



THE CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPER

Published by CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPING CLUB INC
PO Box 527, Christchurch. www.ctc.org.nz

Affiliated with the Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc.

Any similarity between the opinions expressed in this newsletter and Club policy is purely coincidental.

Vol. 89

September 2019

No. 5



Tongariro Winter crossing – heading for home; photo John Kerkhofs

The CHRISTCHURCH TRAMPING CLUB has members of all ages, and runs tramping trips every weekend, ranging from easy (minimal experience required) to hard (high fitness and experience required). We also organise instructional courses and hold weekly social meetings. We have a club hut in Arthurs Pass and have gear available for hire to members. Membership rates per year are \$45 member, \$65 couple, \$20 junior or associate, plus \$15 for members who opt to obtain a paper newsletter.

For more about how the club operates, see the last two pages.

Social News

Thanks to everyone who got up early for the Mid-Winter Breakfast. Nineteen members had a generous 3 course breakfast with bottomless beverages at the Chateau on the Park Hotel.

The Loo-Loo Award was hotly contested with 7 nominations.

The nominees were: **Barney** for gear loss after telling everyone how not to lose your gear, **Barry** for complete party loss, **Susan** for key loss when said keys were in her pocket, **Jacqui** for hot noodle spreading, **Andrew** for traction loss resulting in a dunking, **Jonathan** for minimalist short rope technique, and **Peter** for mistaken food identity.

In keeping with the Loo Loo theme, a toilet-based misadventure took out the supreme award.

The winner was Barry, who turned a long-drop into Dr Who's teleporting box, to disappear and then reappear at the next shelter, much to the wonder of his party, who were waiting in

the nearby hut for him to reappear from the toilet.

Andrew was a close runner-up with Alternative Australian River Crossing Technique, which to be fair won't be catching on any time soon, and Peter wins the consolation prize of a packet of Tasty Tux dog biscuits.

Once inscribed the Trophy Toilet Seat can be viewed on the wall at the Club Hut.

The day's social activities ended with a cruisy "Buffet Buster" walk to Godley Head enjoying the balmy nor-west weather. Thanks to Symon for leading.

Calendar of trips and Social Events

Trips: Unless otherwise stated, club trips depart either from 'Z' Carlton Corner Service Station (formerly Shell) at 1 Papanui Road (next to Liquor Land and opposite Derby Street) or from Caltex Russley on the corner of Russley Road and Yaldhurst Rd. If the departure point is not specified in the trip schedule, you may assume it's 'Z' Carlton. Day trips usually depart at 8am on Saturday or Sunday. Weekend trips may leave on either Friday evening or Saturday morning.

New or prospective members intending to go on any trip must sign up at club night or contact the trip leader in advance.

Social: We meet on Wednesdays 7:30 pm at the CMLC (Canterbury Mineral & Lapidary Club) building at 110 Waltham Road, Waltham. This new building, beside and on the south side of Waltham School, is about 100m south of the Brougham St/Waltham Rd intersection. Waltham Road is the southern extension of Barbadoes Street. A variety of social functions are organised, the atmosphere is informal, and tea and biscuits served. If you can give a presentation or have ideas, please phone John West 0212302536 or email john_a_west@outlook.com. Please note that formalities start at 7:50 pm sharp, and if there is a guest speaker, he/she will start at 8 pm sharp.

Our Club Hut: In the Arthur's Pass township, with all the comforts of home including real showers and inside flushing loos (BYO toilet paper!), but with the mountains at the back door. A great place for a few days away; take your usual gear and a pillowcase. Please book **and pay** before leaving town; the club bank account number is 38-9017-0279838-00 (Kiwibank/Christchurch Tramping Club). Include your name and the words "hut fees" in the particulars/code/reference fields. Phone Steve Bruerton 322-6196 for booking and key code; or if he's away, Chris McGimpsey 027 6573070; or if they're both away, Rex Vink 3525329. Hut fees are \$15 member, \$15 member's partner, \$25 non-member, \$5 kids under 12. If you find any problems or maintenance required, please contact the hut convenor, Steve Bruerton.

Equipment Hire: The Club has a range of equipment for hire. The Gear Custodian is Barney Stephenson, ph. 027 358 3281 . Note: club gear assigned to you is your responsibility; please take care of it. Please put tents inside your pack. Tents attached to the outside of your pack can be easily punctured when bush bashing or even lost. This may result in serious damage to your bank account! Please air and dry tents after taking them on a trip even if they are not used, and report any damage to the gear custodian.

