

# Annual Report of the

## Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club Inc

For the year ended 31st January 2020

Seventy Third Annual Report

[www.wtmc.org.nz](http://www.wtmc.org.nz)

P O Box 5068 Lambton Quay, Wellington 6145

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The Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club Committee presents its Annual Report on club activities for the year **1 February 2019 to 31 January 2020**.

## **The Current Committee**

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Emily Shrosbree (President)  
Tony Gazley (Vice President)  
Graeme Hearfield (Treasurer)  
Heather Garven (Secretary)  
Matt Conway (Chief Guide)  
Maj-Britt Engelhardt (Assistant Chief Guide)  
Rene Auer (Transport Officer)  
Jane Latchem (Membership Officer)  
Aimee Paterson (Promotions Officer)  
Tony Stephens (Social Convenor)  
Brian Goodwin (Ruapehu Lodge Convenor)  
Sumudu Jayalath (Communications Officer)  
Natasha Harris (Newsletter Editor)  
Juan Rada-Vilela (Webmaster)  
George Bowman (General Committee)



## President's comments

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All in all it's been another good year for WTMC. We now have over 700 members and the club continues to support people getting out into the hills through various tramping, and tramping-related activities. Other than enjoying the hills, here a few of the projects our volunteers have been involved in:

**Climate Change Subcommittee** - Following a proposal put to the committee that WTMC adopt a no-flight policy for our trips we've formed a new sub-committee to make some recommendations about what the club should do to minimise our impact on the environment. We want to do this while still meeting the primary aim of the club to facilitate tramping and other outdoor adventure activities.

**FMC Regional Leadership Development Course** - WTMC offered to organise the first Regional Leadership Development Course, supported by FMC. Many clubs with smaller membership than ours struggle to run leadership training which is a worry for the long term future of tramping club trips. FMC are funding us, along with volunteers from other clubs in the Wellington region, to run a leadership course for any FMC-affiliated tramping club members across the region.

**Future of the WTMC Lodge at Ruapehu** - We had another mega winter season at the lodge. We are noticing more members expecting to use the lodge like commercially-operated accommodation. As we rely on volunteer help from our members to run the lodge, this isn't really in the club community spirit. The lodge crew spent a Sunday afternoon in November strategising about the future of the lodge. The discussion focussed firstly on whether the lodge was structurally viable (we are commissioning a full engineers report) and secondly on what changes we need to make to how it is run to ensure continued functionality as a member-run facility (paying for cleaners, not providing food during the week etc).

**Van Transport** - The two WTMC vans are needing more maintenance so we've started to look for a replacement for just one of them at this stage. Given the changing nature of arranging club trips, we might choose to use hire vehicles for more trips, rather owning two vans.

**Ruahine Whio Protection** - Club members continue to maintain the trap lines in the Eastern Ruahine, checking traps and re-baiting. The club provides petrol vouchers to members using their own vehicles to travel to maintain the trap line, and we also cover the cost of bait and gas for the A24 traps.

### Scholarships

The [scholarship fund](#), launched in August 2018, continues to support members to build their skills across a range of activities. This scheme is designed to invest in our future as scholarship recipients commit to sharing their new (and existing) skills and experience with the club community. We've had fewer applications this year, so there is scope for plenty more people to receive funds. All members who meet the criteria are encouraged to apply.

The key thing we are struggling with is that we're not currently set up to easily keep track of which of our members are willing to help out with what, or have what preferences around communications. While there are always tasks that need doing, we struggle to put effective calls out for volunteers. We are looking into



how best to manage the club membership database - this is something that will need to change in the fairly near future in order to support many other projects that committee members and others are keen to implement.

Of course everything I've mentioned above (and much more) has been made possible by our members actively volunteering their time, energy and ideas to not just keeping the club ticking over, but to ensuring we continue to adapt and branch-out to maintain a thriving community of participating members. A big thank you goes to the WTMC Committee, as well as everyone else who plays their part in helping the club run smoothly (over 100 members were on the invite list to our 'thanks-for-helping-out' event in December).

After two years as President, and several on the committee before that, it is time for someone else to take up the role. It's important that the responsibility of running the club is shared among our members and it's healthy for committee roles to change regularly to keep things fresh. I intend to keep helping out with running the club in other ways.

To all our members thanks for being part of the WTMC community—we hope you will stay with us and continue to enjoy being part of, and contributing to, such a great club.

