea"*
J.R.R. Tolkien

A sombre start to our final day on the trail. We pack up tents and gear and walk back to the hut over the river flats, all feeling the end is nigh. Once over the river, we are quizzed about where we are going, and Melanie and Amy were praised for their highly visible orange beanies by overly zealous DoC workers. Sebastian is not praised, because he is wearing all black. Back on the trail again we have a speedy descent, overtaking everyone else all the way downhill to the carpark. This slightly intimidated the day walkers. We saw Lobelia Sackville-Baggins and Otho. Their facial expression makes milk sour.

After waiting a while and drinking tea in the information centre, attempting to shelter from another biting cold

wind, our van arrived and we made our return journey to Queenstown and the Hostel.

Civilization again! Simon headed to KFC. We collected yet more food and got clean and dry and warm again.

Hot shower in the hostel: WSR 1 out of 5 stars because of missing epicness and not being a waterfall.

Day Eleven: The Quest for Proper Snow

In which we build a snowman - nose kindly donated by American tourists.

*"We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time"*
T. S. Elliot

It was a cold cold night. We devised a plan to walk to Fergburger for coffee and food. It was an absolutely frigid walk early in the morning, but they have very good outdoor heaters. There is Snow on Ben Lomond! We have to climb it!



Final Extracts from Sebastian's diary: "From the lake campsite, I hitchhiked back to Queenstown. Here, we start our ascent of Ben Lomond. It's quite a relaxed path with a light backpack, food and chocolate. I am hanging back with Mely, while the others are further ahead. Shortly after the snow line, an ambush lies in wait for us. But we spot it! In preparation, first I paint myself and Mely green again. That comes very unexpectedly to her - but by then she is green already. After building a snowman with a nose kindly donated by

American tourists we head down again, to warm our freezing fingers. I shower cheekily in the hostel. Then we go into town for bar, pizza and beer. Simon will join us later. Late in the evening, a psychedelic guy takes me to the campsite. He had just played a strange rhythmic instrument on the market square.

Mely, still with green paint in her face, is taken seriously by some other Frenchmen in the hostel. She tells us later and everyone wonders how that could happen. "

Some Totals:

Time Walking: 51 hours

Time publicly reading: 7:58 hours

Meals: 11x7 - a few = 70

My Diary:

Our expected Journey:

There and Back Again:

And What Happened After:

Adventures of Five Hobbits. The Tale of the Five Passes, compiled by Amy and Sebastian from their own observations and the accounts of their friends.

Date: 11th-21th of February, 2018

Participants of the trip: Amy Tuffnell, Sebastian Peters, Mélanie Mieske, Simon Yu & Max Jenkins

Authors:

Amy Tuffnell & Sebastian Peters

Photo Credits:

Sebastian Peters, Mélanie Mieske, Simon Yu & Max Jenkins

Waterfall Shower Rating Web-Project by Sebastian:

www.waterfallshowerrating.com

Video by Mélanie: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2IwKACHirs

Q2IwKACHirs



OLIVINES

Location: Mt Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks

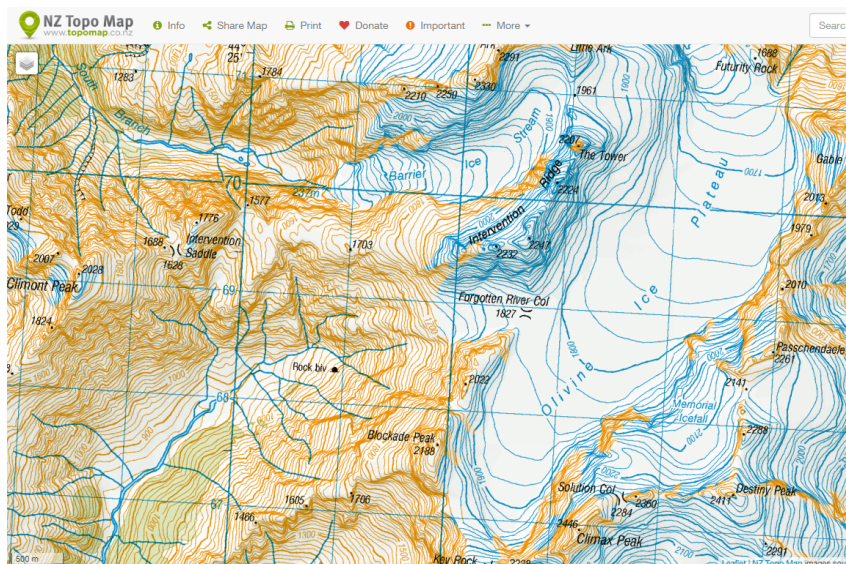
Dates: 10th February – 26th February

Trampers: Sach Knight, Matthew Battley, Sarah Daniell, Hayley Ware, Thomas (Tomothy) Andrews, Timothy (Thimas) Gray.

Author: Timothy Gray

PROLOGUE

For a long time, Sach had been dreaming boldly. He formed a plan to go to the Olivine Ice Plateau, a destination located in a section of untouched wilderness in Mt Aspiring National Park. Keen to redeem his previous failed attempt on the plateau, he recruited 5 crazy people to join him on this, his most bold and daring adventure he had planned yet.



The Olivine Ice Plateau

The Journey to... umm... what's that place called again?

Along with Amy's group of 5 trampers doing the 5 Passes route at the same time, we all set out on our journey one rainy day in February. We were very heavily loaded with alpine gear, and food for the 14 days we would be spending in the wilderness. At our base in Queenstown we weighed our packs, finding that the weights ranged from 25kg (Sarah) to 38kg (Matt). The sight of a 55kg Matt being worn by a 38kg pack was rather amusing.

A crossing of the Dart River to skip a day of walking was amongst the first steps on the long voyage. At this point we hadn't gone completely out of civilisation just yet. A decent track up the Beansburn valley leads to Split Rock Biv, a lovely rock with plenty of spacious accommodation. After a hard day of complaining about how heavy our packs were, dessert (and the knowledge that it didn't have to be carried any longer) was received extremely well. Going outside for a big poo the next morning was also appreciated, as you certainly gain an appreciation for conservation of bodily mass on these sorts of trips.

Hayley's top tips for Pooing in the Bush

~ Morning poos are the best, but make sure you've waited a few minutes after waking up to ensure that the bowels are fully awake.

~ Dig a small hole with an ice axe. Much more civilised than using your hands!

~ Pop a squat. It's the natural way. Best to have something to hold on to.

~ Do your business. Make sure you get it all out, you don't want that feeling of incompleteness that sometimes follows an unsatisfying poo.

~ Inspect your poo and give it a rating on the Bristol Stool Scale (1=solid balls, 7=liquid). Prepare your poo report to tell your fellow

trampers.

~ Wipe, and fill in your hole with dirt and leaves.

The next day featured some more lovely classic tramping activities such as bushbashing. While not strictly necessary for this part, Matt, Tom and I had a good idea to try and bypass a stream by just cutting through an easy bit of bush. An easy bit of bush turned into a harder bit, a harder bit turned into an impassable bit. One benefit of our heavy packs though was the ability to transform us into human bulldozers. By running and gaining enough momentum, one can simply break through the toughest bush with ease. Since skin is cheaper than Gore-Tex, it is recommended that you use this technique with minimal clothing to maximise pleasure.

Rain can be a slight issue at times when tramping. Climbing over the Fohn Saddle on wet tussock is one of the ways this issue can present itself. Unfortunately, this turned out to be the least of our troubles as we reached the top. Curiously enough, wind is also a slight issue when tramping. This wind stimulated us to get down from the saddle, and pitch camp by the Fohn Lakes in good time (though not before wandering around in the cold for far too long looking for a suitable place to camp). Matt's dinner featured bacon that evening, which was greatly appreciated. The rest of us gave him moral support from our warm and comfortable positions inside the tents.

The following day was extremely long, and in the interests of not boring the reader, it is simpler to say that it was a long traverse across a ledge, to a long, long bushbash, to a long streambash. It wasn't particularly fun.

Thoughts on Bushbashing:

"Looking forward to some good bushbashing" - Sach, before entering the bush

"Hmm, at least it doesn't look as bad as the scrub around it" - Tim, before entering the bush

"I think we should go up a bit here, we're just off the GPS trail" - Matt, backseat navigator

"It's easy if you're in the back" - Sarah, from the back

"This is fantastic!" - Tom, from the front

"You guys just go ahead, I need to pee" - Hayley, trying to get to the back.

"Uuuuhhh that took so long, why are we doing this to ourselves?" - Everyone, after finally exiting the bush.

Fortunately for the masochists amongst us (i.e. all of us), this was not the last of our lengthy bushbashing experiences on the trip.

The next day was a lot more fun though, as we made it into the... umm... ah yes, the Forgotten Valley! There was a little bit of a bushbash to get there and a lengthy streambash, but the nice thing about this valley is that it makes you forget the pain it takes to get there.



Walking, walking, more walking. Where were we walking, though?

The can't quite remember valley eventually leads to a fantastic bivvy rock, named the "what's this place called again?" Biv. By this point, I was feeling extremely diseased from a cold I had caught from Hayley, and was quite looking forward to a rest. Rest is certainly what we achieved for the next four days.

On the ceiling of the rock there was an ancient inscription which described exactly how to cure the plague that I was suffering from:

How to cureth thy plague:

Thou wilt require:

Oil of chilie of the orient

Water moste holie

Bloode of the virgin

Taketh thy moste Holie Water, and drinketh. Drinkest thou much, and thou shalt exorcise thy demons from thy urine.

With thy nourishments of Pasta, poureth thy Oil of Chilie generously upon't. Thy mouth will burn, and thy tongue will suffer, but thy plague shalt begone!



The rock under which we slept for 4 nights.

Where have you been? Sleeping under a rock?

The time spend under the rock was well spent. Sitting in a sleeping bag all day and only leaving to pee and poo, eating tramping rations and feeling glad that they're in your stomach and not on your back, and reading War and Peace are some of the activities that were enjoyed under this rock.

Rock Musings - Is this all a game?

Advances in computer graphics mean that real-time rendering of photorealistic terrain is commonplace. And yet, video game developers in 2018 have not embraced this technology and realised the potential of a Tramping video game.

A FPS type walking simulator, coupled with a business simulator would be the ultimate video game for the New Zealand Tramping community. Trampers starting the game can choose a selection of tracks around the country (limited to the Great Walks for the free version, all DOC tracks and huts for the ad-supported version, and all backcountry areas for the paid version). Players can level up their in game trampers with fitness level, navigational skill, and pain threshold. After each track has been completed (anywhere from 1 hour to 6 months, the game runs in real time), the digital trumper can upgrade his/her gear, engage in social tramping

activities, and attend UoA Engineering lectures. The player must balance a number of factors and address a number of issues relating to their tramping, whether they be critical hunger levels, excessive temperatures, or insufficient grades leading to poor academic standing from the University.

NZ Tramping Simulator will be available on Steam in early 2019.

On day 3 under the rock, the weather finally cleared up enough for us to emerge and head up to the Olivine Ice Plateau for a little bit of a look around (minus our packs). The route up was surprisingly easy, and we briefly made it to the ice. Unfortunately we had to turn around before reaching the plateau itself due to some scary looking clouds coming in, and the threat of it getting dark by the time we got down to the bottom. We decided that for better or worse, we would leave the rock the next day.



Left: Tomothy looks out on the valley. Right: Crossing crevasses on the Ice Plateau.

Next day comes around, and ah crap, it's bad weather. We implement the escape plan, which was to go out via the Four Brother's Pass, to the Diorite Stream, and to the Pyke Valley. The rain starts pouring down rather unpleasantly that day, save a couple of moments in between such as the time we saw a few wild Kea teasing us.

The rain just kept going until we finally made it down the other side of the hill to where we would be camping that evening. A disappointing dinner later, and we were in our tents.



The weather begins to turn

That night, a cyclone hit!

At around midnight, Tom left the tent to pee. He described the conditions outside as, "It's like a fire hose!"

I decided to stay as snug as I could inside the tent this whole time, and offered moral support to Tom on his mission. Sleep was difficult that night with the sound of the wind whapping (yay I made up my own word!) the side of the tent. Everything was uncomfortably moist, both inside and outside the tent.

The next morning was a slow start as we recovered from our exciting night. A long bushbash down to the Pyke valley led us to a rather swampy swamp, which after leading the group astray briefly, led into the densest bush lawyer you could possibly imagine. The reward at the other end of this insanely slow-paced day (we only travelled 4km!) was the first hut of the trip.

How to slow down your Matt:

1. Purchase your Matt for \$10 at the Warehouse, or get an inflatable Matt if you're feeling fancy.
2. Take him tramping for many, many hours. Do not let him eat or rest!
3. Carefully place your Matt in a cold, fast flowing stream.
4. Watch him struggle to lift his pack out of the fast moving stream.
5. Your Matt has been successfully slowed down. No longer will you be chasing after your Matt!
6. Retrieve your Matt, and sleep on him/it (best to check which pronouns your Matt is comfortable with first) that evening.

Bruce, the man, the legend.



Bruce Reay outside his hut

Bruce is a hermit who lives alone in a small hut in the Pyke Valley. Once the president of the Canterbury University Tramping Club, he decided to pursue an alternative lifestyle sometime in the 80s, and has been living in the backcountry trapping possums ever since. Since 2010, he has been living in a small hut by an airstrip near Lake Alabaster.

Bruce usually gets around on his small inflatable boat, and gets his groceries and mail delivered by helicopter. In his hut he's got electricity from a generator, a satellite phone, a camera, a laptop, and a hard drive full of 500 movies. He invites many of the trampers on the Pyke Route into his hut for cups of tea, especially if they're single ladies!

Bruce's Ladies:

Belgian Girl: "whoa, she was really hot"! Stayed with Bruce for 4 days before heading off.

"Wild Child": Used to be insecure about her breasts, but these days loves showing off her implants to Bruce.

Girl walking up to Mueller Hut: wearing jeans, and nothing else.

We saw Bruce going along the river in his boat while we were wandering along the track. He was quick to invite us aboard, 3 at a time. Over the next few hours, Bruce shuttled us across the river to his hut, and then on to the Lake Alabaster Hut at the other end of the lake. For the most part the journey was filled with Bruce spinning yarns to us about his life, and filling me (Tim) in with what he'd been up to in the 3 months since I had last seen him. One point that was the exception was when the boat sank. Fortunately we were close to shore, so bailing out the boat wasn't too difficult, and we were more careful about the water splashing dangerously close to the sides of the boat from then on!



Civilisation!

Beautiful scenery, on a nice track. Disgusting, isn't it?

The track from Alabaster Hut is pretty easy as tracks go. Tom and I had fun closing our eyes and seeing how far we dared to walk on the straight sections, on average we could go for about 15-20 steps before caving to our subconscious telling us that this was a silly idea.

The end of this day marked our re-entry into proper civilisation. Gunn's Camp, on the Hollyford road, provides accommodation in the form of lodges and campsites primarily for the massive numbers of tourists going to Milford Sound who can't get accommodation there. Of interest to us though were the **hot showers (!!!)** available. A small shop selling overpriced junk food was also very sought after.

Getting to the Glenorchy side of the mountains (where we were meant to be picked up from) from Gunn's Camp requires going over the Routeburn Track, which starts at The Divide, on the Milford Road. Getting here therefore required a little hitchhiking. While planning our route and finding prospective drivers, Tom and I had the idea of hitchhiking just a little further, to Milford Sound. The others weren't too fussy about this, so we split up.

