



Newsletter of the
NELSON TRAMPING CLUB
Founded 1934, Nelson, New Zealand
www.nelsontrampingclub.org.nz

EDITORIAL MUSINGS >

ARRIVING...

You can often tell when you're nearing a back-country hut. A tell-tale pillar of white woodsmoke might betray the hut's location, wafting above the forest canopy. You might hear human voices nearby. The track gets remarkably easier, with clearings for camping, felled trees for firewood, a network of access tracks to the longdrop or river.

Sometimes you will see the ubiquitous dunny poking through the shrubbery, or perhaps, a few dog kennels scattered about.

If you're the first to arrive at a hut, you have the privilege of bagging a bunk, or boiling a billy for late arrivals. Firewood may need gathering, and water collected from a nearby stream. And, in timeless tradition, the hut's logbook, usually green, will be read, laughed at, and added to. Candles lit, card games played, or books read.

Dinner must be concocted according to individual taste, be it one-minute noodles or a three-course banquet incorporating fresh produce, wine and dessert. As the interior darkens, shadowy silhouettes are seen manoeuvring around the cooking bench, competing for space, headlights beaming into pots like surgeons conducting an operation.

By 9 o'clock it is usual for folk to hit the pit... and then it starts. Sometimes like a freight train, the snoring stranger has you disappearing into your sack, cursing silently, hoping against hope. Sometimes it's just a humble rumble and you drift off into blessed oblivion, listening to heavy rain hammer the anorexic tin ceiling above you – glad to have a roof over your head.



Raymond Salisbury,
HUT-BRAGGER
newsletter@maxnet.co.nz

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS >

Roger & Maureen Cotton, and Mary & Henry Hsu

Nelson Tramping Club November 2011



Bob Janssen leads a party along Robert Ridge to Lake Angelus

PHOTO > RAY SALISBURY

MEMBER PROFILE > *Bob Janssen*

- 1. Occupation:** Conservation Worker.
- 2. Where were you born?** Born in Bandung Java, Indonesia. Home town is Benhar, South Otago.
- 3. How long have you been a member?** Approximately ten years.
- 4. What benefits have you found being a member?** Good company & shared outdoor experience.
- 5. Best tramp:** None are above the rest, they have all been special in their own way.
- 6. Worst tramp:** Lake Manapouri area, we got flooded out, almost washed-out actually.
- 7. Funniest moment:** Our party were running late and ran out of daylight. We decided to take a short-cut down a ridge. I suspected that there was a bluff coming up and ended up walking over the edge of it, landing in a boggy swamp! (My friends thought it was hilarious.)
- 8. Favourite hut:** One of my favourites would be Vigin's Rock Shelter, hidden in the Mt Arthur Range (Lesley River area).
- 9. What future trips would you put on your 'bucket list'?** A return to the Milford Track area, e.g. Neal Burn.

TRIP REPORTS

August–October 2011

28 August – Barnicoat Walkway & Involution Trail – Richmond hills, Nelson

Leader: Brenda Griffin



The new Involution Trail (left) links with the old Barnicoat Walkway.

A good four-hour walk up the Barnicoat and down the Involution. A lovely sunny morning, with few bikers but a number of walkers. Plenty of snow on all surrounding mountains. Great views until you start going down the Involution where plenty of native bush surrounds you.

Involution means when something turns in upon itself. It's great that such a good walk is right in our neighbourhood.

Thanks to those who came: Gillian Arbuthnott, Mike Locke, visitors Garry Bassett and Til Melis, and leader/scribe Brenda Griffin.

26–28 August – Mt Cupola – Nelson Lakes NP

Leader & Scribe: Ruth Hesselyn

A spot of reorganising due to heavy snowfall meant we left town at 6.30am on a fine and frosty Friday, a week later than scheduled.

The previous day, I'd discovered that the Lake Rotoiti Water Taxi was closed for winter, which would add another two hours onto an already long day. Oh well, I decided we would still have enough time to reach Cupola Hut, with daylight to spare.

