



the Mouth'n'Ear



Newsletter of the Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club



Southern Kaweka Range (Photo: Mike McGavin)

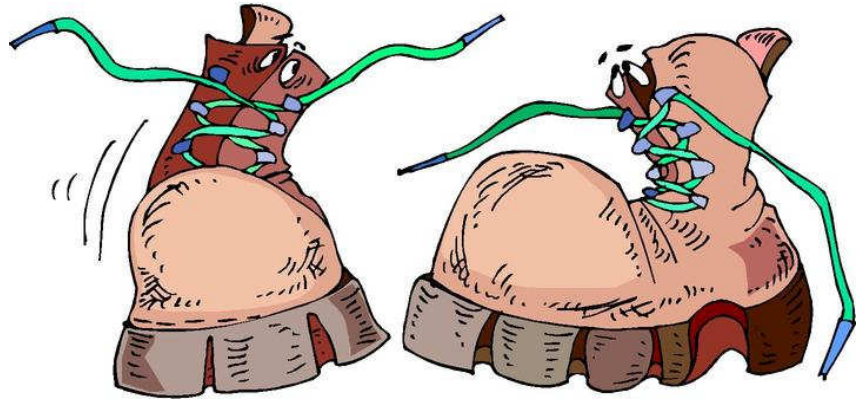
In this December issue: Southern Kaweka Range; Papatahi Crossing (Rimutaka FP); Darren Hammond Interview; Kai on the Fly.

Deadline February Newsletter: 28 January

Send contributions to newsletter@wtmc.org.nz, or PO Box 5068 Wellington.

Track Talk

with Amanda Wells -
Chief Guide



After a tough winter it seems like summer is finally here, though in Wellington we tend never to count chickens prematurely. It's a strange switch from battling ice and hypothermia to being mindful of dehydration and heat exhaustion.

Hopefully you're planning an active summer in the hills. Included with this newsletter is our Summer schedule, covering the months of February to April. If you're wondering where January has gone, we experimented with including it in the Spring schedule this year, because it can be hard to fill and organise January trips if they're not on the board in early December.

I'm typing this one-handed so will be brief. Unfortunately I have proved that the kitchen is a more dangerous place than the wilderness, especially if you don't pay its dangers appropriate attention. We seem to have had a run of accidents and injuries this year and it inspires me to think of how well those concerned have coped with some pretty disabling and traumatic events.

Every time we put together a schedule, the hardest part is getting enough leaders to sign up. Trip leaders are the backbone of our club and it's fair to say that people never fully appreciate the effort leaders put in till they have a go at leading themselves. The planning, the last-minute changes, the transport rearrangements, the cooking and the leadership during the trip all make this role challenging - but hopefully satisfying too. A heartfelt thank you from me to everyone who has lead a trip this year.

If you've been going out on a few club trips lately and want to give something back, trip leading is the best thing you can do. We'll be holding a leadership instruction course on 2-3 April that covers all the basics of trip leading and I'd encourage you to put it in your diary. We always need new leaders as our existing leaders move away or deal with other commitments. Please come and chat to me about leading if you have any questions, or just sign up for the course.

Social Corner



Kia Ora

Well it's another year coming to an end... yes its hard to believe Christmas is only a few weeks away. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people that have helped make Wednesday nights interesting and exciting. Covering subjects as diverse as ornithology and geophysics, and places such as Ethiopia, Iceland, and Stewart Island, giving us inspiration to

create adventures of our own. On that note I am always looking for presenters and ideas for club nights so please talk to me on a Wednesday evening or email me on

social@wtmc.org.nz

Events happening in the future on club nights:

The new member's night will be held on **February 23rd**. This is a great opportunity to invite anybody you come in contact with to come along and find out what we get up to at the club. Megan Banks is our Promotions officer and she would very much appreciate your help on the night. It's a lot of fun and you will also be fed. If you can help in any way please contact Megan on promotions@wtmc.org.nz

The photo competition will be on **March 2nd**. So get your cameras out over the Christmas break and in the new year and get snapping.