As it turned out, going to Milford Sound wasn't a bad idea at all! It was a perfect sunny day (a Fiordland Miracle!), meaning great sightseeing could be done. The highlight was going into the shop, and purchasing delicious, hot, steak and cheese pies. After 12 days of tramping, money is cheap, so we hardly noticed how overpriced they were.

The rest of this day was similar for all of us, we headed up Key Summit, took a few photos, then headed down to the free campsite off the Greenstone Track. The others were rather jealous when they heard of our pie adventure.

The Routeburn Track is considered one of the best walks in the country (if not the world), and rightly so. The scenery is stunning, and the track is extremely well maintained. We passed many of the guided trampers, and made friends with one of the guides who gave us chocolate in exchange for the story of what we'd been up to for the last 2 weeks. With stunning weather and scenery, this was one of the more pleasant parts of the trip overall.

Tom's Tramping Song:

Up up up to the mountains!

Into the mountains we go!

(repeat n times)

At the end of the track, the shuttle came and picked us up to take us back to Queenstown. It was the end. 2 weeks of tramping had taken us through some of the most delightful untouched wilderness the country has to offer, and although we failed in our original goal of reaching the elusive Olivine Ice Plateau, we did achieve the only real goal of tramping, which is to have a fantastic time!



The Uncompleted Egmont Valentine Traverse

Date: February 14-16

Group Members: Ulysse Bellier, Marlene King, Anna Parsons, Laura Jacks and Sean Thomson

Author: Sean Thomson

We are somewhere around Te Awamutu, on the edge of Hamilton, when the storms begin to set in. The five of us, Ulysse, Marlene, Anna, Laura and I find ourselves increasingly trusting in the forecasts. While the rest of the North Island was to be locked in the grips of a vicious psychlone, Mt Taranaki was to somehow be spared, the one corner unmolested by the storm's wrath. We slowed down, low gear high revs, for the suspiciously new fords that we encountered on the highway...



It was with some joy and incredulity that we arrived at the Dawson Falls visitor centre- the sun was shining, the fields were burning, and the weather couldn't be better! Although the visitor centre was abandoned, our guardian Bas was watching over us all the way up, telling us to stop and catch our breath around every corner, and making sure we were still prepared for what may lie around the next.

Fantham's Peak is a secondary cone up the side of Taranaki, and is home to the iconic Syme Hut, as well as the Phantom after which it is named, according to *AUTC Footprints* (Nana 2008). It's a good slippery slog up, with the ground moving when you stay still, rarely staying still when you move. Syme hut presents itself as a rather quaint burrow (quite literally in winter, sitting buried under the snow and ice), and the sunset was most enjoyable.

We decided a repeat performance was in order, so we ran up the mountain to watch the sunset again. We then decided the show had been so spectacular that we absolutely needed to see it in reverse, at sunrise the next morning. Unfortunately we weren't entirely sure when sunrise had been scheduled...

So it was decided! We were to stay up through the night, eating Valentine's hearts and resting our eyes, from the insides of our sleeping bags. Unbeknownst to us however, our revels were to attract the attentions of the Phantom, who had become quite lonely of late, though we weren't to know until much later...

Sometime between the hours of 2 and 3 A.M. we were awoken by a dazzling display of lights outside. Was it a bird? Was it a plane Search and Rescue Helicopter? No! It was aliens!

They had been planning to take a weather day, as the stellar winds had really picked up, but to their dismay they found our Earthly breezes much more problematic. Their ship nearly clipped a hut guy-line on their approach to the Fantham's Landing Pad.

Once they had safely landed, a ramp began to descend. Bright white light flooded out from inside, and a lone silhouette walked down to us where we stood, dazzled like possums who had driven down from Auckland, climbed a mountain and stayed up eating Valentine's chocolates the previous day, before being rudely awoken by extraterrestrial visitors.

The figure opened its mouth, and spoke with a voice that reflected the eternal emptiness, desolation, and lack of service stations in space. Its words:

“Take us to your latrine.”

We pointed them in the general direction of the long-drop, and before we knew it a minor legion of visitors had flooded out of their ship, hastily forming up a queue, and not without some measure of urgency(!).

After the ship-wide crisis had been successfully averted, they found our tank-water much to their liking, and they re-filled their drink bottles. They promised us their eternal gratitude, and a future legacy with them among the stars.

They took off for deep space and we never saw them again. We also ignored the pool of ectoplasm in the not-so-long drop, the next morning.

Resuming our own journey to the heavens, on our ascent we sought shelter from the lashing winds, and traversed off the scree too early. The terrain became treacherous, so we ended our ascent, narrowly avoiding catastrophe by a rather uncomfortable margin.

We took the slip-and-slide back down from Fantham's Peak, and caught up with Bas at the Visitor Centre, who was friendly enough to autograph our map. After licking our wounds at Wilkie's Pools, we drove around to the North ascent route, staying in Maketawa Hut that night.

Little did we know that the Phantom in his loneliness had still more in store for us! When all were bedding down for the night, two (Sean and Laura) were missing. Where could they have gone? The two were found out on the deck, under the spell of the Mothman's hypnotic gaze.

The Mothman is eight feet tall, with glowing red eyes and antennae atop his head. This was not AUTC's first run-in with the Mothman; this was the same Mothman that our predecessors had encountered ten years before, atop Fantham's peak! We knew that the Phantom was to blame.

Anna took one look at the Mothman's hungry gaze, and lured him away from his victims with the help of her fantastic cheesecake. Before you could blink, he snatched the offering and buggered off, back to his bivvy bag beside the hut. Crisis averted, the rest of us soundly went back to sleep.

Dawn, the next morning, all was set for the second ascent... But as we were leaving, **surprise!** The Mothman was already awake! Anna ~~drew the short straw~~ *volunteered* to stay behind with him for the day, counselling him through his fear of heights, while the rest of us exhausted our remaining energy climbing once again. On our return, we extricated ourselves from the Mothman's company as politely as we could, running back to the car before he could change his mind.

The Mothman to this day still haunts the huts of Taranaki, and the Phantom remains an antisocial curmudgeon.

Takeaways from this trip

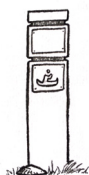
-Cheesecake is a viable tramping food.

-Lentils take a long time to cook.

-Sleeping on the deck of Maketawa Hut is definitely a good idea, as you'll see shooting stars, countless constellations and humbling views of the galaxy.

-Sleeping on the deck of Maketawa Hut is definitely a good idea, your 'water-repellent' sleeping bag will thank you forever.

-Fish and Chips



O Camp

Dates: 3rd-4th March

Location: Hunua Forest Park

Trip Leader: James Judd

Participants: Everyone

Videos: Seb Judd - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjRXkVmtL48>

Author: Captain Thunderbolt

Let's Talk It Out (Saturday, 3 March 2018)

Forty members of the Auckland University Tramping Club met outside the Clock Tower at 8am sharp. It became immediately clear that the newly minted AUTC members to be "oriented" were majority American. After five or six Trump jokes, everyone was sorted into cars according to levels of Trump-iness. The East coast elite were content to rub shoulders with the West coast elite, the few Southerners demonstrated genteel rage and swore vengeance on those who insulted their families, the singular Canadian felt peeved, and all Kiwis were shocked at just how loud Americans actually are. We set out at break neck pace, stopping briefly at "McDonalds" or "Maccuzz" to pick up breakfast. A brief Chinese fire drill at the Hunuas gate resulted in one bruised lap but was quickly forgotten once we learned the wrong campsite had been booked.

Introducing the Americans to "Nature"

Before any legitimate tramping could commence, we performed a sun dance. Even though the sun dance was successful, two or three bare bums saw the sun later in the day. One young man wore a suit with his goulashes. We were told he either tramps in a suit or nothing at all. The suited man led the advanced squad. The home fire crew acquired wheelbarrows and started carting provisions of beetroots, jackfruit, and meat goodies to the lower campsite. The rest of us followed the AUTC flag, hoisted aloft, and set off *en masse*.

This is Water

We arrived at a river crossing of sorts...it was a stream. Anticipating the brief stream crossing, the Americans immediately removed their boots and socks and revealed the soft fleshy skin of their un-calloused feet. An executive decision came down from on high declaring that the petite road bash was no more. Instead, we must stream bash to the campsite. All enjoyed blackberry brambles, rocks, and surprisingly deep water. Casualties included one lost toenail. At a bend in the road, we stopped to enjoy some refreshments. After tramping only a hundred meters more, we arrived at the campsite.

AUTC Olympics

The esteemed countries of Easter Island, Kazakhstan, and North Korea joined the peoples of Antarctica and the Sahara Desert in competing for glory in sport. It is true what they say about Kazakhs; even the women have mustaches. The Antarctic representatives all dressed for summer weather save one, but thankfully enough snowflakes participated despite costume badgering. First there was the human tight rope, followed by a human pyramid race and stretching team members on emergency packs. The tug of war resulted in no clear winner, but North Korea surprisingly beat out all competition despite reports of severe malnutrition in their home country. The final event, a bondage battle of the fittest, revealed that our fearless leader was, in fact, a few sandwiches short of a fully packed lunch.

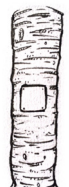
At Night

No one reached absurd levels of inebriation. Some people did have to go to bed early though. Those unlucky few missed out on the brownies and the Burma trail. After learning the true meaning of Te Urewera, junior members heard the legend of Maori burial grounds located just up the hill. One by one they were released on to the Burma trail to meet the spirits. Sounds heard that night include screaming, Canadian small talk, grunted conversation, and Wannabe by the Spice Girls.

A Brief Branding Before Breakfast (Sunday, 4 March 2018)

Everyone was branded with a whale logo. It is unclear what type of whale was chosen. Intense philosophical speculation from the night before indicates it was likely a sperm whale. Conventionally a brand is heated in fire before pressed to the skin. But fire is ILLEGAL in regional parks. So we used a flamethrower instead. The first few to be branded were lucky, as the whale came out distinctly. Over the course of the morning, the logo began to look less like a whale and more like an eggplant.

Postscript: No Americans were harmed on this trip. One Kiwi was injured, however he did not attend O Camp, and subsequently he did not write the trip report as planned. Reports of cannibalism have not yet been confirmed.



Kaimai Ranges (Bushcraft Trip 1/3)

Trip Leader: James Judd

Participants: Harry Carstairs, Scott Claessens, Seb Judd, Sach Knight, Caroline Provo, Simon Yu

Location: Kaimai Ranges

Dates: 9th – 11th March 2018

Video: Seb Judd – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrOhg3y844o>

Author: Scott Claessens

Psychoanalysis Diary (9th March 2018)

Having been accepted onto my PhD programme in Psychology at the University of Auckland, I judged that it was time to get my hands dirty and involve myself in some fieldwork. Observations of human behaviour within the constraints of contemporary civilisation, while informative, are often not particularly useful windows into the true underlying nature of the human psyche. To access such crucial glimpses, one must venture out into the wilderness, the ecology within which *Homo sapiens* is most keenly adapted. Our section of wilderness was the Kaimai Ranges, a delightful stretch of “bush” (as the locals here are apt to refer to it) several hours south of Auckland.

We arranged our departure on the evening of the second Friday of the month. In order to ensure that my observations of the humans were truly representative of unobserved behaviour, I introduced myself to the test subjects as simply one of their own, another fellow tramp, eager to explore the beautiful countryside that New Zealand has to offer. This small deception would allow me to discreetly take notes all weekend, being careful not to influence the test subjects’ behaviour with my presence.

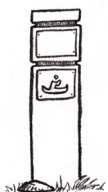
My first interesting glimpse into the minds of this group of humans was their foraging behaviour at a McDonalds (“Maccas”), en-route to the Kaimai Ranges. After several flustered prods of the large computer screen, much like pigeons pecking a light stimulus to receive food, the test subjects devoured their meals, with much excited talk of the adventure ahead.

At the Kiamais, the tramp itself began in the dark, the light of the stars shining down from above us. My initial nervousness about engaging with the test subjects outside the safety of an academic environment escalated. What if the change from civilised man to savage was immediate upon entering the bush? In the dark, I would not know where to run, or how to fend off my attackers. But, luckily, we walked along in pleasant conversation, though the subjects were prone to yelling frankly offensive vulgarities such as “sixty-nine!!” and the like.

After several hours of walking, the alpha-male of the group (JJ) established an easily-defendable location to set up a camp. Despite arriving at almost 3am, the group quickly divided into two sub-units: the gatherers of materials, and the experts of the tarps. This functionally effective division of labour could perhaps be attributed to JJ’s strong leadership style, though it may have arisen simply out of a desperate need for sleep. Regardless, within half an hour, a camp (one would be forgiven for describing it more as a ‘city of tarps’; see Figure 1) was formed, and the subjects and I happily dozed off.



Figure 1. The city of tarps (photo courtesy of Seb Judd).



Psychoanalysis Diary (10th March 2018)

A strange phenomenon occurred on the second day of fieldwork, several times, and in varying locations. The function of the behaviour remains unclear. Initially, it would appear to be a form of grooming, but on closer inspection, the behaviour is qualitatively different to that observed in other species of great ape. Brandishing what appears to be an old rusty iron, one subject will gently smooth the clothes of another, while other group members stand by, either applauding and hooting in earnest, or carefully guarding the members of the ritual while their defences are lowered (see Figure 2).

This behaviour is in equal measures fascinating and perplexing. It clearly does not function to remove creases in the clothing of other group members, as the iron is not at all hot, and is never plugged into an actual supply of electricity. This is despite the glee that subjects displayed when pretending the iron was plugged into a tree or, dare I say, a fellow group member's anus (this variant of the behaviour was only observed once, and fleetingly).



Figure 2. A human female irons a fellow male, with other males standing guard. One guarding male appears to be urinating. The metal helmet on the ironee perhaps serves a defensive function (photo courtesy of Seb Judd).

More rigorous research on this behaviour is needed before drawing solid conclusions, but I believe that the humans are fully aware that the iron is not serving its original purpose, but they have in fact co-opted the ritual as a form of bonding between group members. The physical contact required for such a ritual may encourage emotional closeness, solidifying group membership. However, this hypothesis does not quite fit with other observations of the humans ironing clothes on inanimate objects and surfaces (see Figure 3). More data is required to tease apart these hypotheses.



Figure 3. Here, the alpha male (JJ) irons a hat on a rock. This is evidence that ironing also occurs without physical contact with others, challenging the 'physical contact bonding' hypothesis (photo courtesy of Seb Judd).



With regards to the tramp itself, the second day made for fantastic walking. The views from the Kamai Ranges were phenomenal (see Figure 4), and as I walked I began to grow accustomed to this nomadic way of living; never settling, always travelling with one group. Much to my chagrin, the inner pack animal in me was being activated. I found myself laughing and joking with the subjects, shouting “sixty-nine!!” in unabashed frivolity. In hindsight, I had let social pressure tear me away from contemporary values, and had become equal parts man and savage, much like my very own test subjects.



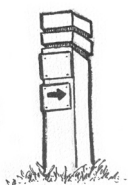
Figure 4. The Kamai Ranges, on our second day of tramping.

Psychoanalysis Diary (11th March 2018)

After setting up camp and watching the stunning sunset the night before, it was time to leave the bush, to allow all the test subjects to return to their lives back in civilisation. As we “bush-bashed” back down towards the road, we contemplated how the weekend had changed us.