Rates for Gear Hire:

Tent	\$3/person/night
Ice axes, crampons	\$4 per item per weekend
Harnesses, snow shovel	\$4 per weekend
Large/small weekend packs	\$2 per weekend
Helmets	Free
Personal locator beacons	Free

Wednesday 28 August	Club Night
<p>Newsletter Folding Evening / "Gone in 15 Minutes" Combining Tramping and Paragliding:</p> <p>Have you ever found yourself standing somewhere above the bushline, just a few too many hours from your car, feeling rather weary and sorry for yourself? Well, be prepared to be sold on a most miraculous product that will make descent woes a thing of the past.</p> <p>Gerhardt Spur Bivouac? 15 minutes from bivvy to car. Mount Fyffe? 15 minutes is your magic number. Buckland Peaks Hut? Naturally, 15 minutes. Mount Te Kinga? Sent in 15. What could possibly be the downside ... come along to hear Lorraine talk about hike and flying around the South Island, including her new goal in life of arriving at work before 9am, after a dawn mountain flight.</p> <p>Also featured will be some video footage from Fraser Monteith, a paraglider who has an annoying habit of flying for much longer than 15 minutes. The main slide show for this talk will feature flights from the flanks of Mount Potts, near the garden of Eden, recounting the experience of paraglider 1, who flew straight to the car, paraglider 2, who diverted to soar over the heads of unsuspecting tourists/orcs on Mount Sunday/Edoras, and paraglider 3, who flew from Mount Potts to soar over Mount Arrowsmith, faster than you could walk to Cameron Hut.</p> <p>Join Lorraine Johns for fascinating tales of aerial activity.</p>	

Saturday 31 August	Leader: Michael Newlove 355-8360
Departure point: Z Station Papanui	newmike@slingshot.co.nz
<p>Mt Grey/Maukatere: This is one of the most accessible bumps in the northern foothills and makes a popular easy/moderate trip. We will start from the Grey River Picnic Area and take the Mt Grey Track which climbs steadily through native bush, before opening out onto tussock slopes leading to the trig on the summit of Mt Grey (934m). Great views from the summit. Return to the Lake Janet picnic area via the lookout. Around 600m height gain. The trip will require a car shuffle.</p>	<p>Grade: Easy/Mod Closes: 29 Aug Map: BV23 BW23 Approx: \$15</p>

Weekend 31 August-1 September	Leader: Barry Watson 021668895
Departure point: Contact Leader	bazzaman7@gmail.com

<p>Avalanche Awareness Course (OENZ): This is a 2 day introductory avalanche awareness course that focuses on identifying avalanche terrain and understanding what causes avalanches.</p> <p>Understanding the NZ Backcountry Avalanche Advisory is a vital skill that you will learn on this course.</p> <p>This is a practical field based course with some theory to increase your understanding. This course is approved by (MSC) Mountain Safety Council. You will gain a MSC certificate in Avalanche Awareness upon completion of this course. We will stay at the Club Hut on Friday and Saturday nights so bring enough food for the weekend.</p> <p>This course is only open to Club Members.</p> <p>AVALANCHE AWARENESS COURSE INCLUDES...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the NZ Backcountry Avalanche Advisory Mountain Weather in NZ Using an avalanche transceiver Probing techniques Snow Shovelling technique Small party rescue scenarios Identifying avalanche terrain Identifying terrain traps Introduction to safe travel techniques. 	<p>Grade: Training</p> <p>Closes: 22 Aug</p> <p>Map:</p> <p>Approx: \$315 + hut fees</p>
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Sunday 1 September	Leader: David Sutton 0211808081
Departure point: Caltex Russley	Davidlsutton@yahoo.co.uk

<p>Mt Manson: Park on the Craigieburn Valley Ski Club road 2km short of the huts. Bush bash down to the Craigieburn then climb directly up Manson via the southern spur. Drop down to the coll between Manson and Pt 1828 and either descend the valley to the car or continue over Pt 1828 to the next Pt 1828 and then drop down to the ski field access road.</p>	<p>Grade: Moderate</p> <p>Closes: 29 Aug</p> <p>Map:</p> <p>Approx: \$25</p>
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Photo Judging for FMC entries:

Hi Everyone! Tonight we're judging member's entries for the Annual FMC Photo Competition. We're a bit late in getting the photo competition under way this year, but there's still time dust off your SD cards and wow us with your best photos. We'll be choosing 2 entries from each category to represent the CTC. John Kerkhofs is organising things and needs your entries by September 1st.