The last Wednesday for this year will be December 15th and that night will be a Quiz night so start studying up on your general knowledge.

The first Wednesday back in 2011 will be 12th January. This night will be a gear/social night only. Then Mika Verheul will be talking about Lake Waikaremoana on January 19th.

That's it from me for this year. Have a great Christmas and New Year and I hope you get a chance to experience the great outdoors in an enjoyable and memorable way.

Donna

Membership Report

This month we welcome Valentina Dinica as a senior member.

You will see that for the 2011/2012 membership year I'm bringing the membership renewals back in line with the WTMC financial year. The Committee supports this move and I hope you will too. You should find your invoice in the envelope with this newsletter!

We, the WTMC Committee, do our best to keep your membership subscriptions low. Unfortunately, this year we've had to make an increase due to the recent rise in GST and a 30% increase in our room and storage costs at the TTC club rooms. This is even more reason to take advantage of the prompt payment discount and renew your subscriptions by the 1st February 2011! Please see the letter I've enclosed with the invoice for more information on subscription rates, renewal dates and payment options.

What are the benefits of WTMC membership? There are lots of reasons! Your subscription, depending on your membership type, gives you; priority lodge bookings, the annual club journal, gear hire, the quarterly FMC bulletin, a FMC discount card and membership rates to the huge number and variety of trips the club runs. I hope you'll agree that our subscription fees represent great value for money!

Any questions please feel free to email me on membership@wtmc.org.nz or find me on a Wednesday night at the club rooms.

Happy Tramping!
Jenny, WTMC Membership officer

Notes from the Basement

Could trip leaders note that there is not an unlimited supply of small flies to hand out for trips. If you have a big group, please request big flies. I know we all like to save weight in our packs but its a limited supply!

If its busy week, eg before a long weekend please turn up early and be a little patient Lots of people heading out on trips is a good thing but its a small space down stairs.

Finally if you have new punters on your trip, please could you let them know where the gear room is and a little about communal gear. Had a couple of instances in the past few weeks of new trampers to the club not being aware of how things work.

Thanks very much indeed

Pete Gent, Gear Custodian.

Aunty Rata Interview with Darren Hammond



Clubs like ours are only as strong and vibrant as their members, particularly those who team up to run the show. Yep that would be the committee. We are very lucky to have a strong, hard working committee that is lead by our President Darren Hammond. After two years at the helm Darren plans to step down next year and head up north. We will need someone to fill his tramping boots.

On the surface the role of President sounds glamorous but Aunty Rata suspects that members only sit up and take notice if stuff goes wrong. The experience could be a bit like a trip to the Tararuas – you brace yourself for inclement weather while enduring lots of complaints from the punters about the leatherwood, steep hills and lack of views. Still you keep an eye out for the silver linings amongst the clag. Maybe finding a cosy hut with a nice fireplace for your party or soaking up one of those rare hot sunny days when everything falls into place. So how bad is it really? In the interests of ensuring any successor to Dazza knows a bit about the good and the bad, and that the rest of us get a bit of an insight into what the Prez actually does, I decided to find out.

How did you get into tramping?

I went tramping a couple of times with my family as a teenager, and pretty much hated it. Later in life, when I had had enough of mountain-biking (it was getting too hard to get fit enough to ride up the hills, and I was too scared of falling off on downhill), I was looking for something active in the outdoors, and my friends Paul and Wendy brought me along to a club night, when they were doing a slideshow. I signed up for a daywalk, then did an overnight to Totara Flats (with John Harrison leading), and the rest is history. Next trip was to Nelson Lakes (with John Hickey leading), it is still one of my most memorable trips to this day!.

What were your first impressions of WTMC?

I remember being on the club bus that first trip to Holdsworth road end (the bus was impressive itself), with all these super fit people with cool gear, who put on their packs and head torches and walked off into the cold night, then came striding back 2 days later not even looking tired, when I was shattered. I was pretty impressed. WTMC has always had a wide range of interesting and unique people, and that will continue I think. I remember that Club nights were pretty daunting the first few times, I don't think that has changed for newbies, but once you get to know a few people, it is fine.