Test Subject #6 (Caroline) had discovered, to her utmost surprise, that she was not actually American, and the group had instead concluded that I was an American in disguise (despite my protests). Test Subject #7 (Sach) had discovered that he can throw an axe into wood with fair accuracy, but that he cannot gloat about it to his group members if no one was there to witness it. Furthermore, we had all discovered that Test Subject #8 (Simon) is the go-to guy for Spotify playlists, that Test Subjects #1 and #4 (James and Seb Judd) are the craziest adventure brothers in the world, and that Test Subject #2 (Harry Carstairs) can be a scary Scotsman if you get on the wrong side of him.

Myself? In the bush, I had uncovered much about human nature that had not previous been made clear from simple urban and experimental observation. Humans are pack animals, who thrive off social groups, and who create complex rituals and patterns of behaviour (some of which involve irons) to signal their in-group loyalty. The bush exacerbates this aspect of human nature, but thankfully I never saw the darker side of this nature *a la* Lord of the Flies: man as “nature, red in tooth and claw”. However, as a human myself, it was unavoidable that I too would be attracted to this way of living. Now, snugly back in civilisation, I am waiting keenly for my next fieldwork stint with this group, to learn more about their way of life, and test further hypotheses about human nature. You will hear from those fieldnotes in due course.



Whangaehu hut

Date: March 24th-25th

Trampers: Sean Thompson, Matt Battley, Malin Luedicke, Jason Rosinger, Rachel Smith, Max Jenkins, Daniel Graham

Author: Max Jenkins

Our adventure began huddled under the general library roof looking at ominous rain as we waited for group members to show up. We were full of cheer and hope that the weather would clear, despite an 'interesting' forecast. Eventually everyone was bundled into Max's dodgy old car and the journey began.

The weather did not clear, despite our best efforts. We were rudely awakened at an inappropriate hour by the more enthusiastic members of the group, and proceeded to drive up towards the mountain as it threateningly looked down upon us. Having been suitably loaded up with alpine gear and weird, wonderful food items; we began to trudge up the slope, desperately trying to keep up with Matt.

In a brilliant stroke of genius, Max forgot to find the keycode for NZAC hut, so had several copies of footprints (which he had been conned into depositing at huts) to bring up the hill along with him. Texts were made to the higher-ups, but to no avail.

As we climbed further up the weather steadily worsened. White-out (grey-out? Not much snow...) conditions had set in by the time we were on top, with rain and wind blowing onto our faces. After having a somewhat hurried lunch in our best attempt at shelter behind the dome ridge, we readily agreed that perhaps the other side of the hill could wait till another day. The descending journey began.

Our superiors responded eventually with the keycodes and we could have lunch in NZAC hut. There wasn't much snow at the end of summer, but at least we got to enjoy other alpine benefits like the drying room (a thing of beauty) as well as hanging our ice-axes on the rails by the entrance pretending to be proper climbers.

I won't disclose whose idea this was, but the suggestion came up that we should visit the Tawhai falls (the set of Gollum's pool in Lord of the Rings) for a swim on the way back. Some of us, like myself, are the kind to spend about 10 seconds in the water, then huddle. Others, like Sean and Rachel, spend a solid 10 minutes jumping in and out, somehow not freezing to death. Lovely spot though, would recommend. Less masochistic than swimming in the Taranaki falls, but there's nowhere you can get in slowly so it's all in or nothing.

Fortunately, we still had all our extravagant food items, and having retreated we also had a fire back at National park. We played a few games, my personal highlight being mafia where I incidentally switched they to he/she in the narration, unintentionally causing the brutal murder of a player or two. This went on long into the night.

The weather, traitorous as always, went all nice and blue for the following day. We had an excellent continental breakfast complete with b&e, hash browns, sausages; the works. After a more sedentary walk than the previous day we started the trip back to Auckland.

We had fish and chips in Huntly, along with the 'tale of the Tararuas by Max and Sean', a tale of whimsy, woe, and the true meaning of friendship where we managed to get spectacularly lost and spent the night out on a peak. If you want to hear more of such gossip, **apply to be a general member for all that spicy committee meeting banter** (not the first shameless plug for this position I've done...). Great time with friends. I do, however, have some unfinished business with a certain hut :^)

Kaweka Kapers

Date: April 2-6

Members: Conor Nelson, Debra Ballard, Jade Beckman, Jason Rosinger, Joshua Woolley, Kabir Khandpur, Lorenzo Posadas-Villegas, Sean Thomson, (commander-in-chief), Simon Yu,

Author: Conor Nelson

It all started on a warm April morning. The sun was shining, the forecast was clear, Seán had once again become drunk on the idea of adventure and Whare's of Iron. All was as it should be. No time to waste, our hero gathered a team, and by gathered I mean to say that he coerced them through unknown means into spending the week with him, a fate which eventually ended in five men sitting in a tight space, developing severe cramps in unspeakable places due to [further content redacted by trip organiser].

We were a motley bunch. Aside from our Great Leader- whose infamy needs no elaboration- among our ranks were recent Bush Skool graduates (Kabir and Jade), thorough thru-hikers (Debra and Josh), a climber (Jason) getting broken in on "low-grade slab", and others (Lorenzo, Simon and Conor) who for some reason thought spending a week walking in the middle of nowhere sounded like a good time.

Stuffed into a pair of cars we set off, entertaining ourselves along the way with all manner of harmless tomfoolery, while still being cautious of committing thoughtcrime... a caution which was very soon forgotten leading to a certain individual being condemned by our Queen, facing progressively severe punishments for correspondingly heinous crimes. "100 years dungeon", we hear as a comment is made passing through some roadworks. "1000 years dungeon", we hear as protest is made. In his insolence, the condemned continues down the path of sin. "DUNGEON UNTIL YOUR LINEAGE BEARS A 7th SON OF A 7th SON", the Queen roars, the boundless grace contained within causing all possums in the vicinity to liquify, soon becoming indistinguishable from their road-bound brethren. Thankfully a compromise was found and this sentence was not enforced.

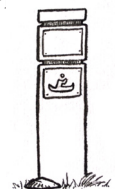
Instead we rerouted ourselves toward Napier, where our Queen stocked up on drugs, placating their anger for a time. A short detour later we came to arrive at the border of the Kaweka forest. Our car is beginning to let off the smell of bacon through the air con. This was especially concerning as our driver was certain that he'd cleaned the engine after his breakfast. We continued on regardless, eventually coming to the carpark where we inexplicably found ourselves, despite our quick dealings with the local cartel, waiting for an hour before the others finally arrived (One can only imagine what they were doing....). A short walk up a rather steep slope later and we came to arrive at Dominie Biv, a cute little two-man hut perfect for a romantic getaway with your lover. It comes complete with a water tank, two beds, and an outhouse with only the most glorious view one can imagine. Whilst Jason quickly disappeared to admire the scenery, we set about preparing dinner. There was quite a selection, from a mountain of couscous, to Debra's finest carbonara, to the rather interesting choice of cole-slaw. Personally I believe that my dinner of pasta and mince was the best, if only because it made my pack 3kg lighter. Wary from our travels and well fed, our party quickly set about organising the camp. Whilst a small number would sleep in tents outdoors, the vast majority sought refuge within the mighty Dominie Biv, which with its two beds and small benchtop was perfect for sleeping seven people. After some skilful people-stacking, and careful placement of our resident climber upon the bench, we drifted off into sleep, surrounded by warm dreams.

In the morning we awakened. Josh and myself rather rudely so, with our tent attempting to raise a coupe, charging toward the edge of a cliff- our sleeping bags and bedrolls complicit in the plot...! Thankfully after a short battle they were subdued, with the tent later being confined to the inside of a pack as punishment. The morning's excitement complete, we shoulder our packs and head off toward the nearest saddle, enjoying the feel of the pseudo-scrée as we slip our way down the ridgelines.

We arrived at Makino Hut just after noon, much to our glorious leader's surprise, and perhaps disappointment. After leaving our mark in the hut book, he immediately ordered a death march (for some) and a casual stroll (for others) onwards to our next destination: the illustrious Mangatainoka Hot Springs. We arrived with plenty of time to pitch recalcitrant tents, locate hidden long drops, and scald uncooperative meals into submission, in varying orders and degrees of urgency. For dessert, hot pools: a tramping club delicacy known as human soup, garnished with a combination of sandflies and a single floating aux cord to taste.

The next day proved to be an arduous one for most. Our destination was Middle Hill Hut, in the midst of countless undulations and PUDs (Pointless Ups and Downs). Out of sheer boredom, Seán and Josh devised a private scheme, which went something like "Eating is cheating!". The pair grew progressively slower as the day went on, yet both yelped with joy and ran to the hut when we drew near, as only then could they sate their many but surprisingly satiable appetites and thirsts. They have since resolved to carry yoyos in order to prevent future idle mindedness. Bunks were claimed and dinners prepared, namely risotto, macaroni and Debra's finest apricot chicken over bulgur wheat. That night the group slumbered to the shining stars above and the roaring of stags from their leks on the rolling hills beyond.

Almost as soon as the group had started walking, they approached a crossroads. It was here that the party split. With the "Iron Whare" looming ahead, their long-suppressed disagreements over the merits of Marx's "Das Kapital" surfaced, creating a deep schism in the group. My faction (whose views on the aforementioned Marxist



literature shall remain confidential) decided to turn to the horizon. As the opposing movement gained in strength, we courageously turned and fled back up to the tops, returning to the saddle's loving embrace. Here we enjoyed some life's simpler pleasures, which have been omitted in consideration of the more sensitive readers among us. Our bodies were drenched and our spirits quenched, so naturally we had no alternative but to strip our raiments. We marched triumphantly into Makahu Saddle Hut as Nature intended, to nary a lifted eyebrow among the opposition.

The lasting horror of the ordeal remains present in the eyes of all who witnessed it, a lingering fog that refuses to lift.

In a final attempt to raise spirits, our Triumphant Leader unveiled a stash of certain consumable goods, and consume them we did, our orifices becoming tingly in the process, later fizzing orange. Our former mentalities restored, and the vigour of youth returning, Josh set about composing an epic ballad set to the tune of "The Fresh Prince" directly into the hut book, leaving behind a legacy for future generations. The morning sun dawned with her red fingers upon the troupe of comrades. The sane returned to their chariot, destined once more for shining Auckland. The far-gone, however, embarked on one more adventure.

After an eventful freediving expedition (where we stumbled upon the priceless treasures that are sight and friendship), our heroes stopped by Turangi's op-shop armoury in order to acquire suitable garb for the Ironist Initiation ceremonies of both "Cast Iron" and "Iron Queen". The unlikely quintet made one final stop at Mangatepopo, to pop up and down Tongariro, before they journeyed forth for a meeting with the almighty "High Temperature", Lord Grey...



Ruapehu Extreme Ironing

Date: 6th -8th April

Location: Mt. Ruapehu

Trampers: Archana Kumaraswamy, Thomas Chu, Conor Nelson, Emily McGeorge, Howard Guan, Ingemar Watt, Jason Rosinger, Kabir Khandpur, Liam Schuitemaker, Lorenzo Posada, Malin Luedicke, Nathan Kamsma, Sean Thomson, Timothy Gijbels, Timothy Gray

Author: Timothy Gray



Conor Nelson, soldier of the Revolution, Ironing.

“Mr Gray, do you know why we are questioning you today?”

Timothy “High Temperature” Gray, founding member of the radical Extreme Ironing movement, nods his head gently as officers Minogue and O’Leary begin their line of questioning. A small video camera and the chief of police look on from behind a one way mirror as the interrogation begins.

“Yes, I do know why I’m here. You believe me to be the leader of the Extreme Ironing movement. I deny all such allegations.”

“Really, sir. Then how would you explain the fact that you were earlier today caught trespassing in Tongariro National Park in the possession of this?” Officer Minogue produces an evidence bag containing an iron. He continues, “This iron was found on your person near the summit plateau of Mt Ruapehu where you were detained by our officers. Do you deny that this is your iron?”

“I deny it! I demand to see a lawyer!”

“There are no law students in AUTC, you should know that by now” says Officer O’Leary calmly.

“Exactly. And I don’t think even a lawyer would be able to claim that the iron shaped tattoo on your buttocks was the result of an unfortunate household accident” says Officer Minogue. From behind the one way mirror, the chief sniggers to himself quietly.

“We’re willing to be lenient and reduce your sentence if you tell us who your accomplices were and why you were up there with and ironing board. It’s in your best interest to plead guilty” says Officer O’Leary.

“Very well then, officers. This is my iron, and the buttock tattoo signifies my devotion to the Extreme Ironing movement.” High Temperature continues, “We were on Mt Ruapehu to do our household chores, and to eat some camembert and caviar. These are my accomplices”, he says while producing a photo of the group.



The League of Extreme Ironists

“The Extreme Ironing Movement has been plotting its revenge for some time now. We ascended Mt Ruapehu with fine clothing, an iron, and an ironing board for the first time in January 2017, and since then have had dreams of dominating the mountains with our radical ideology. The second wave of revolutionary Ironing happened about month after the first, on Mt Taranaki. We used that opportunity to spread our glorious propaganda to the masses, by a tremendous show of force demonstrating our superiority. This time, we also introduced the bringing of fine *grooms* wines to the summits of mountains, which we feel allows for better ironing to be done.”

“The third wave of revolution in 2017 was the strongest, with more ironists than we had ever had before. Our ascent of Mt Ngauruhoe on this occasion was wildly successful, as we were able to spread our radical ideology to a wider audience than ever before. This ascent also incorporated another element into our party doctrine, with the addition of fine cheese and caviar to the list of items to bring up mountains. We offered our caviar freely to all those on the summit who would take it while dressed in our formalwear. As Extreme Ironists, we feel obliged to spread the luxury goods of the bourgeoisie to the masses in order to stimulate the revolution of the oppressed 1% against the inferior 99%.”

“Enough of your revolutionary talk, tell us what you were doing on Mt Ruapehu this year!” shouts Minogue, slipping effortlessly into his Bad Cop persona he’d been working on for the past 2 weeks.

“Ok, ok. So I wanted to climb Ngauruhoe again this year, but unfortunately you can’t really do that anymore because they’ve restricted access to the carpark. We decided to just climb Ruapehu instead, since it was looking like a nice day in the morning. We had several ironing boards and irons with us, as well as a vacuum cleaner. Everything was looking good for spreading our glorious propaganda.”

“Everything went well for the first part of the trip, we very quickly got up to the Knoll Ridge café, and started heading up to the top. Unfortunately then our superior ideology was no match for the weather, which decided to close in on us and become rather windy. The trip to the top was therefore extremely brief.”

“We headed down the mountain, hoping to enlarge our sphere of influence to the skifield. At the small hut by the top chairlift, we settled down and got to work eating our delicious bourgeois lunch. We had caviar, whiskey, wine, camembert (of the \$8 variety!), and a selection of other yummy nummy treats. Life is good for those in the Extreme Ironist movement.”

“Of course, you cannot go up a mountain without ironing something. We took this opportunity to get out our ironing boards, and to do some ironing. We ironed our suits, our shirts, rocks, each other, anything we could get our hands on. We thought the rocks were a little dirty, we vacuumed them a bit to keep NZ beautiful. We took photos to document the event in the history of our ideology, and we spread our glorious propaganda” he says, producing a small leaflet:

THE EXTREME IRONIST MANIFESTO:

IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL EXTREME IRONISTS TO ADHERE TO THESE DIVINE RULES:

CLIMB MOUNTAINS

KEEP YOUR SHIRTS WELL PRESSED AT ALL TIMES (ESPECIALLY WHEN CLIMBING MOUNTAINS)

EAT LUXURIOUS FOOD, ESP. CAVIAR

HONOUR THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA (NORTH KOREA)

HAVE FUN (OR ELSE)

VLADIMIR IRONICH LENIN, OCTOBER 1917

"Well Officer O'Leary, do you think we've heard enough?" says Officer Minogue.