The FMC competition also has a theme this year, "New Zealand's Forgotten Places", you can read more about this on their site <https://www.fmc.org.nz/photo-competition/> There are some awesome prizes on offer for winners of the FMC contest so don't miss out!

We are looking for submissions in the following categories:

- * ABOVE BUSHLINE (With no Human Element)
- * ABOVE BUSHLINE (With a Human Element)
- * BELOW BUSHLINE (With no Human Element)
- * BELOW BUSHLINE (With a Human Element)
- * HISTORIC (taken before January 2016)
- * NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA
- * LONG EXPOSURE (new category) Plus the eagerly awaited return of last year's most enjoyable category:
- * FUNNIEST PHOTO —Send in your Funniest CTC/Tramping photos, we won't forward these to the FMC, so no rules apply! We'll be showing these photos at the CTC photography competition night on 4th September. The top entries from each official category (as voted by those present) will be put forward into the FMC photo competition. So get sorting and sending your snaps and we'll see you on the 4th of September. Any queries to John Kerkhofs. See more details under the Social section of last month's newsletter.

Saturday 7 September
Departure point: Z Station Papanui

Leader: Michael Newlove 355-8360
newmike@slingshot.co.nz

Lake Emily/Manuka Hut: This trip in the Ashburton Lakes area follows part of the Te Araroa Trail.
Starting just off the Hakatere-Heron Road, the track skirts past Lake Emily, climbs over a low ridge on Emily Hill and follows the Stour River. We will check out Manuka Lake before heading upstream to Manuka Hut, an old musterer's hut. The return trip will head back the same way, continuing further down the Stour River, before rejoining the Te Araroa Trail back to the cars.

Grade: Easy+
Closes: 5 Sep
Map: BX19
Approx: \$30

Weekend 7-8 September Departure point: Caltex Russley	Leader: Alan Ross 384-6425 alan_sue@xtra.co.nz
<p>Basic Snowcraft Course new date: Want to learn how to use an Ice Axe and Crampons?</p> <p>This is the course to gain this essential skill set (you should never be wearing crampons without knowing how to use them correctly).</p> <p>We will leave Caltex Russley at 7pm and proceed to the Club Lodge in Arthur's Pass. If you own your own Ice Axe and Crampons bring them. If not they will all be supplied (you do not need to hire them elsewhere). You will need at a minimum easy/moderate fitness. We will be in snow all day so appropriate gear to stay comfortable is essential.</p> <p>You MUST be a club member before the date of the course to participate. Sign up on line.</p> <p>Costs will be transport + Hut fees + Ice Axe and Crampons hire. Approx \$80 total. Any questions ph Alan Ross 021 962884 3846425</p>	<p>Grade: Training</p> <p>Closes: 29 Aug</p> <p>Map: BV20</p> <p>Approx: \$80</p>

Saturday 14 September Departure point: Z Station Papanui	Leader: Symon Holmes symon_gnome@yahoo.co.nz
<p>Mt Grey: Walk up the Mt Grey/Maukatere track through the bush to the summit to hopefully enjoy the views over the Canterbury plains. Weather permitting we will return via the Red Beech track to complete the loop.</p> <p>15 participants max.</p>	<p>Grade: Easy/Mod</p> <p>Closes: 12 Sep</p> <p>Map: BV23 BW23</p> <p>Approx: \$15</p>

Weekend 14-15 September Departure point: Caltex Russley 2pm Friday	Leader: Warwick Dowling
<p>Mt Guinevere, 2042m, Jellicoe Ridge, Arthur's Pass NP :</p> <p>Drive towards Arthurs Pass on Friday afternoon, and stay the night at Crow Hut (\$5/night or Backcountry Hut Pass), a standard 10-bunk DOC hut in known avalanche paths. This means wet feet that afternoon getting to Crow Hut from Klondyke Corner.</p> <p>On Saturday we summit with day packs, and either walk out that afternoon, or stay another night and leave Sunday. If the ascent day is better on Sunday, then we will tailor our plans to suit.</p> <p>Ice-axe, crampons a must, & helmet, harness etc recommended. We will bring a glacier rope, in case.</p> <p>About 1100m height gain from Crow Hut. Refer to the trip report of "4-5 August 2017: Mount Guinevere - EL 2042m".</p>	<p>Grade: Moderate</p> <p>Closes: 5 Sep</p> <p>Map: BV20</p> <p>Approx: Approx \$35 + hut fees</p>