The trip around the lake and up Travers Valley was the usual long (though easy) walk through beech forest and river flats. Birdsong was noticeable, a testament that the extensive trapping programme is finally working.

At John Tait Hut we refuelled, changed from runners and shorts into boots and trousers, then left at 3.30pm for the two-hour climb to Cupola Hut – it took us over four hours!

Mike's extra-heavy pack and bruised body from a recent ski crash slowed things a little, then the diabolical (Pat's word) snow started. Initially, it was ankle to knee-deep with the odd bent and splintered tree hindering progress. About half way up it started to drizzle, the track totally disappeared,

and darkness closed in. Hmmm... we discussed the option of backtracking but everyone was keen to continue, thinking the hut was closer than it actually was.

With head torches blazing (some more than others) we eventually worked our way from marker to marker, crawling under and over bent branches, falling into drifts and getting stuck in holes.

At one stage I was following a distinctive blood trail, courtesy of Chris and his short gaiters. Then, Yippee! we finally reached the hut, everyone a little shattered after a full-on eleven-hour day.

The alarm was set for 5am, in the hope that the snow would be crisp and crunchy for the morrows climb. Buzz, buzz, groan, moan. I checked outside, strong winds and snowing lightly, so back to bed. Mike checked again at 6am: still raining. Yay, more sleep!

We finally emerged from our sacks and left the hut under clearing skies around 9am, for a look. Chris was sensible and stayed in bed as he hadn't intended to do the climb. Once out of the bush and on the traverse to the base of Mt Cupola, the snow improved dramatically, to only ankle-deep. Mike was firing well, no doubt to the greatly reduced weight on his back, Pat was his usual steady self and I was totally lacking in enthusiasm. Maybe due to the previous day's exertions or the aftermath of the flu that I had just recovered from. Whatever, I turned around part way up the gully, arriving back at the hut 1pm for an afternoon snooze.

Mike and Pat made it to the summit, though unfortunately it had clagged in by that stage, reducing their view to snow, mist and each other. They arrived back around 3pm. While they recovered, Chris and I packed then stumbled through to John Tait Hut, much easier in daylight, taking a mere 2.5 hours. By the time Mike and Pat arrived, dinner was cooked and the fire was on, though admittedly it hadn't done much to heat the hut – one of the draw backs of large spaces in winter.

Sunday was a reverse of Day One, thankfully without the Cupola section. We lunched at Cold-water Hut then a final steady plod around the lake



Snow-encrusted Cupola Hut, Nelson Lakes National Park

saw us arrive at the car mid-afternoon. As Mike dumped his pack, he said something like 'a little pain doesn't hurt'. Aye?

Thanks to fellow snow waders, Chris Louth, Mike Drake and Pat Holland for an oddly enjoyable long weekend.

27 August – Gordon's Knob – Mt Richmond FP

Leader: Carole Crocker

From the Cathedral Steps, our convoy collected trampers at Stoke and Richmond before heading up the road toward Tophouse. Our vehicles whined their way up Wai-Iti Road to Inwoods Lookout, sited at about 1000m altitude.

Initially, the track cut through pine over a hillock, spitting us out into the open across a clay pan. Through turpentine scrub we wandered, until it negotiated loose rock up a broad, rocky spur onto the main ridge towards North Peak.

Leaving this poled route, we followed cairns on a high side along the treeline, reaching an obvious saddle before the bulk of the Gordons Knob massif.

Two weeks of sunshine had dried out the ground, however, snow drifts slowed progress as our boots became sodden.

Seven of the party trudged up through tussock and soft snow to gain an unnamed 1685-metre summit known as 'Gordons Top' and impressive views westward. (Gordons Knob itself is lower and a boring snow slog.)

Across the Motueka River headwaters, the distant speck of Right Branch Wairoa Hut glinted in the sunshine, resplendent in orange paint in its new site at Porters Creek.

Wind chill sent us scurrying off to shelter on the leeward slopes, where lunch was leisurely consumed.