"Yes, I think so. Take this revolutionary scum to the cells. His treason against the Extreme Dishwashing movement will not be forgotten. He'll hang at dawn" replies O'Leary.

"Wait, you said you'd give me a reduced sentence! Have mercy, please!" screams High Temperature.

"Scum like you don't deserve mercy. Now please excuse us, we're just going to climb Mt Eden to wash our dishes. There's no need for you to join us since you don't have a Sea to Summit Ultra-Sil Kitchen Sink (\$49.99 from Bivouac)" Minogue says sarcastically.

"NOOOOOOOOooooooooo....."



Screams are heard as the leader of the Extreme Ironing movement is dragged to his cell. A loud clang resonates through the hall, and silence once again fills the corridor.

The leader of the Extreme Ironing movement may be gone, but his ideals shall live on!

Extreme Ironists of the world, unite!



Te Paki Coastal Track

Date: 31st March – 3rd April 2018

Trampers: Timothy Gray, Ngaire Metcalf, Daniel Graham, Stefanie Payne, Tiina Mei, Lina Grisli, Evgeniia Golovina, Thong Nee Ang

Author: Timothy Gray

The Te Paki Coastal Track runs around the very top of the North Island, past Cape Reinga and Cape Maria van Diemen to form a lovely 4 day excursion passing through lovely beaches, subtropical bush, and sand dunes.



Ngaire, Evgeniia, and Daniel descend a sand dune

We started out early in the morning on Easter Saturday, and before we knew it we were up near Whangarei ('the Whangas', as the locals call it). Unfortunately, our journey was made a little longer with the news that there was a fatal police shooting on State Highway 1 north of Auckland. Aside from making us question whether New Zealand had secretly been annexed by the United States in the middle of the night, this added quite a bit of a delay to an already very long (6-7 hour!) car ride. Our bums sure got a lot of exercise from sitting down on car seats on this trip.

We were able to break up the trip on the way up by going to visit some lovely glow worm caves! The Waipu Caves, near Whangarei, are rather magnificent even if you have seen glow worms

before. Turning our headtorches off, we were able to see whole galaxies of these little worms up on the ceiling, which is quite the sight to behold.

Finally reaching the campsite near the very top of the North Island later that evening, we set up our tents and got to eating our dinner. The weather had decided to be very hot this Easter, which was somewhat unfortunate for those of us participating in the competition for who could keep their chocolate Easter bunny intact the longest.

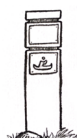
The beach we walked along the next day seemed to go on forever, and with the sun beating down on us and the sand reflecting the light back up at us, it was feeling like a desert. Our efforts were well rewarded by a lovely swim at the end though! A little further walking around the coast led to more beach, which then gave way to a little bit of an uphill where we continued along the coast via a track through some lush subtropical bush. When descending this ridge, there was a little bit of a mishap where we briefly lost the trail and went through a bit of gorse... I extended my deepest apologies to the group for the suffering that I caused them, but to this day I'm not sure that they've actually forgiven me.

Going a bit further on from a large campsite where hundreds of people in their huge tents and campervans were staying, we found a nice spot to camp on the beach. This choice was controversial when the tide came in threatening to wash away our tents. Once I'd got into bed though I couldn't be bothered moving our tent, but we managed to survive the high tide in the night, and got some good rest for climbing up to Cape Reinga in the morning.

Cape Reinga is rather nice, despite being a bit touristy. It's hard to blame the tourists for making the long trip here though, it's a lot of fun taking photos by the famous lighthouse and sign! The panoramic views of the ocean are well worth it too.

The walk from Cape Reinga to Cape Maria van Diemen also took us along a very long beach section. This walk was interrupted by a rather interesting event in which the tide was too high to cross a certain rocky part of the beach, forcing half of the group to go up and over a cliffy bit. Unfortunately the scrub here was not really ideal for walking through, and with no obvious track they quickly became a bit stuck. This resulted in me having to run up the little hill several times to try and look for them. They finally came over the hill after bashing through the dense scrub for around 30 minutes. Again, I'm not entirely sure that they've truly forgiven me for leading them slightly astray.

Cape Maria van Diemen is a rather magnificent, otherworldly place. There are parts that look like the Sahara Desert, others that look like the surface of Mars. Not really ideal holiday spots for mere mortal humans! Once you get all the way across the giant sand dunes though, the cape itself is lush and green. A track leads to the top, with views out over the sand dunes, to Cape Reinga, and to an island with a Maori name meaning 'panting breath', named so because apparently it's quite exhausting to swim there.



An attempt to sleep under the stars that night was thwarted by a number of sandflies and mosquitos trying to suck our blood. These were well soothed by a nice trip to the Ngawha Hot Springs on the way back to Auckland. Unfortunately I was the only one who got to enjoy the hot springs, as the other car couldn't find it, and the rest of my car couldn't be bothered.

All in all, the far north is a fantastic, and unique part of the country. Would highly recommend. 10/10!



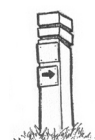
The famous Cape Reinga lighthouse



The divide between the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea, at Cape Reinga



Cape Maria van Diemen, from Cape Reinga.





Date: 28th-29th April

Location: Lake Coleridge

Participants: Timothy Gray, Andrew Battley, Miki Kawano, Sajan Daniell, Graham Brodie, Nicola Tuckey, Max Jenkins, Sean Thomson, Simon Yu, Abi Hill, Diego Hernandez, Daniel Scholes, Christine Bisholt, Archana Kumaraswamy, HuiYee Tan, WingTung Cheung, Chu Shing Yip, Da Tang, Kabir Khandpur

Author: Matthew Battley

Illustrations: Michael Berry

24hrs searching around the Southern Alps for hidden clues in pouring rain and spiky bushes isn't necessarily high on everyone's fun activity list, but for just under 20 silly AUTCers, that's precisely what they signed up for.

T'WALK is an annual event organised by the Canterbury University Tramping Club (CUTC), which sees teams kidnapped, thrown off a bus in a mystery location and forced to search for pieces of soggy paper plates for 24hrs. To make matters even more interesting the almighty T'WALK overlords also ensure the existence of many mountains, matagouri, swamps, spear-grass and this year a good helping of scree-running.

Arriving in silly costumes ranging from playing cards to peasants, the T'WALK teams soon found themselves heading towards their top secret destination in the pouring rain. Shortly before Arthurs Pass, the busses suddenly drove down a gravel side road, before coming to a stop in the middle of nowhere (okay, tbh it was actually about the Porters Pass Ski area).

After a brief (and soggy) reminder of the rules and what we were looking for, T'WALK began as it meant to go on - hurried searching and pouring rain. The first leg didn't mess around, heading up a river valley and then straight up 1000m to the tops. Scree, leftover snow and seemingly endless gradient delighted some more than others, but all enjoyed them more than the matagouri to come. After some fun on the tops it was time to descend again, dropping to begin our quest to the Hash house, home of wraps, lasagna and endless muffins.

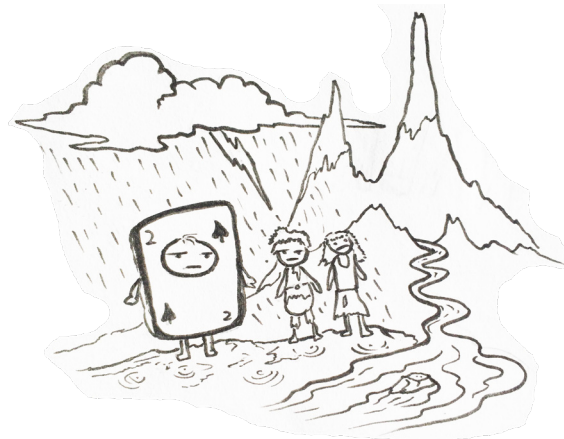
Leg 2 stayed a little lower, instead delighting in throwing the teams into swamp after swamp before (and after) night fell. Night always provides lots of extra challenges for brave T'WALKers, with the decreased visibility playing havoc with a sleep-deprived brain. Particularly amusing clues were 'Cliffhanger', which was on the end of an old fence hanging off a cliff, and 'Stick in the mud', which was quite literally a stick in the middle of a mud-lake... Needless to say, it wasn't just the rain making teams soggy.

Leg 2 ended with another cherished stop at the Hash house, where the exceedingly kind T'WALK chefs had supplied fish and chips for the weary traveler. These were certainly necessary to persuade teams to tough out the excruciating chafing and head out for Leg 3. Leg 3 is 'fondly' remembered for getting lost in shrubbery you had to crawl through, even more chafing and everyone going slowly more mad. (To be honest I can't remember a lot of Leg 3 - I think I must have been asleep on my feet).

I cannot truthfully report on Legs 4 and 5, for very few teams completed them, and I for one could no longer move without making old man noises. However the crazy Godzone teams who did make it that far certainly didn't report things getting much easier.

All and all, it was a particularly tough T'WALK this year, and not just because it didn't stop raining for a single minute of THE ENTIRE 24HRS... Nonetheless, who doesn't like a good bit of suffering in their lives?

I hope you're crazy enough to join next year!



Alternative Endings

Date: May 19th-22nd

Leader: Daniel Nogueira

Participants: James Judd, Nicola Tuckey, Amy Tuffnell, Julian Joneck, Daniel Nogueira

Location: Tararuas

Illustrations: Michael Berry

James did 3 push ups, got whiplash and his head rolled off.

A PLB wasn't in the vicinity and the trip was cancelled.

James picked the PLB up and took it to work before the trip, leaving it on his desk. One of his colleagues thought it was a radio and went to lift the antenna...
that was when the PLB was set off.

The group was learning to juggle beside the Arateatea release with pinecones. It turns out that if a pine cone is thrown high enough, it can fall onto Daniel's head, knocking him unconscious and making him fall into the rapids.
That was when the PLB was set off.

Sitting in a cafe testing Daniel's reaction times, which started with dropping glass water bottles, ended with knives being thrown at him.
That was when the PLB was set off.

A bone saw was purchased and used.

That was when the PLB was set off. Three people returned from the trip, well fed.

Lunch was being prepared in the boardroom when Julian slipped while cutting some cucumber and his pocket knife pinned James' other leg to a swiveling seat.
That was when the PLB was set off.

James found a precarious position to juggle from when he slipped and lost his balls. The PLB was set off as James disappeared into the distance chasing after his balls.

To this day we do not know if James found his balls.

James walked over a very slippery bridge. This bridge was so slippery that everyone else had warned each other about it. James decided to look at the stars.

He slipped and fell on his back, then fell off the bridge.
They searched for his body in the river and then set off the PLB.

The group had an accident and ended up in Palmerston North hospital where Nikki met them in the ER and was then able to set the PLB off so that they could be found.





Daniel was walking in the middle of the night
 Flowers and mushrooms caught his sight
 He stood on what he thought was a step
 Then realised it was a 150m drop

he experienced a falling sensation.
**Nicola had to chase James
 down and they set off the PLB.**

James went naked into the bush to chop wood.
 James accidentally cut the wrong wood.
 They heard the shrieking from the hut.

Nicola managed to fix the issue by attaching her
 shewee, but in the process
 James got hypothermia and died.
The PLB was set off.

Amy made Apple Crumble, however Julian had
 eaten very hot Horopito leaves earlier in the day.

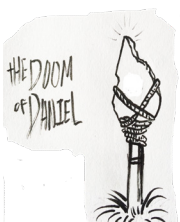
Julian could not get the full taste experience
 as his tongue was numb.
The PLB was set off.

James also tried the Apple Crumble
 He exploded with Happiness.
 The group ate his his remains
 They contained
 traces of apple crumble.

It was dark
 the group turned on strobe lights and
 music They started partying.
 After a couple of hours a drug dealer
 came up offering them all cocaine
 they got high.
 The group decided they could fly and
 jumped off the top bunk beds,
 landing on the floor.
 One week later a group of trampers
 came across the group
 lying on the floor of the hut.

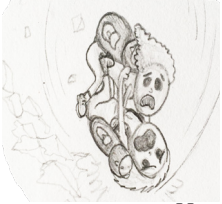
They too **exploded...**
The remnants went everywhere.

That was when the PLB was set off.



The group was walking above the bush line when a gust of wind came along and got in behind Daniel's Pack Cover which ballooned like the spinnaker on a yacht, filling with air and propelling the bag cover into the distance. Daniel chased after it, but as he did so Kim Jong-un finally declared war on the USA. At the same the coordinates for his Nuclear Missile were accidentally entered incorrectly and the bomb landed on the bag cover in the vicinity of Daniel. The rest of the group were unharmed, and Dr Tucky declared Daniel Dead.

The PLB was set off.



The trip ended.

Up above the bushline where the wind was strong and there was fun to be had. Nicola and Amy were being blown away when they realised they could anchor themselves to each other by crossing their hip belts over and facing each other. They noticed that this created an invincible zorb-like structure. They managed to start rolling and their packs protected them from the rocks.

Meanwhile James decided it would be fun to jump off a cliff with his pack on.

Nicola and Amy used the zorb method to get to the PLB and set it off.

The trip ended.



It was very windy above the bushline and the group decided to use their raincoats as parachutes and glide their way down to the hut. The initial gust made them airborne but it soon died out as they came into the windshadow of the opposite valley, and they found themselves in sink.

They plummeted and died on impact.

The trip ended.

Amy and Nicola were Prancercising down a hill. They were also becoming worried that they couldn't find James as he had disappeared after putting on his camo jacket. In actual fact, James was hiding in ambush in a tree above them. James sprung from the tree and took them both out. He had jumped with so much momentum that he was out of control. He slid down the hill, off a cliff and died. Julian and Daniel were at the hut and had no idea what had happened. The next day Julian found James' body and pack whilst collecting some more firewood and set off the PLB. He returned to wait inside the warm hut.

That was the day both Daniel and Julian got a free helicopter ride together.



The Graduation

Date: Autumn Graduation

Location: Albert Park

Participants: Everyone that matters

Author: James Judd

Some say that the socials officer was inspired to celebrate people's graduations. Others say that he had run out of ideas for weekly socials events. There are even a few speculations that he might have just been too lazy to organize any other event that week and wanted to have everyone attend his own graduation. They are all rumours and no one knows the truth, however, we can be certain of one thing: it was his graduation so it seemed selfish. Why I'm writing in third person? Oh wait, it's to make this feel like it wasn't me when it was.

Thanks to a successful performance of an ancient ritual by the J'udd tribe, it was a fantastically wet day with only a single graduand excited by the sudden downpour of rain, about to saturate the ceremony down Queen St. Why excited? Because nothing beats type 2 fun on graduation day, followed by the weekly club social event being alpine traversing in Albert Park. It was spectacular watching numerous expeditions traversing, tied to each other for safety and kitted out with crampons, ice axes, helmets, puffer jackets and gloves. Most spectacular of all was watching the looks on the faces of all the graduands and their families, dressed in their finest attire, especially when they found out the true mission of the brave expeditioners: to get some ironing done. Everyone, including Diego's giant panda head, crowded around to witness the Creaser strike. Silly wizard clothes were pressed, creases were made down sleeves and parents were embarrassed, having to leave the scene. It was fantastic. It wasn't so selfish afterall, because Daniel Tidbury, soon to be published scholar, had also attended as a graduand himself.