Sunday 15 September Departure point: Z Station Papanui	Leader: Michael Newlove 355-8360 newmike@slingshot.co.nz
<p>Curry Track/Ellangowan Reserve/Takamatua Valley:</p> <p>The trip will start part way up Long Bay Road next to the Akaroa Heritage Park from where we go up Curry Track through the Purple Peak/Curry Reserve to Browntop Saddle (610m). Good views of Akaroa.</p> <p>From there, follow a track and Brocheries Road up to the Cabstand, Hickory Bay Road and into the Ellangowan Reserve. Up to Point 729. Walk through the reserve (untracked), along the Summit Road and then down to the Takamatua Valley via an old stock route (Old Le Bons Track).</p> <p>Around 500m height gain and a car shuffle is required.</p>	<p>Grade: Easy/Mod</p> <p>Closes: 12 Sep</p> <p>Map: BY25</p> <p>Approx: \$20</p>

Wednesday 18 September	Club Night
<p>Ski Touring in Kashmir, India:</p> <p>Come and hear CTC member Grant Piper (aka Grubbie) share his experiences about getting out ski touring in Kashmir, India. The trip included nearly a metre of snow in 24 hours, and some serious altitude, with a gondola to 3950m. Get some inspiration to start planning your next adventure!</p>	

Saturday 28 September Departure point: Z Station Papanui	Leader: Michael Newlove 355-8360 newmike@slingshot.co.nz
<p>Mt Ada/Sign of the Bellbird/Kennedy's Bush:</p> <p>Departure Points: "Z" Carlton Corner 8am or Halswell Quarry Car Park, Cashmere Rd entrance 8.30am. The trip will start at the Halswell Quarry Park and follow Kennedy's Track to the Summit Road and up to Mt Ada (467m). Great views of the surrounding area. Follow the Crater Rim Walkway and look forward to lunch at the Sign of the Bellbird. The return trip will involve doing a loop in the Kennedy's Bush Reserve and back to the cars via Kennedy's Track.</p>	<p>Grade: Easy</p> <p>Closes: 26 Sep</p> <p>Map: BX24</p> <p>Approx: \$5</p>

Weekend 28-29 September Departure point: Caltex Russley	Leader: Symon Holmes
<p>Upper Nina Biv:</p> <p>From the NZDA Lodge on SH7 we will walk into the Nina Hut before dropping back down to the river and heading up to the Upper Nina Biv.</p> <p>Note there is an unbridged crossing of the Nina River after the Nina Hut.</p>	<p>Grade: Easy/Mod at a slow pace</p> <p>Closes: 19 Sep</p> <p>Map: BU22 BU23</p> <p>Approx: approx \$40</p>

Sunday 29 September Departure point: Z Station Papanui		Leader: Chris McGimpsey 027 657 3070 tortistours@gmail.com	
<p>TORTIS Tour #30: A beginners guide to getting lost and what to do about it, plus some general navigation & bushcraft skills.</p> <p>Bring your normal day pack & gear, a good lunch and a sense of humour – some pre-torn clothes may be useful as the trip does involve some bush bashing. Bring your GPS and/or compass if you have one, but it is not essential because they will be provided for the navigation part of the exercise. We will stop at the Rangiora pub for tea and a debrief on the way home because the trip lasts till 5 - 6pm depending on your navigation skills.</p> <p>NB - the trip is normally limited to 4 x people at a time.</p>		Grade: Moderate but at an easy pace Closes: 26 Sep Map: Approx: \$20	
Saturday 5 October Departure point: Z Station Papanui		Leader: Michael Newlove 355-8360 newmike@slingshot.co.nz	
<p>Hogs Back, Craigieburn Range:</p> <p>From the access road just west of Castle Hill Village, a track follows the Long Spur ridge line, then through beech forest, crossing Long Creek and Waterfall Creek. We then go up Hogs Back itself (1032m), traverse the ridge before crossing Hogs Back Creek, up to Long Spur and rejoin the track back to the cars. A mix of on and off track tramping.</p> <p>Round trip around 15kms, 500m height gain.</p>		Grade: Easy/Mod Closes: 3 Oct Map: BW21 Approx: \$20	
Long Weekend 25-27 October Departure point: Caltex Russley		Leader: Bill Johnson 022 049 3453 bill@billjohnson.nz	
<p>Centennial Hut (Franz Josef Glacier):</p> <p>Labour weekend above Franz Josef Glacier. Travel to Franz Fri evening, helicopter up to Centennial Hut on Sat morning.</p> <p>Organise trips from there or just hang out and enjoy the view. Grade will range from easy (hang out at the hut, glacier walking) to hard (climb one of the 2600m+ peaks nearby).</p> <p>*Snow skills required*</p> <p>The \$465 amount covers return trip on the helicopter, two nights in the Hut and petrol costs for vehicles. There is a tenting option which will reduce this amount by \$40. NZ Alpine Club members will also be less.</p> <p>We will be back in ChCh around 5:30-6pm Monday.</p>		Grade: ModHard (requires snow skills) 11 Oct Map: BX16 Approx: \$465	