**Emily Shrosbree, President**

#### **More information about WTMC:**

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Our website – <http://wtmc.org.nz/>      Our FaceBook page - <https://www.facebook.com/WTandMC/>

Our newsletter - <http://wtmc.org.nz/newsletter/>

Our most recent online [journal](#)

[Our annual reports and financial statements](#) and [Minutes from Committee Meetings](#)



## Committee Reports

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### Our Finances

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Our Financial Statement for 2020 is available on the [WTMC website](#)

Overall the club has made a surplus of \$27,725 for the 2020 financial year. Within this, the lodge made a surplus of \$15,272. WTMC, alongside VUTC, sponsored the New Zealand Mountain Film Festival, which generated \$2,769 of income for the club. This income goes into the Scholarship fund.

**Graeme Hearfield, Treasurer**

### Chief Guide – The year in brief

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(2018 figures in brackets)

WTMC ran 142 (163) trips during the year, comprising 2256 (2759) person days. While this was down on last year, it was still an active year for the club with trips covering a wide variety of activities ranging from canyoning through to packrafting alongside the mainstays of club activities, tramping and mountaineering.

One reason for the decline in trips run during the year was the increase in trips cancelled due to bad weather, a total of 22 (9) trips for the year. While it is not possible to control the weather, there was also an increase in the number of trips cancelled because there was no leader for the trip, up to 21 (13) for the year. So, another reminder that the club is always looking for trip leaders and if you are interested in leading trips please talk to the Chief Guide.

On a more positive note, there were 13 (11) instruction trips run during the year. Nearly all of these trips are run by club members and it is great to see that people are willing to take the time to share their knowledge and experience with others in the club.

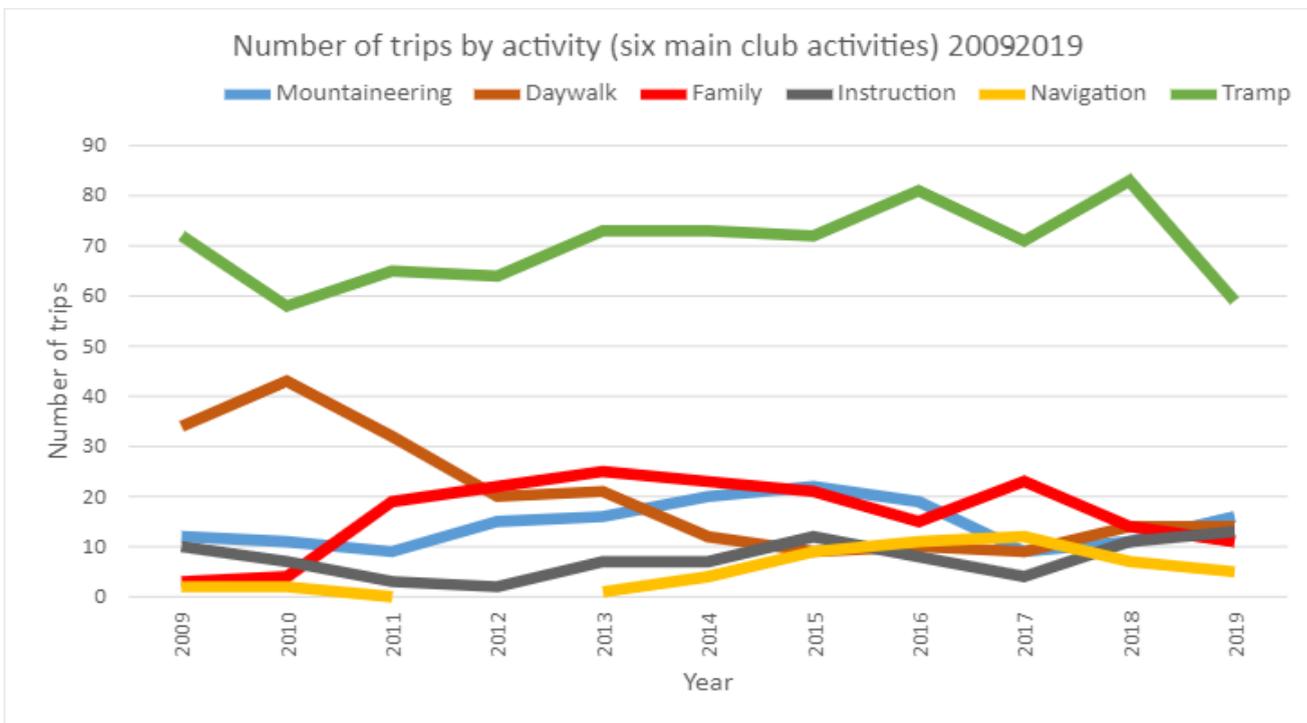
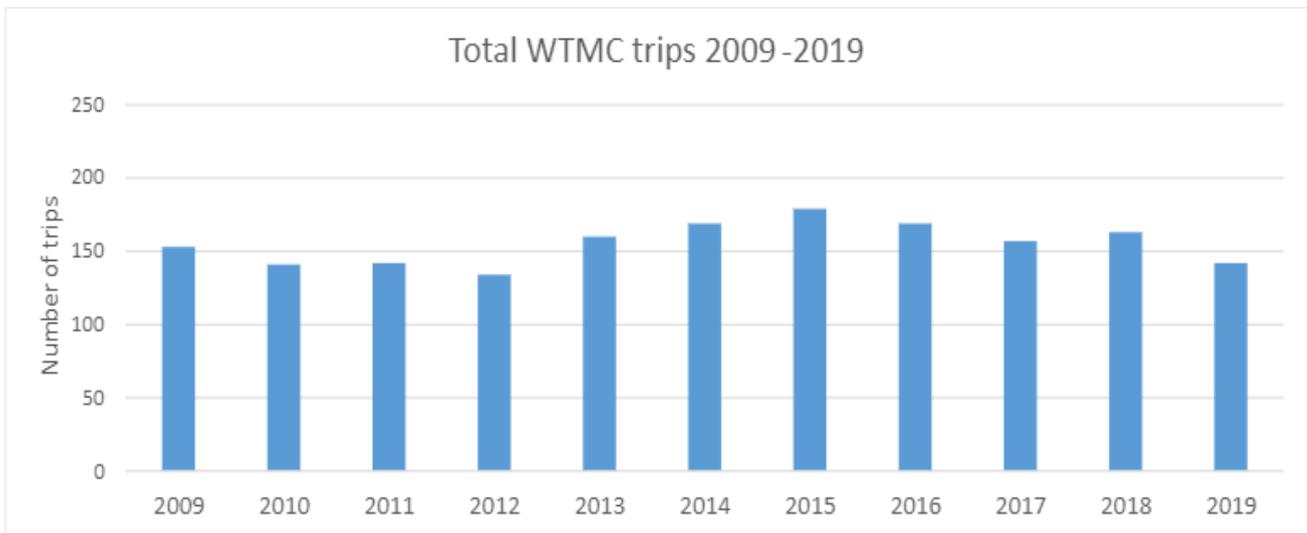
**Matt Conway, Chief Guide**