Mission: Swamp Survival

Date: May 12th

Location: Waitakere Ranges

Trip Leader: James Judd

Participants: Seb Judd, James Judd, Kabir Khandpur, Sean 2000W the son of Thom, Jason Rosinger, Nicholas Loukides, Reinhard Schwanecke, Darina Khun, Campbell Foskin, Shilo Zhang, Martin Lyon, Jack Hopman, Justin Willis, Maxine Opatril, Caroline Provost, Pepijn Luiten, Karina Zawilinski, Yi Xin Heng, Victoria Kelly Katy MacKenzie, Johannes Holstad, Timothy Gray, El Capitan, Kaya Shlomi, Max Jenkins Timothy Gijbels, Caoimhe Lane, Alistair Newcombe, Renjie Huang, Halle Redfearn, Seb Bailey, John Robinson, Daniel Everett, Eder Lee

Author: Darina Khun (Darina ballerina glasses cleana)

Illustrations: Connor Murdoch



Time: 08:00

I miss my home country of North Korea, I miss the warmth radiating from our glorious leader Kim Jong Un. But I must do this. I must survive and show how strong North Koreans are. How superior our blood is.

I was joined by a group of dirty Americans and the traitor, South Korea. They will never survive.

We were led by one dressed in camouflage, holding a pink horse of some sort. He thinks he can be as great as our one true leader, but he will soon learn his place. He will never measure up to our saviour, Kim. He turns to false gods. We trust in the proven wisdom and genius of our leader. As he foolishly dances his rain dance in hopes that he can make it rain, our leader is already coming up with scientific ways of doing so with nuclear energy.

We are given eggs to carry - 3 or 4 eggs per person. The objective is to protect them for the remaining journey, without carrying them in our packs. The objective being to make sure no harm comes to them. They think this is difficult?

We march onwards. We pray to our supreme leader, Kim, in hopes it will bring us guidance and protect us from being stabbed in the back by the other corrupted nations.

Time: 08:30

We survived the beach trail. No North Koreans left behind. The Americans marched onwards, their flags flying high - but not as high as ours. I see the long grass and the swamp-like landscape appear in front of us.

Time: 09:45

We are not great swimmers. Our packs and shoes weigh us down, and the cold is almost unbearable. The Americans are already trying to kill us. They smile as they watch us struggle in the neck-deep water. They laugh as they pass us, using their giant like height to their advantage. They are precisely the savages the Supreme Leader warned us about, caring for no one but themselves, and only finding joy in the suffering of others. One of them even has a camera to film us so they can enjoy it over and over again later as they laze around in their oversized couches. Still, we keep pushing. No pain. No gain.

Time: 10:20

Out of nowhere, the pink horse guy screams out. Everyone is running around panicking. The South Koreans have broken the ceasefire, and it is a rush to a giant rock sculpture up ahead. I had filthy Americans left and right of me, pushing and crawling their way out. My eggs are well protected in a pouch I made of my own shirt; I feared for them. It was a steep decline down

a river bank infested with gorse. The ground beneath us turned to a mushy mess; you would sink if you were not careful. We finally made it to the top of the rock. Safe and sound for the North Koreans... for now.

Time: 10:40

We are now down on our stomachs. It has become too dangerous to stand on our legs. The long grass wraps around our feet as we crawl through and we have to fight it. Our clothes, packs and skin are now brown from the mud and smell of damp moss swamp.

BAM!

I had a fellow North Korean fall on top of me. There was terror in his face as he scrambled to get up. That is when I saw them coming towards me. The Americans were using brutal force to hold us down and get to our eggs. Crack. Crack. Crack. The golden yolk runs down my face. My eggs are gone. Their lives cut short by backstabbing scums. We were right not to trust them. I watched in hopelessness as they continued their killing spree. All I hear is the cries and wailing coming from behind me as more eggshells fall to the ground.

Time: 11:00

Finally! We got to our final destination. The magnificent "Penis Rock" stood proudly in front of us. We knew we have made it. Our clothes and packs were now soaked through, our hands and legs were cut up from the sharp plants surrounding us, our eggs are history, but looking at the remarkable monument standing in front of us, it was all worth it. Now, we just have to survive the journey back.

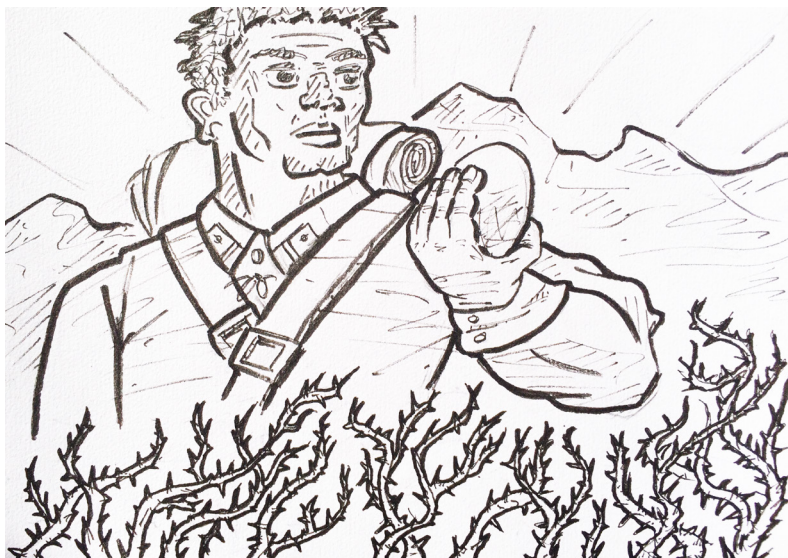
Time: 13:00

The tramp back was reasonably easier. The cold gave us the motivation to keep moving. The long grass and muddy ground were still not forgiving, but we were determined to get back.

Along the way, we stopped at the beach from which we started the tramp. The pink horse guy began to draw massive shapes in the sand. We all stood there, curious as to what he was about to do next. He then split us off into teams. It was one final battle.... Capture the flag.

On one side stood our glorious flags of North Korea. On the other stood the inferior nations. We had our runners and our defenders. Game on.

Hourse passed, and each side won their own little victories. But of course, North Korea came out on top.



As the sand flies devoured our legs and feet, we decided it was time to head back. We made our way back to the cars. We knew it was going to be all over soon.

Time: 16:00

We made it! We had survived. Even though it was an intense struggle against nature, North Korea triumphed. We will go back to our countries as heroes. The almighty Kim will reward us for our loyalty and devotion as he has promised. North Korea will always come out on top.

Mission Swamp Survival: COMPLETE

Mt Eden – Savage Mountain

Date: May 29th

Location: Mt. Eden

Leader: Timothy Gray

Author: Timothy Gray

The great mountains of the world exist in a league of their own, seen as mysterious and inaccessible to much of the public, while capturing the imagination of those who dare to climb them. However, danger exists at every turn for those who choose to set foot upon them. The Matterhorn, for example, has claimed over 500 lives by those who have dared to touch its precipitous slopes. Mt Everest has claimed over 200 lives of its own, and is famed for being a graveyard for those who attempt to defy nature and climb above 8000m. However, no mountain has quite captured the imagination, nor earned such a deadly reputation as Auckland's very own Mt Eden.



K2, a relatively easy mountain.

There exists danger at every turn for those who attempt the treacherous summit of Mt Eden. While the danger in other mountains lies in their precipitous rock faces, their avalanche prone terrain, or simply their immense altitude, greater challenges lie in store for those who wish to summit Mt Eden. Mt Eden does not have great rock faces to climb, nor snow field, and its modest elevation of 196m ensures that even the most sedentary people do not suffer from altitude sickness. However, many have fallen victim to having insufficiently ironed clothing on the summit. This necessitates special gear requirements, namely an iron and ironing board.

The first and one of the most crucial parts of the entire climb is the approach. From the University, an arduous 45 minute tramp leads to the base camp of Mt Eden. All gear must be carried on this route, which includes many objective dangers such as the Symonds St – K-Rd intersection. At this difficult part of the journey, the division between those who will survive and those who may not becomes quickly apparent. Of those who have perished on Mt Eden in recent years, none have been wearing suits and ties, widely regarded as being critical for surviving the harsh conditions at the summit.

Rachel “The Blacksmith” Smith irons inverted at the summit.



From the base camp, a gentle gradient leads to a winding path up the mountain. It is here that sweat typically starts to form in the armpits of climbers, a recipe for disaster if wearing a cotton shirt underneath their suits. As the 100m mark is reached, climbers typically unholster their irons, and get ready to do battle with their creases.

The final push to the summit is usually the hardest part of the ascent, with many failing to make the summit in the last push. It is also here that the majority of fatalities due to creased clothing occur. For those who do make it, however, there are great rewards in store. The view over the Auckland CBD is said to be splendid from here, especially at night time. However, the climb will have taken its toll on many by this point, and almost universal use of the iron and ironing board is recommended.

For some, the satisfaction provided by ironing in a conventional upright position is insufficient, and so inversion is performed to increase the satisfaction. Inverting the ironist is shown to reduce the effects of altitude sickness on the ironist, allowing them to better carry out their ironing with more blood in their heads. To further combat the harsh conditions at the summit, food and good fine wine is also often consumed.

Despite the legendary reputation of this savage mountain, and despite the concerted efforts of the Auckland University Tramping Club to encourage the use of irons and ironing boards in the climbing of this mountain, many forgo these essential items of safety gear. The take home message is: If there's a mountain to be explored, you'd better bring your ironing board!



The League of Extraordinary Ironists

Queen's Birthday Feasting and Revels

Date: 2nd-4th June,

Location: Kaimanawas

Attendees: Rachel Smith & Jack Hopman, Caroline Provost & Katy Mackenzie, Laura Jacks and Jason Rosinger, James Judd & Seb Judd + Sacha Knight & Kaya Shlomi, and Darina Khun & Sean Thomson

Author: Sean Thomson

Breakfast

Pancakes [From scratch]

Sunny-side eggs

Fresh banana smoothie

breakfast mash

Peanut Butter

Lunch: crackers and salami...

Dinner

Slow-cooked Schnitzel

Fresh NZ Beef, breaded in panko and fresh laid eggs, using high grade flour milled generously with herbs and spices. Slowly fried until golden brown late at night on the outside deck of a filled Waipakihi Hut, to infuse subtle hints of hunger and exhaustion. Comes with sides of white button mushrooms sautéed in fresh NZ butter, and Israeli couscous, seasoned with a generous splash of lemon. Additional cheese sauce and fresh greens optional.

Wild Woodfired Pizza

Baked in the Wapakihi Hut oven, our chefs have outdone themselves in their plethora of toppings, ranging from simple margherita to pepperoni to meatlovers to baking paper. Flour carried for miles on the back of a mule is known to acquire a certain flavour, which really comes into its own when kneaded into dough on a hut bench.

Drinks

In House Mulled Wine

Our finest chasseur, mulled to even greater perfection with our special range of spices and zest

Bayley's Irish Cream

To be drunk straight, or diluted with Tiramisu

Dessert

Tiramisu

Alcoholic or non-alcoholic options available Caramel Date

Puddings

available on request

Vegan Shepherd's Pie

Baked in a portable oven, this innovative dish combines the comfort of a homely classic with the comfort of a reasonable pack. Zero cruelty involved [vegans not included].

Rustic Spaghetti Bolognese

A time-tested classic, a staple in every tramper's repertoire. Al dente spaghetti served with freshly opened tomato paste and spiced sausages. Reminiscent of catered halls of residence.

We hope to have you at our next dining convenience.

Winter Solstice party

Date: 23rd June

Location: Tunnel Point, Karekare

Leader: James Judd

Participants: Seb Judd, James Judd, El Capitan, Jamie Corkill, Renjie Huang, Nicolas Lopez, Caroline Provost, Sudara Fernando, Conor Nelson, Sean Thomson, Stefanie Payne, Ngaire Metcalf, Scott Claessens, Shilo Zhang, Benjamin Peploe, Laura Jacks, Anoeck Grosmann, Jason Rosinger, Sophia Grifferty, Diego Hernandez, Jainee Shah, Nicola Tuckey, Anusha Dravid

Author: Laura Jacks

The winter solstice celebrations commenced at 8am, 23rd of June. I do not know what events unfolded that morning, as a rather poorly timed exam ensured I would not arrive until 4pm. All I know is that when we descended from the muddy banks in an attempt at an ambush, our plans were thwarted as the camp lay empty.

However, it wasn't long before we were greeted with bouts of laughter and welcomed into the winter solstice celebrations. Remnants of the day's activities could be seen all around. From the magnificent sand castle that lay on the beach and the feather boas that could be seen sticking out of bags, to the brightness of everyone's smiling faces. We were keen to join in and quickly donned our costumes before listening to their tales unfold.

Unfortunately, it would later be revealed that we'd angered the sun gods. Although we chanted for sun, we were given rain. At the time, I was perplexed! What had we done to merit this smite? It was only retrospectively that I remembered the horrible brew we had created, shortly before the rain began. It would be far too generous for me to refer to this questionable concoction as pasta. There is no doubt in my mind that this was the cause of the sun gods' rage. It was either that, or it took offence to the crudely made BDSM rope harness that one of our comrades adorned at dinner.

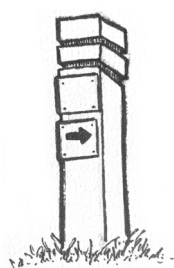
We soon forgot about the rain, as a more pressing matter needed to be addressed. We were informed that dementors were about. To avoid the trouble they inflicted, we were to wear knitted gimp masks and run towards two lights like moths to flames. All a while, ducking and hiding from their soul-sucking kiss.

It was not long before we put this terror behind us and began another round of celebrations. As the goon was raised, our spirits were high. We spent the evening frolicking around the speaker singing shouting along ABBA's greatest hits. Our otherwise pleasant night was interspersed with the sound of screaming coming from the glowing path James had created. He pulled us away one by one to experience its horror.

As the night wore on, our goons ran dry, and eventually, the batteries of our speakers followed suit. We found ourselves resounded to going to bed. We all curled up together underneath the large tarp and attempted to shield ourselves from the rude and rather persistent attacks from mosquitos. I say 'all', but one sleeping beauty found themselves lying alone amongst the bush litter.

When we awoke the next day, our insults to the sun god was realised further as we found ourselves swept up in a Noahesque storm. We floated out to sea, hanging on to whatever we could. The sand castle lay forgotten and so did the night's celebrations, as we acquainted ourselves with our almost inevitable demise. Just when we'd given up all hope, a great taniwha arose from the waves! He called to us, asking us what brought us into the fierce depths of the ocean. We replied, recounting our tales as I am to you now. The taniwha laughed and told about the temperamental ways of the sun god, "Oh, you should see him at Christmas!" he laughed. We did not explore this exclamation any further but instead asked for his help returning us to land. "I can do you one better!" he announced, "I'll take you back to your haukainga". Thankful, we agreed and began the process of climbing onto his back. I joked about how climbing, once so hated by trampers, was now saving their lives. The kind taniwha returned us home, and we thanked him again.

During my time on this trip, I saw and experienced a great many things. An elephant, a cow, a dinosaur impersonating a sun, and most importantly of all, a friendly taniwha, to whom we will all be forever grateful. All in all, although we may have been without our cave, we certainly had a raving good time.



Advanced snow school

Date: 24th-29th June

Location: Mt. Ruapehu

Instructors: Toby, Henry, Tuan and Natalie

People: Toby Jackson, Tuan Chien, Henry Conquer, Natalie Sharples, Richard Graham, Daniel Nogueira, Trent Porter, Natalie Villard, Alex Lischka, Max Jenkins, Jason Rose.