Multi day trip 26-31 October Departure point: Contact Leader	Leader: Michael Hammond 02108414764 mbahammond@hotmail.com
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<p>Alps to Ocean MTB ride: This ride is relatively easy and downhill in this direction</p> <p>The plan is to travel to Mt Cook on Sat 26, hopefully after dropping another car off at Oamaru for the return shuttle.</p> <p>Public transport is available but time consuming day 2 is 89km to Twizel. Stay at the camping ground day 3 is 83km Twizel to Oamarama stay at the camping ground day 4 is 92km Oamarama to Duntroon stay at the camping ground day 5 is 54km Duntroon to Oamaru and the sea. Stay at the camping ground day 6 Oct 31st return to Chch</p> <p>I'm a bit flexible on the dates between Oct 26 and Nov 2 so let me know if something else is more suitable.</p>	<p>Grade: MTB</p> <p>Closes: 17 Oct</p> <p>Map:</p> <p>Approx: Approx \$215 + accomodation</p>
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Sunday 27 October Departure point: Z Station Papanui	Leader: Chris McGimpsey 027 657 3070 tortistours@gmail.com
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<p>TORTIS Tour #31: A beginners guide to getting lost and what to do about it, plus some general navigation & bushcraft skills.</p> <p>Bring your normal day pack & gear, a good lunch and a sense of humour – some pre-torn clothes may be useful as the trip does involve some bush bashing. Bring your GPS and/or compass if you have one, but it is not essential because they will be provided for the navigation part of the exercise. We will stop at the Rangiora pub for tea and a debrief on the way home because the trip lasts till 5 - 6pm depending on your navigation skills.</p> <p>NB - the trip is normally limited to 4 x people at a time.</p> <p>NB - this will be the last TORTIS Tour for 2019.</p>	<p>Grade: Moderate but at an easy pace</p> <p>Closes: 24 Oct</p> <p>Map:</p> <p>Approx: \$20</p>
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Trip Reports

Tongariro Winter Crossing long weekend 7-11 Aug 2019

Barry thought it would be a good idea to walk the Tongariro Crossing in winter, and evidently he was not alone in this thought as it didn't take very long before he had quite a few people signed up to walk with him; ultimately there were fifteen keen walkers.

Some commitment was required as flights had to be booked some time ahead to avoid being gouged by Air New Zealand for a last-minute desire to fly, and rental vehicles also had to be booked. As the time neared, we started to see a lot of chat on Facebook Messenger about where we were going to stay, and about tenting vs lodge or cabins, and tenting on the crossing itself. Enthusiasm for this option was initially not great, and started

to wane rapidly after Josh pointed out that in the fragile alpine environment poo pots are mandatory. Further research revealed that camping is not permitted in the Active Volcanic Hazard Zone, or within 500 metres of the Northern circuit Track, etc, etc, etc. OK Google, where is the Active Volcanic Hazard Zone? Well, Ngauruhoe, Red Crater, and Te Maari crater are active volcanic vents, and also volcanic hazard zones, but only within 3km of the Te Maari crater is an Active Volcanic Hazard Zone. Cool, that includes the proposed campsite in the North Crater. Let's not camp there! The Northern Circuit includes the Tongariro Crossing from Mangatepopo as far as the Emerald Lakes, so the camping options are very limited indeed. Then there was the question of why we were going to spend two days on a one day trip, freezing our arses off in a tent overnight, when we could use the second day to do any number of cool walks including climbing Ruapehu. Enthusiasm was completely gone.