What do you consider your main achievements as President?

It was really good to get the 2nd van, and I'm very pleased we got the PLBs. We had to battle a bit against some opposition that I really didn't understand, but it was the right thing to do. This year I felt more comfortable as President, so felt better placed to advocate on behalf of the club, writing a submission against the Schedule 4 changes, and getting exemptions to the Kahurangi by-laws. I've got a lot of satisfaction from doing those. But when I started, I just wanted to see people out on trips having fun, if that is still the case, then I'm happy about that.

What aspects of the job have you found the most rewarding?

I have got great pleasure from seeing someone I helped recruit to committee doing a great job in their area. Or seeing a new member who I encouraged, starting to lead trips and enjoying it. On a simple level, just watching the crowd gather on a Wednesday night, and hearing the hum of the crowd gives me a sense of satisfaction that the club is going well. And I always get a buzz out of representing the club at meetings and events, it reminds me that I'm representing a well-known and respected club with over 60 years of history behind it.

What aspects of the job have caused you the most grief?

That is easy to answer, dealing with people dramas. That is to be expected when dealing with a group of strong-willed individuals, but it is a challenge at times. It is a frustrating position in the respect that you get virtually no thanks or credit for doing the job (apart from at the AGM maybe), so you have to do it for your own reasons. And even though I constantly ask for feedback from the members on what they'd like to see being done, I don't get anything back at all. So I have no idea if people are happy with things or not. I'd like to know either way...

What have you learnt from your experience of being Prez?

I have certainly learnt a lot about how to deal with people. Also, that it's better to deal with issues as they come up, and not to dwell on things too much. I've been pleasantly surprised about what I could actually achieve with my time, when I got focussed on the issues at hand.

What are the top three attributes you reckon a successful President needs to have?

You need to be well-organised, and have a sympathetic (or ignorant) employer and a sympathetic partner ☺. Good communication skills are a must, as well as diplomacy. Finally, knowing when to stick to your guns on an issue, and when to be willing to give way. That's more than 3, but they are all important, so I will leave them all in...

Do you have any advice for anyone contemplating getting themselves nominated for the office of President, or any other Committee role?

In terms of making sure you know what you're getting into, talk to the person currently in the role, and get an honest assessment of the pros and cons of the role. Only that person can give you an idea of what it is really like. But basically, just do it! (get someone to nominate you).

Do you think that generally Club Members help out enough or are a few people doing the bulk of the work?

Generally members do help out when asked, but there are some people, especially on committee, who do so much, even beyond their demanding committee roles, that as President I get nervous about people burning out, and dropping out of the club. There are things like; leading trips, being weekend contact person, writing newsletter and journal articles, doing slideshows at clubs, where I'd like to see members more involved and committee members less involved.

What, in your opinion sets WTMC apart from rival tramping clubs?

I actually find that very hard to answer as I've only ever been involved with WTMC. I'm sure most clubs have similar issues to us, and have some great people who put in a lot of personal time to make things happen too.

What are the challenges facing WTMC over the next 2-5 years?

I think there is a risk that we will get to a point where there are not enough people helping out to lead trips, do slideshows, write articles etc, that we have to cut back our activities in those areas, which would be a shame, and have a trickle-on effect. We're probably not seeing the growth in new members that I'd really like to see, so that we get fresh faces coming along to replace those moving on, that is a challenge for the club in the next year or so.

You are going to be shifting to Auckland, what will you miss the most about Wellington (apart from the black ice on the roads in Winter...)?

I've been here for about 17 years, so there are a lot of people I know here, I'll miss them the most. But I'm excited about moving to Auckland, and starting a new chapter of my life with Sandra. I'm looking forward to some better weather up there...

Kiwi Saddle – Macintosh Hut (Kaweka FP) Medium Tramp – Labour Weekend

by Mike McGavin

We started out on Labour weekend with a basic plan of staying a couple of nights around Studholme Saddle Hut, and possibly heading further up the main Kaweka Range during that time. Things didn't work out that way. For the first time in a long time, at least as far as I can remember, we had three long summer days of sunshine, and ended up lazily following a loop around Kiwi Saddle and down Mackintosh Spur.