Author: Max Jenkins

Our journey begins with a group of huddled trampers with a collection of spiky things attached to them at the top of the Bruce at midnight looking at the total darkness, driving rain and mist. I think we can safely say that Toby got his money's worth; we spent the next 2 days in a blizzard in NZAC hut.

*"I identify as a type 2 fun enthusiast"*¹ -Toby Jackson



NZAC hut has tables that are just wide enough that you can pull off something called a table traverse on. This is where you lie on the table, climb underneath it, and pull yourself back up to where you started. You can do this lengthways (easier) or widthways (harder). This is a great climbing exercise and also a great way of establishing dominance over your fellow climbers, would recommend.

I personally have a couple of wire rim sunglasses for this trip, so I saw most of this through the snow-encrusted on said sunglasses (would not recommend). Though, as I understood, I was supposed to be doing something called crevasse rescue. This is where your climbing partner tragically falls into something and enters a state of unconsciousness/death/unable-to-move-to-stop-me-stealing-his/her-gear-and-running-away. If I were a good person, either morally or at rope work, I would now proceed to set up an elaborate pulley system to slowly pull them out. Needless to say, my partner Jason had enough time to dig himself a little snow cave while waiting for me to set all this up, but of course, we still did it fast enough to be back in time for dinner.

There's also this thing called pitching, where you set up an anchor and send your friend up a climb to place another anchor and belay yourself up to him/her. The issue with this is of course that if he falls, he has 2x the length of rope you let out before the anchor catches him; up to 120 metres...

"There's rock climbing safety, and then there's alpine safety". -Tuan Chien

Oh, and there's the off-chance you can't see or talk to your climber when they're pitching, so you have to communicate via tugs on the rope. Also, if you plant your anchors wrong they can pop out without much trouble and have everyone fall to their deaths. 10/10 would do again :D

Before the blizzard died out, we also had a solid attempt at snow camping. Having done this again since the trip, I should say I absolutely love snow camping, but perhaps not in 80km/h winds. You have to imagine you're Trump for a while and build a wall to keep the winds out, but we're still working on the part where you make the wind pay for it. A good way to do this is to cut blocks of ice out of somewhere in the surrounding area and stack them. This is very stable and remained long enough for the next snow school to see it.



When the weather finally cleared our lovely instructors set up top rope climbs, which for most of us was the first time we'd done ice climbing. Wielding ice axes in each hand and using them to grip onto random tiny edges of rocks is awesome, though it does require a few pull-ups. Your boots have to be really solid so they don't bend when you use only the front points of your crampons to climb (mine aren't), but they too work on absurdly small edges. It makes for a truly special experience, you should try it.

The following day we climbed to the plateau and pitch climbed the south face of Te Heuheu. I was a wee bit sketched out by the climb, but the view on top was incredible. It was the middle of winter so everything was covered in snow for miles around and the sky was perfect blue.

That night, we did a legendary tradition of the advanced snow school. The prusik traverse. A rope is strung between 2 carabiners attached to the roof, and the glorious climbers proceed to make their way up and down this system, kissing both carabiners on their way. They are allowed 2 prusiks and 2 screw gate carabiners. I can't remember what everyone did, but I'm pretty sure it wasn't how we were supposed to. I personally dropped one of my prusiks part way through and had to lift myself on the rope with one hand while pushing the prusik down with the other. Fun times. Lots of being upside down.

On the last day none of us really felt like doing much, so we had a snowball fight with our instructors, who tragically took the high ground and were only dethroned when their bums got too cold from sitting on the snow. We then managed to hitch a ride on the chairlifts by convincing them that we'd mess up their beautiful ski field with our nasty crampons. After lunch at the bar in National park (which has a doggo OMG :D:D:D:D:D) we made our way home to continue with our boring lives, but each of us having the drive to ascend something steep at midnight in the rain with sharp things attached to us. Or maybe not, maybe some of us like normal people times and nice weather. Who am I to judge?



Beginners Snowschool - Dirty Cups, Filthy Meat, Squeaky Immigrants

Date: June 28th - July 1st

Location: Mt. Ruapehu

Instructors: Maud and David

Participants: Maud Tissink, David Zeng, Anoek Grossman, Conor Nelson, Hao Zhang, Kiera Montgomery, Sean Thomson, Matthew Mulvey, Thomas Clarkson

Author: Sean Thomson

The cars left Auckland just in time to catch the farewell traffic. Our destination? None other than Ruapehu, to equip a mixed group of trampers and climbers with skills to tackle the alpine environment. We had the entirety of Mangahua Campsite to ourselves, where we had practice setting up alpine tents on the icy ground. The next morning, we decided that this was enough tenting experience, and we left them with the cars the next day.

We made our way up to the bottom of the ski field to begin the approach. Shiny new crampons were fitted, and the sun glowed warmly in its set mantle of blue. The group spread out according to hobbies, with walkers scrambling up ridges and climbers struggling with the low-grade slab. At last, several pitches later, NZAC Ruapehu Hut was in sight! This meant that we could unload our packs, enjoy some lunch and that Sean would finally put on some long pants.

At the hut we emptied our kit, bags'ing bunk spaces, and in total producing ten unbroken eggs, nine onions, eight toilet rolls, seven heads of broccoli, six litres of wine, five kilograms of mince, four bags of biscuits, three packets of bacon, two tiers of chocolate beetroot cake and one coconut. We were going to eat well on this one.

We spent the rest of the day working on self-arrests and avalanche safety. This involved sliding down snow slopes and hunting for buried transceivers, preparing us for life-threatening situations while still in safe conditions, under the watchful gaze of experienced alpinists.

As the sun set, we retreated to the hut for our first feast. We made short work of the bottled wine, leaving us no other alcoholic alternatives than to start on the casked stuff. Merriment and revelry ensued, in the forms of table traversing and floor-sucking with fellow patrons of the hut, and the guys all went for a fraternal run outside the hut together. That night, we settled into our cosy bunks, most certainly not making an alpine start of things the next day.

The sun was just rising as we tentatively poked our heads outside. Today we were continuing up the mountain, looking out for avalanche zones and variation in terrain along the way. We crossed the summit plateau, had a peek at the toasty-looking crater lake, and shimmied our way up Dome to crack open the coconut.

On our way down Whakapapa glacier, we stopped to appreciate the snow-cave that a miscellany of other AUTC members were digging at the time. We arrived back at the hut in time for a late lunch, and David and Maud set up a top rope for us to play around on for the rest of the day.

As we returned and opened the door to the hut, we nearly lost David as a minor avalanche of unwashed cups cascaded down upon him. The air was heavy with our neighbours' mulled wine, and the benchtops ran red with the blood of their murderously non-vegan steaks. A gale blew outside, the heater ticked ominously. The scene was set for an alpine coven.

Suddenly, we were visited by none other than the Ghost of Foreign Affairs! It took us on a psychedelic journey to show us the outcome of immigration on the rising cost of gear in New Zealand. All suitably shaken, we retired, unwilling to find out what the Ghost of Acting Prime Minister Present had in store for us, and reluctant to check Sitka's price range.

In the morning we packed our bags, tidied the hut and had a final avo talk before heading out. The weather was less than ideal, and the climbers wanted to see the view from the chairlift, so the trampers begrudgingly allowed a mechanised detour down to the parking lot. We rolled down to the finest pub of National Park, where we said our goodbyes, ate nachos, and Matt drowned in a bowl of soup. All in all, a fine adventure.

Ngauruhoe and Taranaki climbing

Date: 4th-6th July

Participants: Sean Thompson, Anoek Grosmann, Laura Jacks, Jason Rosinger, Conor Nelson, Max Jenkins, ~~Caroline Provo~~

Author: Max Jenkins

“Pretty keen to get up at 3am” - Jason Rosinger

We did so on one misty Friday morning, and huddled into our cars to make our way to the elusive National park. My car, “the Lichenmobile”, is a bit antique, and its aircon wasn’t feeling too good, so we spent a while with Jason’s beautiful new RAB Neutrino endurance sleeping bag on top of us (basically like seeing the face of God) and making stops at each Maccas along the way to see if we could get some student fries and ice cream. The day warmed up and as we ran into some wonderful muffins and croissants in the Taumaranui Countdown we began to feel like going up Ngauruhoe in the same day as driving there might just work.

“Probably don’t follow me. The ice just made a funky sound” - Max Jenkins

Being particularly clever, we skipped the devil’s staircase and tried to go up a more direct route using a scree slope. This probably wasted us a fair bit of time, but, you know.. fun. This called for a break. The climb up the ridge is interesting for some of the flimsier bits of rime ice, particularly if you value your crampons. We got there with time, effort and gummy bears and took selfies on top before deciding the wind is very much cold and the sun was getting low, and looking rather tentatively at the steepish descent.



We did get a beautiful sunset on the way down, which happened just in time for Jason to realise he was missing a glove. We went back down the shortcut from the devil’s staircase with torches scanning for a black glove against black rocks. By some miracle we did find them (credit to Anoek Grosmann). As I write this Jason is now on his fourth instance of leaving gloves behind and they’re currently in my house sitting next to a pile of spiky things which are waiting to go to Toby’s place, after he left them in my car. No judge.

We got home after an exciting night time gravel drive in “The Lichenmobile” and after dinner happened to make a very special round of hot chocolate. This was so strong it put us all to sleep and forever destroyed our plans of getting up at 3am again to climb Taranaki. We woke up at something something 10am.

The next day or two involved a series of short (and somewhat questionable) adventures during which we gradually descended into insanity. First things first, we tried to go to Mangaturuturu hut down the waterfall face from Oakhune mountain road. We got there, made it part of the way down the waterfall, and found something that could sort of pass for an ice climb.





Sort of. We didn't have crampons on us because, obviously.. but we all had a go, and, well, doing ice climbs without crampons turns out to be surprisingly tricky; who knew? While not climbing we also took a few rather seductive photos of Jason which are MINE. YOU CAN'T HAVE THEM.

We also made a snowman by Turoa skifield and gave it hugs. Caroline was, for a short time, part of the party. This was followed by a wonderful cook off that evening, in which Conor attempted to deepfry mars bars and failed miserably, for which we still haven't forgiven him!

"Not like this, dude" - Conor, upon failing to deepfry his mars bars.

The following day the plan was to go to blyth hut, drop off Sean and Anoek to go do a round the mountain trip and head back, nice and simple. We started off this trip with an interesting delicacy. If you put 10 or so gummy bears and a couple of spoonful's of Nutella into a tortilla wrap you get something which has a very high energy content but is also absurdly difficult to eat. 10/10 would recommend.

Unfortunately Conor found out that he was missing some essential food ingredients part way along the walk. He absolutely had to go back to the car and get it, so we made our way up close to Blyth hut to chill and wait for him. In a moment of genius, he missed the turnoff to Blyth hut and went a solid while before realising that this wasn't the boardwalk he was looking for. He came back to find a crime scene!



That stuff could be best described as 'liquid strawberry flavoured sugar' and makes for excellent slushies. It's rather a delicacy to eat said slushy off the adze of an ice-axe. By the time Sean and Anoek headed off to their round the mountain trip they were bouncing from the amount of sweets we had pumped into them, and ready to face the 100km/h winds that was in the forecast the following couple of days.

That part wasn't a joke. Sean and Anoek did the round the mountain, walking from Rangipo to Waihohonu hut in 100k winds and snow while the rest of us settled down to a road trip of ABBA, student fries and lichen.

"I still haven't summited Taranaki. Send help"
-Max, the National Park hut book (2016-2018)

Jason proceeded to take me up Ruapehu and get up at 5am a couple of weeks later. Clearly none of us have learned our lessons.

The Queen Charlotte Tramp

Dates: 7th – 11th July

Location: Queen Charlotte, Marlborough Sounds

Trampers: Carmen Chan, Himamshu Umesh, Tan Yan, Naveen Weeratunga.

Author: Carmen Chan

The unexpected visitation of the Southern Right Whale was a probable harbinger to the events that would ensue. Recruited in a spur of spontaneity, four trampers embarked upon a five day journey from Wellington Harbour to the Marlborough Sounds to tramp the Queen Charlotte Track.

In the weekend that we commenced the tramp, the Sounds experienced more rainfall than it had seen for over a month. When we began the tramp at Ship Cove, we had been joined by a group of schoolboys taking the same boat transfer from the East Cape. By the time that we reached Cowshed Bay on day 3, the boys had bailed, teacher had opted for a cabin in lieu of his tent, and we found that pitching a tent involved stabbing tent poles into the ground under 20mm of water. Nevertheless, the journey was one coloured by a stunning plethora of flora, fauna, and a healthy dosing of aqua-jogging.

The Queen Charlotte route is well-formed, and barring a cyclone (which, according to the boys was the weather system that we tramped in for the first two days, so perhaps including even a low-grade cyclone), it made for a remarkably beautiful journey that took us for a broad panorama of the Sounds. The confluence, the turbulent ocean, crumpled peaks, the odd goat and flitting fantail is enough to satisfy the stiffest of sensibilities. As the weather cleared for the latter half our journey, the lookouts from the Bay of Many Coves to Te Mahia gave us a continuous view of the expanding ocean.



Eatwells Lookout, Queen Charlotte Track

To give a prosaic account of our journey (if anyone might choose to repeat the venture), here is our route:

Day 1: Wellington to Picton via Interislander Ferry. Boat service to Ship Cove, Ship Cove to Resolution Bay.

Day 2: Resolution Bay to Camp Bay (7h, 23km)

Day 3: Camp Bay to Torea Saddle to Cowshed Bay (8h, 24.5km)

Day 4: Cowshed Bay to Anakiwa (8h, 20km)

To give an artistic summation of our lived human experiences, we wrote a song to describe our joys and our sufferings (which can also be played as a polka with the sheet music):

Queen Charlotte Polka

Carmen Chan
Cynthia Wratt

Through wind and rain

G C B A

We walked the coves

G C D E

Saw I.D.P.*

G G^{va} E D

Any many goats.

G C B C

(Repeat)

The sun was fair

C D E G

Clouds disappeared C B C A

Stout weka came

G G^{va} E D

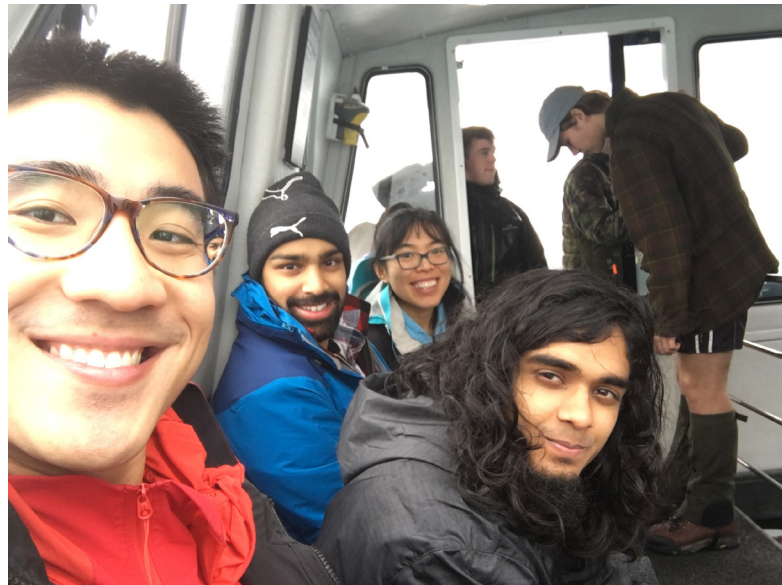
And stole our gear

G A B C

*I.D.P. = Illusion de Panoramique



Following our four days traversing the coast, finding new physics phenomena, and living with the weka, we arrived at Anakiwa and met up with fellow AUTC adventurer Finn Drummond, who was living and working at the local Outward Bound. We spent the rest of the afternoon looking around the site, viewing the high ropes section and the hidden apple trees. Later towards the evening we eventually got a lift out to Picton with Naveen's fortuitous paternal connections after discovering that the roads had partially re-opened after the storm. The evening was spent jamming with a non-tunable guitar in front of the hostel fire, and raiding of local Picton book stores prior to the departure in our ways.