Next hurdle was accommodation – let's stay at Whakapapa Village. But most of the cabins were booked out, and then there was a flurry of bookings that consumed the remaining beds, but was enough for only half of the team. It was unclear who had beds, or even what nights they should be booked for, and it started to look like we would be split between cabins and tents. So many messages flying back and forth! Then Google revealed that there was oodles of accommodation only 15 km away in National Park, including a YHA with a climbing wall! At this point I want for a brief walk up the Rapaki Track, and when I returned about 2 hrs later, the Whakapapa accommodation had been dumped and almost the entire group had booked into the YHA.

The Sunday before departure we had a meeting to discuss options and form a plan. We had thought to head to Mt Taranaki on Friday, but the avalanche risk was extreme, so forget that option. Besides, there is so much to do around Tongariro that it would be hard to fit it all in. After much discussion, we decided to stay at the Mangatepopo hut on Thursday night, which gives us a few options like ascending Mt Ngauruhoe, and then back at the YHA for Friday and Saturday. They are full, but we will be sleeping on the floor in the climbing gym – how cool is that? Now we just need some good weather. The forecast is rubbish, so already we have abandoned all hope of completing the Tongariro Crossing, and will instead be just walking as far as the Red Crater. Such a shame to bail before we even start, but it looks like it will be risky, and miserable, and we are there to have fun and come back safely. There is still the possibility of ascending Mt Tongariro, so it's not a total loss, and the section to the Red Crater is probably the best part of the walk anyway.

Departure day arrived, and a number of people arrived at Christchurch airport. We managed to get a few people into the Koru Lounge as guests, where they filled up on all the free food and drink, but I'd already eaten before being admitted, so it was a bit of a waste. The company was good, and it was heaps of fun, though. Some people went via Wellington, or came from Auckland, but most of us ended up at Palmerston North and piled into a couple of rental vans for the trip to National Park, arriving there just before midnight. The morning plan was to go to Tama Lakes as we would all be a bit tired after the late night and didn't really want to tackle anything too big in the morning.

The weather on Wednesday was reasonable as we set off in the vans to Whakapapa Village. I led the crowd off in the direction of the Taranaki Falls, but missed the turn-off because I was engrossed in conversation with Chris and Sarah, who I'd met just that morning. Getting to know them was more important than navigating, and with so many people on the team somebody was bound to pick up the error before too long. It took about an hour to get to the falls, and after a bit of a rest we continued on the track to the Tama Lakes. It wasn't too long before we were well into the snow, but the weather continued to hold, although visibility was bad and there were no views into the distance at

all. Walking conditions were good and crampons were unnecessary as we walked through a varying landscape, with wind-blown snow piled up against rocks in some areas, ice built up on rocks in others, and frozen tussock poking through the snow in others. We had an early lunch, or perhaps a late morning tea, just before the track splits off to the Waihohonu Hut, and then pressed on to the Lower Tama Lake.



Early lunch break

At the first lake the weather started to deteriorate and the raincoats were donned by those who weren't already wearing them. The view was OK, but marred somewhat by the murky conditions. This was undoubtedly a factor in the decision by many of the team to turn back at this point, leaving only the hardest half dozen to continue on to the upper lake. I won't name them, but as I'm continuing to write about this part of the walk, obviously I was one of them. The drizzle turned to rain and visibility dropped as we continued, but the track is well marked so we had no real difficulty. It wasn't really cold, and I was wearing only waterproof shell mitts to keep the wind off my fingers. It took us only another 45 minutes to get to the end of the track, but there was no lake to be seen. We could have continued, but with no markers it might have been a bit tricky to find our way back, so we decided to play it safe and head for home.

By the time we got back to Whakapapa village the rain had virtually stopped, and we headed to the Château Tongariro to join the rest of the team. We had no keys for the vans to dispose of our gear, and as we milled around the entrance wondering where we could dump our packs the staff urged us to "come on in". So in we walked, in full wet tramping kit wearing boots and carrying ice axes, to join the rest of the team who had already started rearranging the furniture to accommodate our group of fifteen. Beers, coffees, and snacks were consumed as we enjoyed the rather fancy surroundings.

Back at the YHA in National Park we changed into dry clothes and settled down for some relaxation before dinner. For some of us this took the form of using the climbing wall, which was fun as it was a bit different to the one in Christchurch, but as dinner was quite early we had only an hour. We dined at the bar next door, fortunately very close as it was raining hard when we went out. Raincoats were in the drying room at the YHA, so we just ran as

fast as we could. Over dinner we made plans for Thursday. Barry was in touch with the local tour guides who advised that they were not going out as conditions were going to be bad, so we planned a trip to Taupo instead, with a stop at some hot pools as well.