Friday night was spent camping at a DoC campsite somewhere near the Cameron Carpark, shared with the Easy/Medium group, which were themselves intending to spend a couple of nights around Kiwi Saddle.

Having packed up from our camp, we hopped into the van, left the other group behind and drove to the Lakes Carpark, making a small accidental diversion to the Mackintosh Carpark but realising soon enough.

The Lakes Carpark leads off in three possible directions. Leaving here at 8.45am, we chose the middle track (towards Kiwi Saddle Hut), which more or less heads due west, then north-west straight up the hill, initially through a pine forest as an interesting change from the majority of New Zealand tramping, and eventually (but briefly) changing to what Rowena identified as a Kanuka forest. We were soon out in the open, hit by bright sunshine, on our way to the first major high point called Kuripapango (1250).

We sat on Kuripapango for a short while, then continued the clockwise walk along the Smith Russell Track towards Kiwi Saddle, with fantastic vistas towards Tongariro National Park, which didn't really leave us for the entire time we spent on the tops over the long weekend. Despite the nice weather, some small splatterings of snow had resisted the heat, but nothing to cause any hazards. The ridge-line is very eroded revealing a brown clay, and there also appears to be a huge problem in this part of the Kawekas with wilding pines, specifically *Pinus Contorta*, which is blanketing much of the tops and taking over from what should really be alpine tussock. For parts of the track leading towards Kiwi Saddle Hut, the side of the track has even been sprayed. At 11.40'ish we reached the track junction that leads down to Cameron Hut, marked by a giant signpost, and from here Kiwi Saddle Hut was only about 20 minutes further, much of which was spent cautiously hopping down a fairly steep but wide open area eroding away.



As generally planned, we stopped for lunch at Kiwi Saddle Hut. Having packed up in a fairly lazy way, we left Kiwi Saddle at around 1pm, and went back up above the bush-line into the weed-ling pinus contorta, although it was less obvious for a while along here. Over the next couple of hours, we met four people out for a daywalk from the Napier Tramping Club, and we stopped and chatted for a while. They mentioned they'd already seen three people on their way down to Studholme Saddle Hut, and suggested that rather than go there we could aim for a point just below the bush-line on the ridge called Kiwi Camp — a big dug-out campsite with a couple of water tanks, and also a small enclosed shelter. Apparently it was put up by contractors who are intermittently brought in to help control the wilding pines. By the time we arrived we'd virtually decided it was a good idea. Michael L in particular had still been feeling some effects of a cold the previous week, and on arriving I think we stopped and simply never got around to picking up and leaving again.

Rowena pulled out the mountain radio, set up the antenna and we listened in for a while. Rowena reported in as JG39 for the 8pm sked, not reporting anything except a great day, and we listened as AT32 requested assistance for their injured party member.

With another fantastic night, I bivvied out under a tree once again rather than head under a fly. Sunday morning brought some more sad news over the mountain radio, with vague information about someone having been shot dead by a hunter, although details were sketchy.

We resolved to simply go to Mackintosh Hut, making it a cruisy day, but were still away at about 8.30am, quickly out of the saddle (and the bush-line), and standing up on Kaiarahi (1507) within an hour, catching a glimpse of Studholme Saddle Biv to the north along the way.

We began to follow the Mackintosh Spur track down towards Mackintosh Hut. As soon as we were over the ridge, we entered a thick forest of wilding pinus contorta, continuing the theme of this noxious weed in the Kawekas. We pulled out a couple of small ones, but on the scale of things I doubt it made much difference. It was sad to see it taking over so much of the hill-side, but at the same time it offered a different experience from the usual New Zealand bush. The track through this forest is very well cut and, apart from one (possibly two) small rocky bluffs to climb around, is very easy and straightforward. Eerie cairns buried in the pine trees suggest that the area didn't used to be like this, and was probably much more open and tussocky in past decades before the ugly pines invaded.