Yan, Naveen, Carmen and Himamshu
on boat to Ship Cove with school boys (Left to right)

TOP DEFINITION



Illusion de panoramique

The phenomenon by which horizontal rain, when [superimposed](#) upon distant landscapes (e.g. mountain ranges) creates a [kaleidoscope](#) effect where the [panorama](#) appears to move away from the viewer. Also known colloquially through the acronym as 'I.D.P.'

"Man, this [horizontal rain](#) is awful, but check out that I.D.P illusion de panoramique- those vistas are [spacey!](#)"

#mountains #illusion #mountain #vista #kaleidoscope #ranges #rain #horizontal rain #water #paronama #panoramique #illusion de paroramique #optical illusion #wilderness #tramping #hiking #wet #sunlight #vertical rain #angular rain #moving #i.d.p. #ocean #drizzle #mist

by [carcha](#) July 13, 2018

I.D.P. was coined in the urban dictionary as a result of this trip, where after seeing a lot of rain decorate our distant vista, we discovered a new phenomenon:

Snow School

Date: 12th-15th July

Location: Ruapehu

Instructors: Sach Knight, Brendan Graf

Students: Maxine Opatril, Eder Lee, Thomas Chu, Waldron Martis, Jeremy Shelley, Abigail Birkin-Hall, Terence Beeton, Emily McGeorge

Author: Eder Lee

The crackling crunch of glazed snow
under spiked-heels.
Cold and sharp, wind whistles on exposed skin.
Gasps of awe sneak between ragged breaths –
on the left, like a row of jagged teeth,
the antediluvian jaws of the Pinnacles yawn skywards.

Ngauruhoe, cast in silhouette
by the morning light,
looms imposingly
over the meadow of distant clouds.
To our right, the Whakapapa Glacier
cambers downwards in an elegant rill,
framed in picturesque beauty by a
rim of peaks and the verdant greenery
in the far-below horizon.
Ahead of us, the grueling ascent
towards the Summit.

Neither picture nor prose can capture the wave of emotions that wash over you as you clamber over the precipice. In truth, memory is insufficient as well. I yearn to be on the mountain again. To once again see the pristine expanse of the Summit Plateau. To watch the last golden peals of sunlight play upon empty snow fields. To feel the camaraderie of easy laughter and exhausted smiles from a day well spent. To sit in contented silence with a hot cup of Milo, as we watch the mountain mist enshroud us once more.



Re-O Camp

20-22 July, 2018

Leader: James Judd

Location: Karangahake Gorge

“I do a lot of hiking back home in the States,” I told one of the long-time tramping club members.

“Hiking? What the f*** is *hiking*?”

For the next five months, I will never say the word “hiking” again, unless I want to intentionally piss off the kiwis and distinguish myself as a member of Team USA.

I arrived in rainy Auckland as an exchange student from sunny California, USA, and when I unintentionally ran into the University’s Tramping Club tent, I took it as a sign that I should join. Myself and a few other American students (referred to as Team USA) signed up to go on the weekend trip because it was affordable and an easy way to meet new people. Before we knew it we were all in a van headed to a park that I couldn’t pronounce.

We arrived after dinner on Friday night and at that moment, I realized just how odd this club was. The first game we played was something called “Try to Get Your Body Around the Entire Table Without Touching the Ground”. How do you play the game? You try to get your body around the entire table without touching the ground. I was amazed at how hard the task actually was. My friend came out of the game with bruises. What a trooper.

When the time for sleep came, I realized that none of Team USA had brought sleeping bags. We were told that blankets would be just fine, but some of the boys decided that they’d be fine sleeping under a sheet or a towel. They were so wrong.

Morale was low for us in the morning, as we ate our mush and drank our coffee, but our mood quickly changed as soon as we started walking. Walking through Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park was exactly what my body needed after my poor night’s sleep. The sun was shining and we were all smiling as we trekked through a landscape that I had never seen before. We crossed rivers and got to know each other along the way, and after a few hours ended up back at the cars and headed back for the games. I thought the day was almost over but I had no idea how competitive this club was about their games!

I was one of the hostages for the blue team in the most intense game of Capture the Flag I had ever witnessed. I don’t remember much about each team’s strategies, but I’m pretty sure James’ was to run around and confuse as many people as possible. He succeeded. The blue team came out on top and we continued to play more games throughout the night.

After another cold night, we woke up, cleaned up, and got out of there. I went into the weekend with absolutely no expectations of how it would be, and left with some new friends and a new hobby: tramping.

I still have no clue what extreme ironing is though.

Legally snow - the tale of advanced bush(lawyer)craft

Leaders: James Judd and Sach Knight

Location: Kaimanawa Ranges

Attendees: Max Jenkins, Sean thomson, Mathew Pearce, Laura Jacks, Kaya Shlomi, Madeleine Marnoch, Daniel Tidbury, Danielle Johnson, Renjie Mike Huang, Jason Rosinger, Georgia McCrory-Bowick and Anoeck Grosmann

Date: 24th-27th August

It all started out at a small takeaway shop in the humble town of Huntly, as we were finally past the Friday night outbound Auckland traffic! Several hours driving and fully loaded on musical theatre hits, we arrived in the dark at a frosty campsite in the Kaimanawas, where we quickly battled with our exceptional accommodation of club tents to rest for the night.

The morning started with a presentation of personal safety whistles and James driving his car to the start of the track with a questionable amount of his body out of the window.

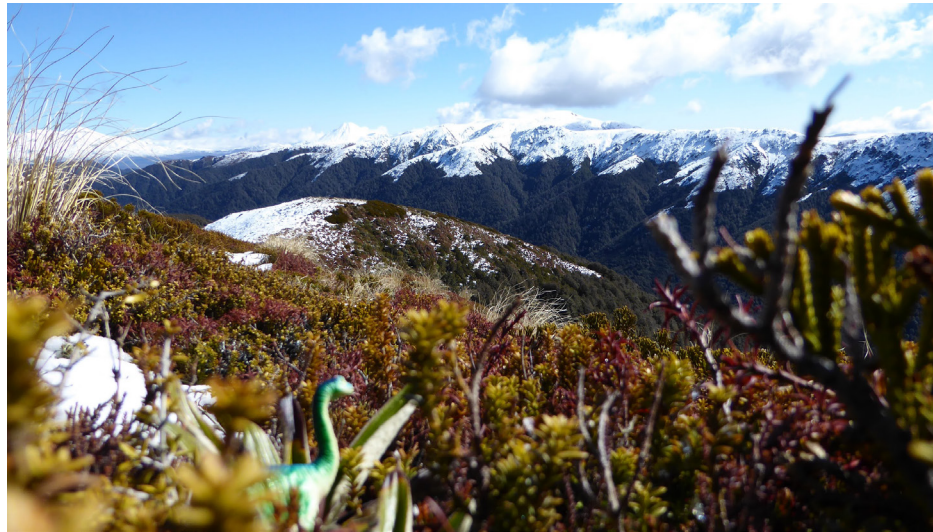
Ascending ridge one of three for the weekend, we practised our navigation skills for elevation precision. Unfortunately, Max and I both didn't want the chocolate fish. Once out of the bushline, the best part of the day was spent trudging through deep snow. We enjoyed lunch under the peak of Umukarikari.

A few hours later we saw a hut! We came 30m close to a hut! We entered the realm with type 2 fun of cold, wet boots, which was to be a recurring theme for the rest of the trip. Having made and had dinner in practice shelters, by dark most of the group was pretty cold. A Fantastic time to go for a late night navigational search for a campsite!

In summary, this event involved either "directed falling" down cliffs or battling bushlawyer followed by the first-ever performance of large group bird imitating evening safety whistle whistling. Once reassembled, we made camp by what turned out to be an old spot for now "outdated" traps.



Following a relaxed start time and waking up half out of the tarp shelter, we ascended unnamed ridge two. Pausing for a casual snack, it turned into lunch by having a quality photo session (I am not sure if my camera agrees). Once rested, we prepared for what was meant to be a relatively quick navigational exercise; to get to the bottom and meet at a river intersection. As we were in four groups of three going down at 20 min intervals, it should have taken about 2 hours.



In short;

- Group one found a hunters track to the bottom and made waffles with an iron waffle cast.
- Group two got there in the end... (We got good at whistling)
- Group three decided not to follow the footprints in the snow and had a nice long encounter with cliffs and beloved bushlawyer.
- Group four followed a similar route to group one and "chilled".

The next morning we groggily overslept and awoke to frozen boots (some had to boil water to get into them). Those who had initially resisted the wetting of boots earlier in the trip stomped right in. After a good stream bash, we ascended Umu-karikari again (without a track of course!). From there, we enjoyed a breezy lunch with a wide variety of landscape views.



Pinnacles Day Trip Fanfiction

Date: September 29th

Location: Pinnacles

Leader: Sean Thomson

Attendees: Aja Loo, Bill Smugs, Derek Chan, Dylan Cleaver, Evgeniia Golovina, Frederique Derks, Lena Hartebrodt, Liz Vouk, Rachel Smith, Renjie Mike Huang, Sacha Knight, Samuel Roeslin, Scott Claessens, Sean Thomson

Illustration: Connor Murdoch

Kevin the Kiwi awoke with a start, as one usually does when a noisy lot of trampers walk by.

“Ever since they put up that ‘Long Trestle’ tourist sign, people have been trampling right through my grassy home... it really will not do,” he thought malcontentedly to himself, fluffing his feathers indignantly. Kevin decided enough was enough, and that it was time to act.

“Now, if you look over here,” chief guide Bill Smugs began, “You’ll see classic remains of kauri log-AH, SH*T!”

“What!? What’s wrong, Bill?” Sach asks, concerned for his dear friend.

“I JUST GOT PRICKED IN THE REAR BY SOMETHING SMELLY,” was the uncharacteristically animated response, gruff with constipation.

This was the beginning of a new life for Bill.



Unbeknownst to the rest of the group, Bill had been attacked by Kevin the Kiwi, who, unfortunately for Bill, happened to be the successor to the deadly martial art of Hokuto Shin Ken, a mythic fighting style which targeted the body’s pressure points. Kevin had used his long, sensitive beak to strike with pinpoint precision the points that control bowel movements, along with associated brain functions. From now on, Bill would live with a fascination for all things crappy.

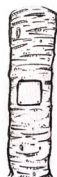
Once a proud civil engineer, Bill had quickly forgotten his ambition to become the finest waste manager the country had ever seen. Instead, Bill was consumed by his hunger for knowledge of the world’s sewage systems. His engineering past all but forgotten, Bill made a studious scientist, and quickly became a self-taught expert in effluence. Though he once possessed extraordinary mental faculties, much of his knowledge was from intimate experience.

Since his run-in with Kevin he felt perpetually bloated, and otherwise needed to drain his bowels at least twice per day (thrice on weekends and on bank holidays). Bill’s outstanding intellect soon grew bored at the prospect of urban wastewater treatment, and his body soon began to reject flushing toilets, often with disastrous consequences. Bill knew what he had to do. What he’d always done (at least what he’d been doing most weekends since semester two of his first year at university, when he had joined AUTC, looking for adventure, innovative dunny design and girls who cared ever so slightly less after a day spent walking up the Tarawaere Track to the Pinnacles to enjoy the view before running back down the main path where he would eat plain 2-minute noodles straight off the ground after spilling them from his slightly too small billy without a decent handle while trying to transfer them to his bowl while the pot was still scalding hot to the touch and liable to slip out of his improvised tea towel oven mitt). Bill went tramping.

This is one such origin tale recounting how Bill Smugs came to be the expert bog assessor of the backcountry burg. Still, there are unanswered questions. What made Bill start communicating only in SLIGHTLY DERANGED ALL CAPS? How does Bill finance his adventures, if his fear of civilised waste management prevents him from settling down? And how on earth did a kiwi get a name, and learn a fictitious martial art, and not actually get eaten as an egg by a hungry stoat?

TUNE IN NEXT TIME, FOR MORE ON THESE MYSTERIES, AND MORE...

IN 20XX, HE WAS SENT TO UNIVERSITY BY HIS FAMILY FOR A CAREER HE DIDN’T WANT. HE PROMPTLY ESCAPED FROM HIS ENGEN LECTURES TO THE NEW ZEALAND BACKCOUNTRY. TODAY, STILL WANTED BY STUDYLINK, HE SURVIVES AS A SELF-APPOINTED BOG-DWELLING ASSESSMENT OFFICER. IF YOU HAVE A LONG-DROP, AND NO ONE ELSE CAN USE IT, AND IF YOU CAN FIND HIM, MAYBE YOU CAN COMMISSION BILL SMUGS.



Foodies go north

Dates: October 29th-30th

Location: Lane Cove

Trip leaders: Fran and Abi

Participants: Fran, Abi, Joseph

Official chef: Joseph Griffiths

Author: Abi with help from Fran



I flew back from Wellington in the morning, was picked up at the airport by Joe, had a brief foray at my flat to swap bags, and left for Tai Tokerau in Fran's car. We got KFC, stopped at the Hundertwasser toilets for a photoshoot, and listened to Beyoncé et al, as is required on any trip with Fran. The walk in to Lane Cove was lovely and straightforward, though I was the only one with completely dry feet. I was pleased with this. We saw no one on the trail and arrived to find the hut empty. Joe started cooking couscous 'n stuff and Fran and I started cutting up veggies and feta (but mostly just eating feta). The resulting salad was enjoyed by all (90% of the salad was feta tbh), and mango vodka and pineapple juice was enjoyed by Joe and I.

There was chocolate and biscuits and yummm goodness all of us love food so much. We had a delicious breakfast of leftovers and chocolate porridge and hot chocolate (with melted Whittaker's!) the next morning I had a short photo shoot at the hut for my insta followers (I'm insta famous) and continued to see no one else on the walk back. We stopped at the Nosh in Kerikeri, I believe (we didn't know if it was the last one in NZ or not) and the pretty porcelain toilets in Kawakawa (again). The drive back was otherwise uneventful but filled with, you guessed it, Beyoncé and similar artists.



Halloween Party

Date: The weekend of Halloween

Participants: James, Seb, Jason, Laura, Zoe, Collin, Darina Ballerina Glasses Cleana, Campbell, Feikje, Rachel, Shilo, Paul, Anusha, Jack, Mike

Author: James Judd

Location: Hell

Many things happened that night, but quite frankly, there is only one thing that was truly great enough to be recounted and remembered for the rest of club history. It was the Priest's vlogging career. It started off innocently enough, he had a jolly time and was as happy as Larry. Dinner was eaten, games were played and victims "conveniently" disappeared on the Burma trail. After some hard partying and epic vlogging, the priest slumped over a table for a quick nana nap for half an hour. The transformative half an hour. Over that period he had a vision, saw the light and suddenly woke up to realize the true potential of his newly acquired GoPro Hero. He jumped into the middle of the partying maniacs, filming like there was no tomorrow until his energy started to wear out so he went outside to recount the events that had just taken place for his future records. Slowly, the Heavens gave him the power to re-enter the party and continue his antics of collecting glow sticks and throwing them at James, one at a time, before hitting the wall again and going outside to record his take on the events. It was then, as he was vlogging about the epic craziness the party was emitting that the power of the Gods took over and released an awesome power, mid-vlog, from the depths of his mortal body, projecting the contents of his stomach and freeing the priest of any evil being.