On the way to Taupo in the morning after a relaxed start we realised that the Huka Falls are only just out of town, so we drove straight there and were tourists for a while. Once we'd had enough of that it was lunchtime, so we drove back to town and split into a number of groups as we searched out places to eat. After lunch there was a desire for dessert, so we sought out a restaurant with an extensive dessert menu and got stuck in. Most people wanted to go for a swim in the local hot river afterwards, but a few of us preferred to relax, and one even wanted to work! We few stayed in the dessert restaurant working, reading and doing puzzles while the others went swimming. Monika saw me doing a Codecracker puzzle and was intrigued, had a go, and is now a CodeCracker addict. By the end of the day, Emma and Zack were also addicted.

Back at National Park we settled into the common room and made our own dinner, and spent the evening reading, talking, and codecracking. The next day we had to clear out as we were going to stay at the Mangetepopo Hut overnight, so backpacks had to be prepared and the rest of the gear stowed away for storage. All the wet gear from the previous day had dried out in the YHA's dry room, so we were all set for a fresh start the following day.

Friday saw another reasonably relaxed start. We weren't planning a long walk, so there was no hurry to get away. Bags were stowed at the YHA and we headed off to the Mangatepopo car park where we started out walk in the rain. An easy half hour walk had us at the Managatepopo Hut where we claimed beds and dumped all the heavy stuff we didn't need for a day walk. The hut is very damp inside; the walls were dripping and the mattresses were also quite damp. It's still a good shelter though, and there is a gas fire as well.



Approaching Soda springs

By 10:00 we were on our way – The Tongariro Crossing, at last! Except that due to avalanche risk we weren't going all the way. It wasn't too long before we were in the snow again. Did I mention that it was raining? It rained on and off all day, but never very heavily. Visibility was predictably bad, and there really wasn't much of the volcanoes to be seen. The first part of the walk to Soda Springs is quite flat, and then there is a bit of a climb up to the South Crater. By the time we hit the crater visibility was pretty bad, at times we could see only two markers ahead on the track. In the crater we encountered a large group guided by the people Barry had been speaking with. We discussed the conditions ahead, and decided that we would not continue any further due to possible avalanche risk. Most of our team turned back at this point, while Grant decided to carry on a bit further. A few of us decided to stay behind and wait for him, and eventually when the visibility improved a bit Monika and I walked up to the ridge for a look, followed shortly after by Emma and Zack. There was not much to be seen, so we headed back down to wait. At one point I decided to walk off to the side of the track a short distance, and promptly fell flat on my face. There was a total white-out, and I was so unable to see the difference between the sky and ground that I'd fallen over a hump of snow on the ground. It's the first time I've ever been in a true white-out, and it's scary how disorienting it is.



Climbing up towards South Crater

Grant eventually returned and we made our way back to the hut where after some effort we got the gas fire going. On the way back visibility improved to the point where we could actually see Mt Ngauruhoe, and we started planning to climb it in the morning. Wet clothes were hung up on the drying rack above the fire and we settled down for snacks and dinner. Just as I was settling down to sleep, a couple of trampers arrived looking for a bed. I had the top tier of three bunks to myself, so my gear was spread out all over the place, together with some of Barry's. There was a quick clean-up to stow all my gear so the other bunks were available, and the two new arrivals settled down for a night of loud snoring, but not before they'd had a rather noisy dinner. They were also off early in the morning, so we didn't get to sleep in.

Saturday morning was pretty grim – drizzle and very low visibility. The late arrivals were making an attempt on Ngauruhoe, but it looked to us like a waste of time, so we just headed back to the car park. Tania decided to walk back to Whakapapa village via the Mangatepopo track, while the rest of us would do the Silica Rapids walk and we would all meet up at The Château. Somehow on the way back the plan changed. We were going back to the YHA first, and then in conversation with one of the staff members we found out about the track that goes from National Park to Tupapakurua Falls. New plan! I still wanted to go to Silica Rapids, but was completely out-voted, so most of us headed off in that direction, and Allen would pick up Tania at Whakapapa.