After 90 minutes and a couple of track junctions, we reached the bright orange Mackintosh Hut. It's situated in a beautiful place in front of a swampy stream on a giant plateau of the spur. The hut has 8 bunks, lots of floor space, and lots of space on the verandah outside. Not that it was needed.

Inside the hut just felt quite hot, and I dragged a mattress outside onto the deck, anticipating another clear, calm evening. Rowena copied me, and having earlier set up the

antenna for the mountain radio to catch the 8pm sked, she configured it so she could listen for a while in bed and we learned more about the fatal spotlighting incident at Kaimanawa Road Campsite on Friday night.

An adult possum with a baby possum on its back scooted past, giving the two of us some entertainment as we tried to get photographs. Something out the front, which later turned out to be a discarded instant soup packet, had gotten its attention. It wasn't spooked at all by torchlight, suggesting it may have been familiar with people at this hut, generally not a good thing. We didn't want it hanging around, and on discovering an arsenal of firewood and (especially) pine cones under the bench next to where I'd set up my mattress, a couple of near-target throws sent it scampering. The rest of the night was fairly uneventful.



Monday morning was yet another excessively sunny day, and we resolved to walk back to the Lakes Carpark with the Easy/Medium group, given we'd be sharing our transport with them anyway. I took a quick glance at the map, and only taking some lazy notice of the relatively flat parts of the route out (skimming over the steep drops and climbs around a couple of rivers) I probably deserved some of the ribbing I later got from a couple of others who'd for some reason trusted my description of the walk out rather than look for themselves. All of us left at around 8.30am, back into the largely Pine weed forest from where we'd come, eventually turning off Mackintosh Spur to head back south-west in the direction of the carpark... which is generally a gentle coastly sidling track albeit for ongoing undulation, and except for the 150 metre drop into (and climb out of) Kaiarahi Creek, the 200 metre climb up towards Cooks Horn Basin (at the site of the old Kaweka Hut that burned down in 2003), and the 200 metre drop into (and climb out of) the Tutaekuri River. So yeah, pretty much flat I think, except for those numerous parts that aren't.

I finally got wet feet—the first time in the entire weekend—at the Tutaekuri River. A few maps imply that there's still a wire bridge here, too, but we saw no sign of it. There was no need under the circumstances as it was running very low, and anyone wanting to keep their feet dry was easily able to cross 50 metres further up-stream. From the river onwards, the track sidles steeply but steadily up-hill back towards the parking area. This zone is all pine forest which almost looks plantation, despite being part of the forest park. Rowena and I took guesses, wondering if DoC has a plan to perhaps fell it at a later date when the trees are a little bigger, then use the proceeds to try and fund more effective measures to remove pinus contortis from the rest of the park. However it works, if it's ever done it'll be really hard to do.

So with some lengthy stops along the way, we finally stepped out to the carpark at around 12.30pm, with still a generally clear sky above us to top off a calm and clear long weekend. It's been a while. I hear the Tararuas were one of the few places in all of New Zealand to have had rain this weekend.

The trampers were: Michael Lightbourne, Rowena Johnstone, Phil Lubeck, and Mike McGavin.

Papatahi Crossing (Rimutaka FP) Medium/Fit Tramp - November 6 & 7

by Hans Wiskerke

What's the definition of a M/F-tramp? According to some, it doesn't even exist as it would be either M or F, and anything in between is just smoke and mirrors. This trip was optimistically scheduled to be a M-trip, but over the weekend the idea developed that it actually should be rated a M/F tramp.

Let's start with the ingredients: some veggies and couscous, a relaxed Saturday morning start allowing all to check out the Guy Fawkes fireworks on Friday evening, two vans to do a car swap, a bunch of enthusiastic punters, lots of orange triangles, vertical and horizontal water, and a few bits of rope.

This probably requires some more explanation, so let's go to a coffee shop in Petone where four guys are bent over a NZ Topo map, discussing the track whilst letting some of the southerly rain get past. The plan was to leave one van in Wainuiomata, guarded by the local duck posse on Sunny Grove, allowing these four punters to start from the west side. Two others took the club van and had already headed off to the Wairarapa side of the crossing and started their journey from there. The junction of Boulder Creek and the Orongorongo seemed a logical mid-point to meet the other group and set up camp.