The Tale of Five Passes

Dates: 27th December 2018 – 3rd January 2019

Boot Members: Asolo & Olosa – “Bog finder”, Scar & Papa- “Cairn finder”, Ewa & Sal – “Shelter finder”, Gar & Mont - “Route finder”, Tom & Jerry – “Pronavigator”, Mer & Rill – “Mountain radio”

Humans: Carmen Chan, Hannah Brightley, Hamish Chan, Ben Nistor, Sarah Daniell, Hayley Ware

Passes: Fohn Saddle, Fiery Col, Cow Saddle, Park Pass, North Col

Distance: 65km

Author: Carmen Chan

Hey Folks! My name’s Asolo. I’m the tramping boot for Carmen’s left foot. Olosa is my fellow companion boot for Carmen’s right foot. She’s drying elsewhere, so you probably won’t hear from her-

Olosa: “Excuse me. I’m right up here.”

[Shakes her laces from the branch above.]

Asolo: “Er...anyways. Today, whilst we’re drying, we’re going to tell you a little story about our recent adventures to the Five Passes.”

Olosa: “Probably because Carmen’s never going to tell it right. We get right close to the action, bottoms up, ground zero, you know...”

The 5 Passes – Osolo’s Poem:

Twelve boots go a-hiking
Underneath the summer sun
Heavy laden with great packs
Their leather has some fun.

They clamber up steep ranges
And toward a lot of peaks.
They glimpse wild birds and flora
Travel more than just a week.

How grand the mountains tower
In the Beans and Routeburn range
Twelve boots and six explorers
Danced in fields as New Year came.



This stout company traversed
Across fiery skies five passes.
Through heat, rain, thunder, lightning
And then across great grasses.

How wondrous 'tis to wander
And then tent on Lake Nerine.
Such wild and beautiful country
Too long has been left unseen.

What need is there to shower
When wild rivers roar with rain?
By day eight, the icy streams
Cleansed away all aches and pain.

Fiordland and Aspiring
Such parklands are treasure troves.
Go sink your boots in landscapes
Celebrate this earth, behave.

Visit here for the full story: <https://tramptalesnz.blogspot.com/>

Photographs

Wandering along the Bryneira Range.

Camping out on New Years Eve – post
Cow Saddle

Ascending Fiery Col, Five Passes

Descent from Fiery Col, Hidden Falls
Creek

The crew! Carmen, Hannah, Ben, Sarah,
Hayley, Hamish (Left to Right)

Rock Bivvy – two shelves for sleeping two
groups, along the Beans Burn



Summit (sunburn) Luncheon

Date: 7-9 December

Location: Ruapehu

Leader: Max Jenkins

The Squad: Max Jenkins, James Judd, Anoek Grosmann, Daniel Tidbury, Jason Rose, Laura Jacks, Nicola Caitlin, Sach Knight, Sean Thompson

Author: Max Jenkins



Our story began one rainy day when Sach sent a challenge to Victoria Uni tramping club to play a game of cricket against the very best in AUTC on the summit of Ruapehu. Once upon a time, there was an honoured tradition of having such a game each year, for which Vic still holds the trophy. Impressed by our skills and fashion sense, they cowardly declined, but we still had a weekend to kill, and James had stuff in his house that hadn't gone up Ruapehu yet.

A couple of weeks later 2 cars rolled up to the top of the Bruce, along with 2 kayaks on top of James' new car (who goes by the name of Rambo). With them came our heroes bringing jeans, umbrellas, flags, fancy teacups and in some cases actual tramping gear.

Taking kayaks up through scoria was a bit trickier than we anticipated. The smaller kayak weighed 12kg and fit neatly on James' back with a minimum of headbanging and balance issues, but the larger one weighed 20kg and needed to be carried between 2 people. This made climbing up ridges rather interesting. We arrived at NZAC hut in need of a lot of water and chocolate.

Luck shone in our favour. From here on out it was snow all the way up, so Jason in his wisdom created a sled arrangement of sorts, using sling rather like you would to make an anchor in climbing. It makes it just about possible to walk along with it; possible enough that the kayak teams went faster than I did up the hill. One issue with kayak hauling is that it's rather difficult to stop to slap on sunscreen. This turned out to spell tragedy for us...

We arrived at the summit plateau and began sunbathing immediately. Those of us who weren't on kayak duty began to build the sleeping arrangements, and what sleeping arrangements they were! We dug a slot out of a snowdrift to make a flat sheltered spot on which to pitch tents.

Sach and James, unconvinced by the amount of suffering we'd encountered thus far, proceeded to make some igloo walls to pitch their tarp over. This took many hours and was truly a marvel of engineering. The blocks fit snugly together and the walls were stunningly well aligned. There was a doorway, buttresses, kayaks and probably Wi-Fi.



What a wonder of the modern world. Such skill and finesse impressed the tramping gods so much that they decided to join in the fun!



BILL SMUGS

to me

21/12/2018 [View details](#)



MAD MAX JENKINS,

WHAT A STELLA OF AN OPPORTUNITY! COUNT US IN! THE OTHER WEEK WE FOUND OUT THAT HUTCHINS CAN DROP A LOG SO FEROCIOUSLY THAT IT SENDS EVERYONE IN THE outhouse BACK IN TIME. WE'RE GOING TO BE USING THIS MEANS OF TIME TRAVEL TO MAKE IT TO THE TRIP, SO HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ABOUT HUTCHINS BEING A PLUS 1.

SEE YOU A WEEK AGO JENKINS

BILL

Sadly, the tramping gods are cruel beings with minds of their own. The temperature was above zero during the night, then Sach, James, Nicola and Daniel started hearing mysterious sounds from the walls of their igloo. First, they built in additional structural supports, then followed this with additional pegging for the tarp. Eventually, they decided to sit there and nudge the worst of the blocks away from them and tried to sleep. In the morning we gazed with mixed feelings of disappointment and amusement at the results.

Such fun. I personally slept like a somewhat unruly baby in my tent through all of this, stopping only to stumble around at 2am trying to appreciate the stars through my shivering, also to contemplate my life decisions while trying to ignore my sun-burnt legs. What a thing it is to be at the centre of the action.



The slings served us well on the way down, and the kayaks finally paid off for some beautiful, fully safety conscious hightails down the Whakapapa glacier. Apparently, you can sit on the rear end of the kayak and use an ice axe to turn the kayak around and eventually break it or wait till you run into a flat spot. Either way, they are certainly a step up from bum sliding and hopefully justified the effort required to bring them up.

At this point, it bears mentioning that every single person in the group was quite severely sunburnt. It was super-hot atop of the mountain, and we'd spent the day in T-shirts. Despite our best efforts to steal Laura's supplies of sunscreen, everyone had developed some impressive tan lines by the end of the trip. Highlights include James' tomato red legs and Sach's neck blister.

We slogged our way down the ski slopes once again and gladly collapsed into our cars. Couches in National park made a good break before the journey home accompanied by 70s music and attempts to shade our legs from the sun.

*"I think this an instance of type *i*^l fun, where it's glorious but you can't do it for 2 weekends in a row." -Max*

The fun didn't end there, and we spent another week or so comparing blisters, tan lines and peeling. This hasn't dissuaded James from planning to bring trees up the mountain next year. I hope VUWTC is pleased with themselves.

The AUTC Iris Burn Project



Former AUTC members from the 80's have formed a group for DOC's Valley project, which sets out to connect groups of passionate outdoors people with specific valleys in Fiordland. The aim is to set traps to eradicate pests and raise native bird population numbers. Each group gathers donations from its members and organizes the installation of automated traps in their valley and keeps them operational for five years.

The AUTC Iris Burn Project is a volunteer based campaign and will run on donations, primarily for purchasing traps. So far there has been great interest expressed, and only set to grow since the project is in its early days. The first trap-setting trip will be going out in March 2019; among the volunteers are AUTC members Sophie Jenkins and Abi Hill. The goal will be to set 100 traps over five days in the Upper Iris Burn main river valley (6km) and to establish marked traplines.

There is opportunity for current AUTC members who are experienced hikers to volunteer in the future. To find out more, visit and join the facebook group:

The AUTC Iris Burn Project

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/228565311209431/>

AUTC trips and events of 2018

Compiled by Andrew Battley

Edited by Andrew Battley, James Judd and Anna Kalatcheva



Date	Trip/event	Location	Leader
3-4 March	O Camp	Hunuas	James Judd
9-11 March	Bush Skill Series Trip 1	Kaimai Ranges	J.Judd & Sach Knight
9-11 March	Tongariro Alpine Crossing	Tongariro	Yi Xin Heng
10-11 March	Kaimanawas Weekend Excursion	Kaimanawas	Daniel Scholes
15-March	Wine and Cheese	Mt Eden	Timothy Gray
16-18 March	Pouakai Circuit	Taranaki	Seb Bailey
17-March	Waiheke Island Day Tramp	Waiheke	Chris Holyer
19-21 March	Waitawheta Tramway	Kaimais	Debra Ballard
22-March	AUTC/AURAC pub quiz	Shadows	James Judd
23-25 March	Basic Bush School	Kaimanawas	Andrew Battley
23-25 March	Bush Skill Series Trip 2	Kaimais	J.Judd & Sach Knight
24-25 March	Ruapehu: Whangaehu Hut	Ruapehu	Max Jenkins
30 March - 12 April	Epic South Island Trip		Seb Bailey
30 March - 3 April	Tongariro Around the Mountain	Tongariro	Nikki Reed
31 March - 2 April	Te Paki Coastal Track	Cape Reinga	Timothy Gray
1-3 April	Cape Brett	Cape Brett	Yi Xin Heng
1-April	Tawharanui Day Trip + Volunteering	Tawharanui	Wing Kam
2-3 April	Pinnacles	Pinnacles	Wing Kam
6-8 April	Ruapehu: Summit Plateau Camping	Ruapehu	Rachel Smith
6-8 April	Tongariro Northern Circuit	Tongariro	Chris Holyer
6-8 April	Ngauruhoe Extreme Ironing	Mt Doom	Timothy Gray
7-8 April	Leitch's Hut	Whareorino	Fran Osten
12-14 April	Abel Tasman Coastal Track	Abel Tasman	Abi Hill
13-15 April	Bush Skills Series Trip 3	Kaimai Ranges	J.Judd & Sach Knight
17-April	Movie night	Movies	James Judd
22-April	Baiting 1	Waitakere Ranges	Amelia Verrall
21-April	Fastpacking trip 1	Pirongia	Wing Kam
25-April	Rangitoto Anzac Day	Rangitoto	James Judd
26-April	Kawekas	Kawekas	Sean Thomson
28-29 April	T'WALK	Christchurch	Various
28-29 April	Mystery Tramping Trip	People still don't know	Wing Kam
1-May	Posh Dins	McDonald's, Queen St	James Judd
3-4 May	Northern Circuit	National Park	Harry Carstairs
4-6 May	Kaimais	Kaimais	James Judd
12-May	The Swamping Mission	Waitakeres	James Judd
19-22 May	Tararuas Madness Adventure	Tararuas	Daniel Nogueira
19-29 May	Coromandel Coastal Walkway	Coromandel	Seb Bailey
22-May	Bowling and Dinner	Bowling Alley	Caroline Provost
25-27 May	Tongariro National Park	Tongariro	Alistair Newcombe
26-27 May	Maratoto-Wentworth Crossing	Coromandel	Wing Kam
29-May	Extreme Ironing	Mt Eden	James Judd

1-4 June	Great Barrier Island	Great Barrier Island	Harry Carstairs
1-4 June	Tongariro Northern Circuit	Tongariro	Eder Lee
2-4 June	Kaimanawa Camping	Kaimanawas	Sean Thomson
5-Jun	Trasure Hunt	Campus	Caroline Provost
12-Jun	Board Game Night	Campus	James Judd
23-24 June	Solstice Party	Tunnel Point	James Judd
24-29 June	Advanced Snow School	Ruapehu	Toby Jackson, Henry Conquer, Tuan Chien, Natalie Villard
24-26 June	Northern Coromandel	Coromandel	Chris Holyer
28 June - 1 July	Beginners Snow School 1	Ruapehu	M.Tissink, David Zeng
29-30 June	Tama Lakes	Tamas	Seb Bailey
30 June - 1 July	Mt Pirongia	Pirongia	Chris Holyer
12-15 July	Beginners Snow School 3	Ruapehu	S. Knight, Brendan Graf
2-12 July	Epic South Island Trip	Various, around Wanaka	Ella Gibb
4-6 July	Ngauruhoe-T'naki snowbash+cookoff	Mt Doom and the Naki	Jason Rosinger
6-9 July	Beginners Snow School 2	Ruapehu	
7-9 July	Kaimai Ranges	Kaimais	Chris Holyer
7-11 July	Queen Charlotte Track	Marlborough Sounds	Carmen Chan
20-22 July	Re-Ocamp	Waitawheta Camp	James Judd
24-July	AUTC Movie Night	Movies	James Judd
31-July	Extreme Ironing	Mt Eden	James Judd
4-5 August	Cape Brett	Cape Brett	Chris Holyer
7-August	Posh Dins	Maccas	James Judd
11-12 August	Bream Head Scenic Reserve Ridge	Bream Head Scenic Reserve	Yi Xin Heng
17-19 August	Pirongia Extreme Ironing	Pirongia	James Judd
18-19 August	Mahoenui track	Mahoenui	Daniel Graham
24-27 August	Advanced Bush School	Kaimanawas	J.Judd & Sach Knight
25-28 August	Beginners Snow School 4	Ruapehu	
25-26 August	A White Christmas Trip	Ruapehu	Wing Kam
2-September	Motutapu Island Day Trip	Motutapu	Chris Holyer
3-September	Avalanche Awareness Course	Ruapehu	Louis Christie
5-9 September	Beginners Snow School 5	Ruapehu	
14-16 September	Pirongia	Pirongia	James Judd
21-September	James' graduation	The trecherous Albert Park	James Judd
29-September	Coromandel	Coromandel	Sean Thomson
2-October	Search and Rescue Talk	Campas	James Judd
20-October	Mount Te Aroha	Kaimais	Rachel Smith
3-4 November	Halloween Party	Waitaks	James Judd
9-11 November	Taranaki	Taranaki	Sach Knight
17-19 November	Pouakai Circuit	Taranaki	Debra Ballard
18-November	Caving Port Waikato	Port Waikato	James Judd
1-2 December	Pirongia	Pirongia	Laura Jacks
2-6 December	Whirinaki	Whirinaki	Rachel Smith
7-9 December	Summit Luncheon	Ruapehu	Max Jenkins
14-17 December	Pureora Forest	Pureoras	Debra Ballard
20-23 December	Taranaki	Taranaki	Daniel Graham

AUTC Photo Competition



Kepler Kea
Native flora & fauna
Daniel Nogueira
Kepler Track



Sundown
Outdoor landscape
Sigvart Bretteville-Jensen
Waiheke Island

Will you marry me, Abi?
Comedy
Daniel Nogueira
NZAC hut, Ruapehu





Blowing in the wind
Above the Bushline
Daniel Nogueira
Ruapehu

Cape Brett Night Sky
Below the bushline
Andrew Wang
Cape Brett





Night Sky
Camping
Sigvart Bretteville-Jensen
Waiheke Island