The return journey was uneventful and somewhat quicker. The entire tramp lasted nearly seven hours. Our party of nine did well to stay together, despite varying fitness levels. Thanks to Carole for her organisation.

Climbers were Val Latimer, Ray Salisbury (scribe), Liam Sullivan, Steve, Dan McGuire, Mary Honey, Mary Su, Alison Aaron and Carole Crocker.

28 August – Trig K – Pelorus, Marlborough

The usual fog started at Rai Valley but by the time we had climbed to the trig and small, open top it had cleared and we had good views. The bush on the north side was different from the south side – quite large beautiful trees in both areas. There was evidence of a trapping programme and the weka at the top was certainly very friendly (and I suspect well fed). We investigated the two waterfalls and decided one would be spectacular after a bit of rain. After the three-hour walk we enjoyed our lunch down by the Pelorus River, just below the bridge.

Members were: Gretchen Williams (leader & scribe), Uta Purcell, Mike Locke, Maree Lenting, Brenda Griffin. Visitors were: Garry Bassett & Mayumi Otani.



Freezing conditions on Gordons Top (1685m), an outlier of the Richmond Ranges. Mary, Alison, Val, Liam & Steve.

PHOTO > LIAM SULLIVAN

4 September – Akersten Bay, Abel Tasman NP

Leader: Brenda Griffin

What a gorgeous day for a walk to Akersten Bay. I've never walked this part of the Abel Tasman. Once past Apple Tree Bay the gorse disappeared and we were surrounded by lovely native bush and bird song. The beach at Akersten would be great for summer swimming. We lunched at Akersten Bay then walked the two hours back. It was great to see the track was well used from family groups and solo walkers.

We enjoyed a well-deserved ice cream at Motueka. Thanks to visitor Pip Greer, club member Ross Price and leader/scribe Brenda Griffin.

3–4 September – Castle Rocks Hut, Abel Tasman National Park

Leader: Ruth Henry

Four of us set off from Marahau, on a pleasant morning, at 9.30am. Marahau was quiet and serene before the hustle and bustle of summer visitors. At the first viewpoint, we stopped and chatted to a local man who turned out to be someone two of our party knew.

As the day warmed up and with the uphill climb, layers of clothing came off, including leggings for a couple of us. Stops for photographic opportunities occurred through the bush until we came to Holyoakes Clearing. This was a sunny, sheltered spot to relax and eat our lunch at the outside table. We visited the quaint two-bunk hut and after an extended time, we moved on.

Two of our group had not been to Castle Rocks Hut before so this was a new section of NZ bush for them. On arrival at the well-sited hut, one member suggested a cup of tea but other members persuaded her to visit the rocks first. After a short, steep route, we reached the rocks where expansive views are exposed. More photographic opportunities until the windiness and



PHOTO > RAY SALISBURY

Balloon Hut hides in the tussock between the Tablelands and Mount Peel

cooler temperatures drove us back downhill to the cosy hut to kick off boots and completely relax. By now, one other person, a young American woman, had arrived. She proved an interesting hut companion. For Mayumi, the Japanese member of our group, this was her first stay at a New Zealand hut.

The next day was pleasant and our botanically-minded Kiwis decided to inform Mayumi of the names of some of our native trees including our iconic silver fern.

After a food break at Holyoakes Clearing, it took us longer than we remembered to reach Akersten Bay. We arrived at 2pm – too late to catch the day-trippers but enjoyed another food break and a paddle of feet.

The hard, unforgiving surface of this coastal track meant feet were sore but this track is easy, enabling a quick pace. We arrived back at Marahau at 4.30pm after a great weekend and good company. Thank you to Uta Purcell, Jocelyn Winn, Mayumi Otani and Ruth Henry.

A Master List of member's names & contact details are now featured discreetly on the **CLUB'S WEBSITE:**
www.nelsontrampingclub.org.nz

17–18 September – Balloon Hut, Kahurangi National Park

Leader: Ken Ridley

Five members plus one visitor went on this trip. We had a good weather forecast in an otherwise unstable weather pattern. Snow fell on Friday night, settling above the car park.