We trudged up the seemingly endless road to a sign that informed us that the waterfall was about an hour away. We'd already been walking for an hour, so clearly the supposed two hour walk to the waterfall was from the start of the track, and not from the YHA. We walked to a viewpoint that had no view, at which time most of the group elected to return to the comfort of the YHA. The die-hards were of the view "Dammit, we've come this far", and we carried on on at a cracking pace, up and down, up and down, eventually reaching a view of the waterfall. Disappointing, in my opinion. Nice forest, the waterfall is OK, but nothing spectacular. Still, it was a good workout, and filled in the morning nicely. And a bit of the afternoon. About 3h40m to do a supposed 2h walk. It was after 2pm when we got lunch. Some of us spent the afternoon lazing around, while others headed off to the hot pools at Tokaanu. I don't mind hot pools occasionally, but generally after ten minutes I'm all hot-pooled out, so I stayed in the nearby café doing puzzles until we were asked to leave because some paying customers wanted a table. Quite a reasonable request, I thought, and the entire team returned later that evening for dinner.

Sunday was the return to Christchurch. A bit of a road trip was called for, so we decided to go to Ohakune to see the big carrot. It turns out that there is now also an adventure park with assorted vegetable-related statues that caused much hilarity. We found a crowded

café for morning tea that turned into early lunch, and then continued on to the delightful town of Bulls, where everything is something-a-bull. The library is read-a-bull, the café is delect-a-bull, the information centre is inform-a-bull, you get the drift, don't you? Quite laugh-a-bull really, but we should be charit-a-bull and say that the citizens have a commend-a-bull pride in their town.

On to Palmerston North airport. One of the rental vans was returned while the other carried on to Wellington with the people who were flying from there. We settled down to wait for the flight which eventually left on time. A cold tedious bus ride home followed, but \$2.65 for a bus beats \$43.00 for an Uber. The Tongariro trip was a bit of a mixed bag. The weather wasn't good, and it was disappointing to use up three days of precious annual leave and spend money on airfares to not accomplish our goals, but I guess that's the nature of winter trips. We've had plenty of recent trips cancelled or rescheduled, but we can only keep trying. Despite not doing what we set out to do, I think we all had a pretty good time.

The trip participants were: Barry Watson (Leader), Allen Lim, Basia Nowak, Benny Huang, Chris Fundalski, Emma Rogers, Grant Barrie, Joshua Johnson, Monika Bratownik, Sarah Little, Tania Dalzell, Tina Guan, Tomyu Hu, Zack Williams, John Kerkhofs (Scribe and photographer)

More about the CTC

CTC Overdue Trips: Members/family/partners or a nominated person concerned about a trip being overdue should firstly discuss this with a Club Officer when they feel that the trip is delayed. Club Officers know where to obtain copies of the Trip Lists containing the names and addresses of the party members with their vehicle registration details etc. This will greatly assist Police Search and Rescue. The Club Officer can then contact the Police directly. Concerned people should keep trying different numbers until they actually contact a Club Officer (**do not leave messages**).

We recommend you start with the Club Captain, then the Gear Custodian, then the Presidents, then the Trip Organisers, then people listed under Our Club Hut – if no contact can be made then the Police. Refer to the list of Club Officers below, and on www.ctc.org.nz. Members (particularly Trip Leaders) please discuss this arrangement with your loved ones so they are aware of this procedure.

Club Officers

<i>President:</i>	Chris McGimpsey	027 657 3070	<i>Overnight Trip Organiser:</i>	Barry Watson	021668895
<i>Vice President:</i>	Bill Johnson	022 049 3453	<i>Social Convenor:</i>	John West	021 230 2536
<i>Secretary:</i>	Eric Skea	021 0247 5473	<i>Gear Custodian:</i>	Barney Stephenson	027 358 3281
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Carol Horgan	027 212 7294	<i>Editor:</i>	Peter Hinchey	0225948023
<i>Club Captain:</i>	Alan Ross	384-6425	<i>Hut Convenor:</i>	Steve Bruerton	322-6196
<i>New Members Rep:</i>	Emma Rogers	0224916625	<i>IT Convenor:</i>	Nick Edwards	0273656751
<i>New Members Rep:</i>	Joshua Johnson	0278865868	<i>Access Officer:</i>	Ian Dunn	0212141907
<i>Day Trip Organiser:</i>	Kelly Purdie	027 614 2255			

Please have stuff for the next newsletter to the editor (editor@ctc.org.nz) by 19 September 2019 – Thanks.