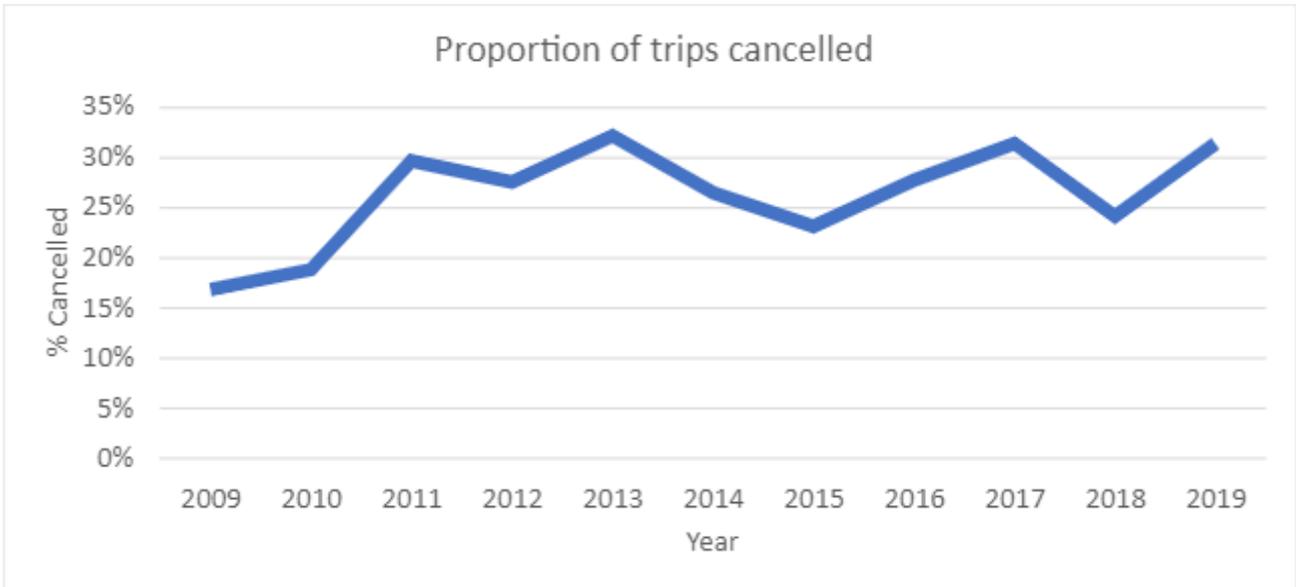
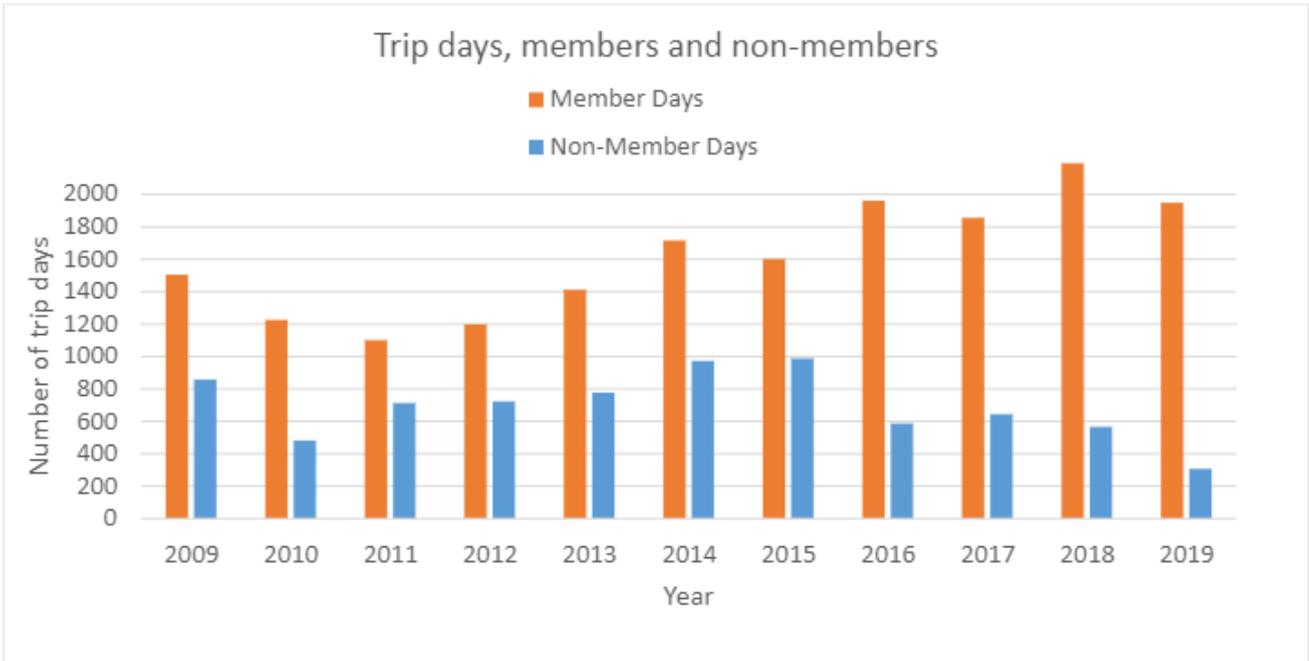
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## Statistics