We had an uneventful walk to the Tablelands, stopping for lunch at the rock overhang. From here we had slushy snow gradually increasing in depth as we walked up Starvation Ridge. The going got harder beyond Chinatown and harder still, beyond Bishop's Cave, where we were pushing through old snow softened by new snow melt – we were pleased to arrive at the hut.

Any ideas about climbing Mount Peel were abandoned. We knew that the gas heater wasn't working, but the hut was not cold when arrived, and it remained comfortable all evening.

In the morning there was five centimetres of new snow, misty sunshine, and only a slight frost. My assurance of firm snow didn't eventuate, so we followed our old foot prints on the way back. We looked at Bishop's Cave, visited Salisbury Lodge, and also did the potholes circuit.

This was a bit tricky in places

due to soft snow. We lunched and drank a brew at Growler Rock Shelter, before trudging back to Flora carpark.

On the trip were: Christine Hoy, Rodger and Maurene Cotton, Mayumi Otani, visitor Livia Bera (Switzerland) with leader/scribe Ken Ridley.

24 September – Doom Creek loop, Wakamarina Valley

Leader: Robyn Walsh

Previously planned for May, but cancelled due to torrential rain, today the weather was great. Seven departed Nelson, over the hill, and up the Wakamarina River. Nearly every house here had a name on the gate. One hinted at what often goes on inside: "Kiss-a-lot".

After pre-walk snacks, we headed off through the bush, which recent logging had broken up and damaged. Several streams were crossed, then, just prior to midday, we arrived at a particularly large creek containing huge boulders – evidence that big volumes of water can hurtle down here after rain. To cross required much dexterity, on slippery rocks, or little thin pinnacles, for the dry sock fraternity, but we all succeeded.

Around the corner a dry, sunny spot heralded an early lunch. Now well-fed and rested, we continued up valley. We made a short diversion to the site of the old Doom Creek Hut. Further on, we enjoyed good views up to Fosters Clearing. The climb out of the gorge into sunlight gave our legs a good stretch back to the cars, after about four hours' walking.

Participants were: Jim Maxwell, Beverley Muirhead, Robyn Walsh (leader/scribe), with guests Ken Holmes & Bridie, Mayumi Otani & Hiroko Toyomasu (Japan) & Livia Bera (Switzerland).

25 September – Flora-Cloustone Mine circuit, Kahurangi NP

Leader: Pat Holland

The weather forecast was dubious: a strong SW front due later in the day. So, an intrepid

band of four set off early from Flora carpark on a clear, calm morning. We decided to tramp clockwise due to the forecast and duly reached Mt Arthur Hut in good order. On up the ridge which was clear of snow though lots in the gullies and down into Horseshoe Basin.

Lunch in the lee of the ridge under Gordons Pyramid was followed by snow flurries and clag. Miraculously it cleared when we reached the top of the Pyramid with excellent views to the west, (Tablelands), north (Lodestone, Crusader, etc.) and northeast to Tasman Bay.

Snow-slides led us down to Cloustone where the mine tunnel was under a snow cornice.

After a charming walk through the forest and along the river to Flora Hut, a cup of tea was brewed and the resident weka was entertained. The round circuit to our car took nine hours. Our quartet was: Pat Holland (leader), Ruth Hesselyn, Uta Purcell and David Sissons.

2 October – Third House, Nelson

Leader: Mary Honey

Seven hardy souls assembled at the Cathedral steps, despite the inclement weather. We proceeded up the Brook Sanctuary and at Fern Flat negotiated the creek, swollen by heavy rain. The further crossings were also a bit of a challenge but no one flinched. We arrived at Third House about noon, utterly soaked to the skin.

After an unsuccessful attempt to light the fire, we settled down to lunch. A quick decision was made not to proceed up Fringed Hill, because everyone was cold and wet. We made a dash down the Dun railway line and arrived back at the cars at about 2pm.

It was a bold effort by Mary Honey (leader) Uta Purcell, Gillian Arburnott, Emily Gee, Gretchen Williams, Dan McGuire and Mayumi Otaki from Japan, whose balancing skills were phenomenal, jumping from one wet rock to another when crossing the streams.