Cheerful start at Sunny Grove

Indeed a river terrace just south of Boulder Creek provided a perfect camping spot. Rowena, accompanied by her dog, had already walked in from Catchpool after a dog-training, identified the right location and was about to start a nice campfire by the time the group of four arrived. Metservice had promised the southerly to die out in the course of the day, so we put up the large fly

in the hope of a comfortable night.

Meanwhile the other two had arrived from the eastern side, going up Papatahi on one side and sliding down the other side. A combination of some snow, a bit of mud and loose scree

made it quite challenging, but luckily there were some bits of rope and sufficient trees to grab for additional support. As fisherman tales and campfire stories go, the mud, slips, onga-onga and vertical drops got bigger and bigger, and by the end of the evening (must have been 9 o'clock) their 7-hour tramp had been transformed into a 10-hour gruesome journey. The leg of the tramp from Wainui to the campsite had been pretty easy going on a well-formed track, with the major events being some crossings of the Orongorongo. The four guys had therefore no possibility to balance the horror stories with similar R16 stuff.

Sunday crept in very quietly, so the group of four actually got up a bit later than planned and hit the track shortly before 9AM. They made a huge effort to stick to the 10-hour scheme, negotiating the track carefully, having some snack breaks, doing map reading and altimeter checks. There certainly were steep parts where the trees, ferns and ropes came in handy, there were some bum-slides, and worst of all some even hit the stinging nettle. Halfway the afternoon they came across Joe's hut (or Wharepapa hut on the new map) which contained some 1970's editions of the Outdoor magazine (50c only) advertising real Swiss army knives for about \$40. The final leg meant going up another hill, and down, and up another little one, and down again to reach the van basking in the early evening sun. Proud as they were to have made this 10-hour trip in exactly 10 hours, the four men happily drove home. Meanwhile, the three feminine trampers had spent half a day in and around their homes, as the bit to Wanuiomata appeared to be some five hours only.

Marie in Joe's hut

So getting back to the original question it is very clear: a M/F tramp should be defined as a tramp where the Male punters travel in one direction, and the Female in the other. Simple as that!

Punters: Marie Henderson, Mika Verheul, Rowena Johnstone (all F), and Frank Ruckstuhl, Phil Wheeler, Colin Bouttel, Hans Wiskerke (all M)



Last lazy bit out, looking back to Papatahi and Mt Matthews

KAI ON THE FLY

with Aunty Rata

Kia ora fellow trampers

The end of the year is nigh and my focus on sharing recipes with you is also starting to wane. Mostly this is because thanks to the efforts of Megan Sety, Illona Keenan, Kevin Cole, Amanda Wells, Steve Austin and the rest of the team the Club now has an online collection of recipes. Go to the WTMC website and click on “downloads” in the main menu on the left hand side of the page then go to “miscellaneous goodies” and you will find the link to the recipes. Any feedback is most welcome as are fresh recipes or new twists on old favourites. In the New Year I may stray into tramping baking. I’m on the hunt for that elusive bomb proof recipe for Tararua biscuits.

While you are out in the hills over the holiday period, reflecting on the year that was and speculating on what 2011 will bring, spare a thought for WTMC. Lots of us will be on Xmas trips with other Club members, people who we met through the Club and we now count as our mates. We all get lots out of the Club whether it be shared transport, new friends, new skills and experiences, great photos and memories, cheap gear hire or blisters. Clubs like ours only survive and thrive if the people in them share the many tasks involved in keeping the ship sailing.

What are you going to contribute in 2011?

Here are my starters for 10:

- 1 Lead a trip or two – great way to practice new skills and meet new people
- 2 Encourage friends and acquaintances to come and join the Club – this is a great way to share the load of running the Club and to bring on board new people with different skills and experiences. Also, the more people who join the easier it is to keep costs down.
- 3 Volunteer to help out on the front desk on Wednesday nights or in the back room supervising gear hire and return – this is a great way to meet new people and learn about the Club and our supply of gear. Check out the ice hammers – awesome!
- 4 Offer to do a slideshow or organise a social event – great way to ensure Wednesday nights are interesting and to practice your public speaking. It is dark and you don’t have to look at the audience because you are behind them. You get to choose the biscuits.
- 5 More at home not dealing with people face to face? Maybe you would like to collect trip statistics or help out as a Club contact person for trips – great way to find out what is going on without having to talk to anyone.