A big thanks to Steve Kohler for recording and calculating these statistics.







## Our Assets

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### Ruapehu Lodge

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The club owns an excellent facility on the northern slopes of Mt Ruapehu which is the Whakapapa side at the top of the Bruce Road primarily to accommodate our club members and guests.

Our lodge has been well utilized in the past year to levels exceeding the previous year and that of the high of 2011. Snow falls creating up to a three metre base on the upper mountain made for excellent skiing when the weather was favourable. Unfortunately, when we have large snowfalls we also often have more bad weather.

The lodge has been used by school groups, member family groups, alpine use, the usual skiing and boarding and also a base for ski touring trips.

Summer use has also increased by both members and non-members as a base for walking, running, mountain biking or just used as a place to relax. The gondola is also providing access to the upper mountain café. Beyond this people have been able to follow the marked trails for sightseeing and go to the upper area of the mountain.

Our lodge has been so successful that we have created increased work for our booking team and a desire to reduce this workload has necessitated some changes on how people will be making bookings. Check with our booking information to see how these changes will affect everyone.

**Brian Goodwin, Ruapehu Lodge Convenor**

### Paua Hut

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Paua hut has continued to receive many visitors during 2019, often with one party on Friday evening and another party on Saturday evening.

One key has gone missing as of June 2019. Despite a big effort to locate it, it is still out there somewhere. There were multiple groups through using the hut around that time.

A maintenance team has painted the hut inside and out in January 2020. Many thanks to all involved for their efforts.

Low water is currently an issue, with likely toxic algae in the river, no water low down in Green Stream and very little in the tank. As of mid-February users need to walk up Green stream some way to access water.

**Ann and Phil Kendon, Paua Hut Bookings**



## Club Vans

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- The two club vans continue to be well-used, although the variety of club trips means we are often also using hire vans and cars.
- This year the committee decided to look for a replacement for just one of the club vans. Given our greater use of hire vehicles it may be that operating with one owned van is a better arrangement for today's club.

**Rene Auer, Transport Officer (Logistics) and Pete Silverwood, Van Maintenance**

## Our People

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### Membership

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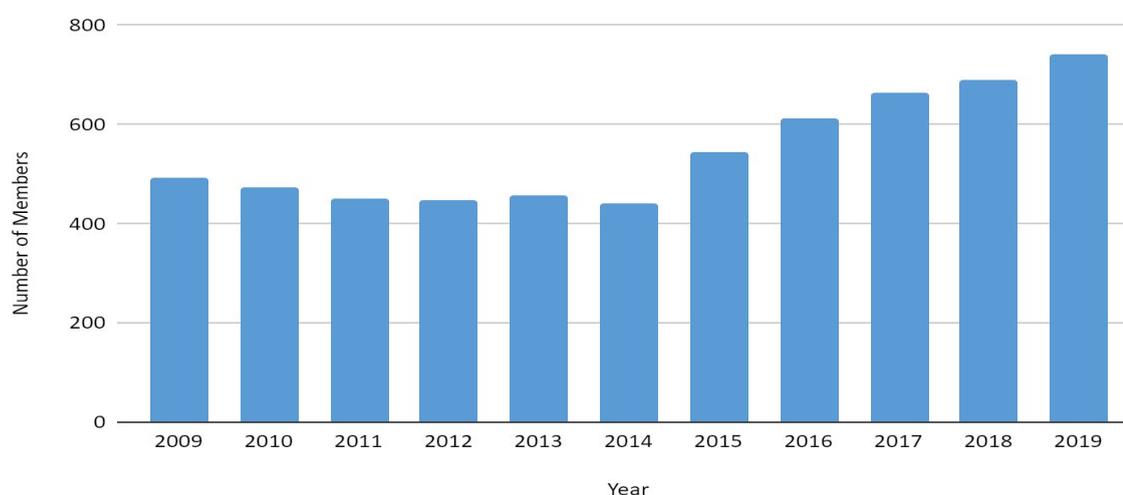
As at the end of 2019 the club had 741 (689) members in 424 households. This is up from 689 at the end of 2018. Adult members make up 57.5% of our current membership, with 22% child or junior members, 17.5% veterans and 3% life members. More people joined us this year (184) than last (145).

Of the 424 households, 84.2% live in Wellington, the Hutt Valley, or Porirua areas. About 60 member households live outside these areas, and another 7 live outside New Zealand.

Members are encouraged to keep the club's database up-to-date with any changes to their contact details, including email address. Please send your updated details to [membership@wtmc.org.nz](mailto:membership@wtmc.org.nz) or notify the membership officer by post (PO Box 5068, Lambton Quay, Wellington 6145).

We now have a flat fee for annual membership. There is no discount for joining part way through the year. This keeps things simpler for our volunteer membership officer. From Winter 2020, member benefits for the WTMC Lodge will only be available for members current as of April 1st.

Total Annual Membership: 2009-2019



**Jane Latchem, Membership Officer**



## Our Promotions and Communications

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- Our main means of communication are via the WTMC website (including the Newsletter and the Forum), the Facebook page and direct email. Club nights are another opportunity to communicate, but messages only reach those who are there on the night.
- Club nights continue to be fairly busy with some talks more popular than others.
- We held a New Members' Night in February 2020 with good attendance.