Oliver Speeding, Merrick Mitchell, Graham Davey & Andy Clark in the Matiri Valley, Kahurangi N.P.

PHOTO > UTA PURCELL

8–9 October – McConchies Hut, Kahurangi National Park

Leader: Andy Clark

A fine weekend was the forecast as five of us set off from the 2WD car park in the Matiri Valley. A 4WD farm track was followed to the west branch of the Matiri which was forded and, in due course, Lake Matiri Hut was reached.

It did not take long after departing the hut for the terrain and track to become rougher and progress slowed. We followed the valley, at times on river flats but mostly in the bush, with two climbs above the valley to bypass sections that were impassable at river level. It was not long before many were questioning the grade of this trip which had been a 'medium'. Progress continued at a steady rate with arrival at McConchies Hut approximately six hours after leaving Lake Matiri Hut.

According to the hut book, the last entry was late April of this year which confirmed beliefs that this is a seldom-visited area in Kahurangi. All were glad to have reached the hut and most declared this was a once-only trip, but a couple were keen to continue the route up-valley, through to the Wangapeka Track, at some later stage.

The next morning dawned fine and the two who slept outside proved none the worse for wear. Progress down valley seemed to go better but the time taken was the same; the only difference was that all were better prepared mentally. Damage to the landscape from the 1929 Murchison quake was continually evident, providing spectacular scenery. Continual banter keeping morale high, especially from 'Jim' and 'George'.

All arrived safely at the car after a tiring eight hours. We were all lucky enough to be invited into a local lady's home for a cuppa and a look around the superb rural garden she keeps – thanks Margaret.

A special thanks to my companions on this trip being: Graham Davey, Uta Purcell, Merrick Mitchell and visitor Oliver Speding.

9 October – Mt Duppa, Bryant Range, Nelson

Leader: Jim Maxwell.

The weather was perfect for the steep climb on this rough track up Duppa. When we arrived on top the sun was causing the trees to continually shed ice from their foliage.

We were lucky with our chosen day. The views to the Rai Valley and over the Richmond Ranges were good, but the horizon still had that Nelson haze. We had a long lunch in the sun and carefully picked our way down with only a few slips and no injuries. Participants were: Emily Gee, Beverley Muirhead, Pete Peters (non member) and English language school students Mayumi Otani, Hiroko Toyomasu and Mami from Japan.



Matteo Bordini, Greg & Alison Pickford, Dan McGuire, Uta Purcell, Alison Aaron, Fiona Herney & Lou Kolf on Mount Malita

PHOTO > RAY SALISBURY

es but with leki poles). Some of these descents were a lot more elegant and controlled than others.

We were pleased to arrive safely back at Mt Arthur Hut for afternoon tea and a brew-up. The resident weka poked about whilst we were there. Then we continued down to Flora carpark.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable day of about seven hours. Participants were: Barry James, Ken Ridley, Chris Louth, Patrick Holland, Katie Greer, Mary Honey and Sue Locke (scribe).



The Visitor 'book' inside the Nelson City Council hut on Mt Malita dates back to 1964.

PHOTO > RAY SALISBURY

29 October – Mount Malita & Roding River, Nelson

Leader: Alison Pickford

A truly cosmopolitan group arrived early for a trip to the old copper smelter and mine up the Roding. After fording the river three times, we ate morning tea at the smelter before following the tramline up to the Champion Mine for lunch. (The main shaft here is under water).

Lots of difficult bush-bashing up a creek and steep face got us onto a scrubby ridgeline where the going became somewhat easier.

A second tea-stop on the main ridgeline saw the weather partially clear. From here, we looked over into the Hackett watershed. Ascending a final spur, we proceeded through windfall in the beech forest to the open grassy top of Mount Malita (959m) where photos were taken by Raymond. Armed with his trusty GPS, Greg busied himself with locating a geo-cache near the concrete plinth.