- 6 If you are an experienced outdoors type you may be able to help out with the Club instruction courses such as Bushcraft, Snowcraft and the Leadership course or help organise external providers to run courses such as outdoor first aid. If so, the Chief Guide and/or Assistant Chief Guide would love to hear from you.
- 7 Write up your trips for the Club newsletter or journal (plus photos of course)– great way to hone your creative writing skills and ensure there is a lasting record of your cool trip told from your perspective.
- 8 Learn to drive the Club vans and run the Club Lodge – these are fun and practical ways to contribute to the smooth running of the Club. We always need competent drivers to occupy our special heated and padded driving seats and people who are experienced in the art of allocating bunks and delegating toilet cleaning and washing up to people hanging out in our palatial batch up at Ruapehu
- 9 If you like meetings or want to get experience working in groups there are lots of groups the WTMTC is represented on or could be – from the Whakapapa ski field hut committee to the FMC. There is also a Tararua huts committee I believe or something similar. There are also several sub-committees that report to the Club Committee – great way to contribute in a specialised area such as Lodge administration and getting our trips organised each week. A natural groupie? Talk to someone on the Committee.
- 10 Perhaps leadership and getting stuff done is your thing or you think it could be. We are always looking for diligent, hardworking, resilient, smart people with lots of enthusiasm and bright ideas to go onto the Club Committee and the global search for a new President will commence in 2011.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer break. Make sure you come back refreshed and relaxed. 2011 presents lots of great opportunities.

All published trip reports (or other written articles that aren't committee reports) are in the draw to win a \$20 book voucher!

Congratulations to Sharron Came, winner of the November draw, for the Mt Rolleston report.

The views expressed in the articles in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club. Any queries or comments should be directed to the writer of the article.

FROM THE GREEN CROCS

This month, you are getting a bumper package from the club, the December newsletter, the Annual Journal, the Summer Trip Schedule, and the latest FMC bulletin. Plenty of reading material for the summer break!

This is the second journal that Tony Gazley and Jackie Foster have produced for the club, and I know you will enjoy reading it, there are some great stories and photos in it. Many thanks to all who have contributed to this year's journal.

Our Chief Guide Amanda has come up with an exciting Summer trip schedule. Thanks to all the people who have volunteered to lead trips, especially those who are leading trips for the first time. There are a few trips listed as Leader Required, if you would like to see these trips run, all volunteers to lead these trips (or any extra trips!) are gratefully accepted, Amanda or Melissa would love to hear from you.

This is a good time to thank all those who have helped the club out over the last year in whatever way, whether you served on committee, lead a trip, greeted people at the door or did a slideshow on a club night, wrote a trip report, helped out in the gear room, drove the van, or anything I have forgotten, THANK YOU for making our club work!



2010 has been a very eventful year for me personally, I got civil unioned (I think that is the right term ☺) in February, and broke my hip after falling off my bike in July. Civil union life is treating me very well, and my hip has healed well (see photo!), and I am back riding my bike to work, and hope to start tramping again in 2011. Also in 2011, (as alluded to in Aunty Rata's interview with me in this newsletter) I will be moving to Auckland, so I will not be seeking re-election as president at the AGM in April. There are a number of people in the club who I know would do a great job of this challenging role, so I am sure that I will be passing over leadership of the club to safe hands.

I have enjoyed my second year as president, despite the challenges the role brings with it. It is always a pleasure to represent the club, and to see plenty of members out enjoying the NZ outdoors on club trips.

I'm looking forward to a Christmas break, Sandra and I are going camping in the Far North, after Christmas with family. Whatever you are doing over the summer break, I hope you have a great time, and stay safe!

Darren Hammond