### **Sumudu Jayalath, Communications Officer and Aimee Paterson, Promotions Officer**

#### **Website**

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In 2019, we made two major changes on our technology platform: migration of web provider and migration of email provider. We migrated from a local web provider named “Webbase” to the global and ubiquitous “Amazon Web Services (AWS)”. The reason to migrate was the poor performance of our website, which very often offered very slow responses to web users or just errors related to its performance. The migration consisted of copying the Wordpress site to a virtual computer in the AWS platform, which provides great performance and many tools to handle scalability. The difference has been drastic not only in uptime, but also in speed for our web users and web administrators.

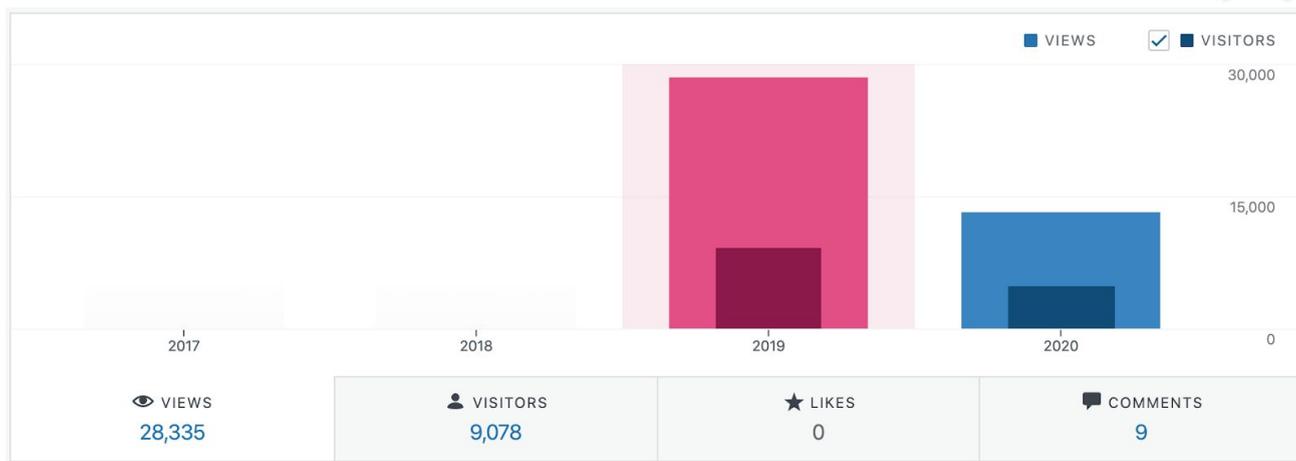
In addition to the web migration, we also migrated our email servers previously hosted on “Webbase” to Google Suite. We registered the WTMC as a not-for-profit organisation in TechSoup New Zealand, which allows us to use Google email services for free under the “wtmc.org.nz” domain.

The move to migrate away from “Webbase” was timely and convenient because we were having issues with space usage, which, when exceeded, our web and email service was shut down automatically until the problem was resolved. Now, we have large amounts of space available and, more importantly, we use (probably) the best technological infrastructure available in the market.

As a consequence of having our web service much more available and faster, we have been suffering from more frequent attacks to our Wordpress site. This situation encouraged us to implement Multi-Factor Authentication when logging into Wordpress and also to subscribe to a service of continuous backups in case the attackers manage to access and hack our website.

Some additional work on technology we performed were the online web application form and the automation of emailing membership invoices. The online web application form is a Google Form document that will help us better track our membership process. The automated process of emailing invoices means that next year we will be faster and more efficient at doing so.

With respect to the site visitors, we lost the history of visits during the migration, so only have data available from the last three months of 2019. Approximately, per month, we had 3,000 visitors and 10,000 page views.



All in all, I believe it has been an exciting year in technology for the club with great infrastructure, great services, and many opportunities still to leverage.

With respect to what is next, a few items will be priority:

1. We are currently under a 60% discount on AWS until we reach a year of usage, but just after that the costs will be higher. We will need to find out how much higher they could be and then reconfigure the infrastructure in order to reduce costs.
2. We will document the configuration of the infrastructure and centralise the necessary pieces of information such that transitions and secondments to the Webmaster role are simple, easy, and smooth.
3. We will continue to automate processes in order to free more time for committee members from performing tedious tasks.
4. We will continue to explore options to leverage the technological capabilities of our infrastructure.

**Juan Rada-Vilela, Web President**