We were surprised to find the Council's two-berth hut open, as vandal poachers had regularly broken the door latch. Instead of a hut visitor book, an A2-sized sheet of paper was hanging off the wall, with names dating back to 1964 when this hill was a potential observatory site.

Afterwards there was a dash down the forestry road which returned us to the caretakers house, where we signed out.

Special thanks to visitor Matteo Bordini from Rome for his review of Italian politics and the latest scandals.

Participants were: Scribe Dan McGuire (USA), Matteo Bordini (Italy), Fiona Herney (Kiwi-visitor from Christchurch), Uta Purcell (Kiwi-German), Ray Salisbury (notorious North Islander), Alison Pickford (Kiwi leader), Greg Pickford (British-Kiwi), Lou Kolff (soon to be retired Kiwi), and Alison Aaron (Kiwi union organiser).

UPcoming CLUBNITES >

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

Monday 5 December:

Photograph Comp

Guest Judge: Barry Doig, member of PSNZ, and tramper.

>>> Get your photos ready!

WILDERNESS MAGAZINES

The club receives 2 magazines each month, which you are entitled to read.

Contact David Blunt if you wish to read an issue.

MAITAI DAM NEW PIPELINE in the pipeline...

Your Sunday drives to the Maitai Dam will need to be curbed this summer. Work is starting on a new 7km secondary water pipeline.

The road will be closed to traffic for the duration of Stage One until May 2012. Hikers and bikers will still be able to use walking & biking tracks which will extend to Smith's Ford Bridge.

The current pipeline is 47 years old and is showing its age.



OUTDOOR SAFETY COURSES RUN IN NELSON

2011-2012 Programme

River Crossing & Safety >
3 Dec 2011 > COST: \$30

Intermediate Navigation
25-26 Feb 2012 > COST: \$50

Outdoor First Aid
17/18 March 2012,
8-9 Sept 2012 > COST: \$180

Outdoor First Aid Revalidation
18 Aug 2012

Advanced Alpine
25-26 Aug 2012 > COST: \$175

CONTACT DETAILS >

Contact: Evelyn O'Neill.
Mail: 23 Coleridge Place, Stoke.
Telephone: (03) 547 2426
Email: nelson@mountainsafety.org.nz

NEW BEACON

A light-weight 'KANNAD' Flotation 406MHz PLB has been purchased, bringing our total tally of locator beacons to five.

Big Beach CLEAN UP Sat 19 November — Boulder Bank

The Big Beach Clean-up is a chance for us to come together as a community to clear rubbish from our beaches to make them safer, more attractive and enjoyable for ourselves, our visitors and our wildlife.

Put this in your diary now!

>>> **The brief for our club:** pick up and carry out rubbish on the Boulder Bank from oxidation ponds at Wakapuaka to cottages (inner and outer coastlines). It is on the trip list and but we need a big turnout to enable a good result without too much strain on the participants.

It should be a nice day out, or perhaps only the morning. We will include some social events. We are planning an 8am start from the sewage ponds (turn-off left from main road before the Glenduan road). Also **pick-ups from Cathedral steps 7:45am.**

Big plastic bags are supplied but bring good gloves & wear boots.

Phone the co-organisers:
Pat Holland 539 1340
Bob Janssen 548 6118

COMMITTEE >

President: Lawrie Halkett
Correspondence Secretary: Pat Holland
Treasurer: Brenda Griffin
Minutes Secretary: Merrick Mitchell
Gear: Mark Stevens
Programme Team Rep: Jim Maxwell
Committee: Raymond Salisbury, Dion Pont, Bob Janssen, Mike Glover, Chris Olds
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Post trip reports to: 71 Montreal Rd, Victory

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NEW Mailbox: PO Box 1238, Nelson 7040.

ANNUAL PHOTO COMPETITION

< Monday 5 December >

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

> **Categories:** Landscape, Hut/Camp Life, Above & Below Bushline, Nature, Historical & a new open category titled "Anything Goes".

First place-getters receive gift vouchers. Finalists get their photos entered into the *FMC Bulletin's* national club photo competition.