

Newsletter Sept to Dec 2025



Website: [www. motuekatrampingclub.org](http://www.motuekatrampingclub.org)

Email: secretary.motuekatc@gmail.com

Committee



Secretary and Committee: Lynne Flood

Treasurer and Committee: Heather Adams

Membership Officer and Committee: Kathy Chandler

Committee Member: Kathleen Famularo

Walks Committee: Becky Johns, Maggie Pidgeon and Sonya Lloyd

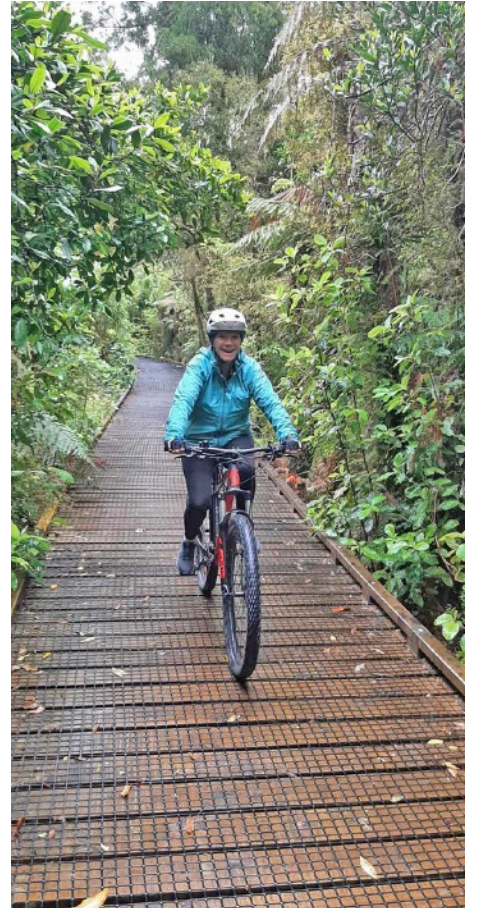
A tribute to club member Amy MacIver who died in a tramping accident

My friend Amy was a wonderful soul. It is so unbelievable she has gone. So wonderful to tramp with, a laugh a minute, she loved to sing songs about situations on the track that got me singing along. We did many hours together on the trails and were always looking for that fabulous swimming hole to complete the day, with an afternoon laze by a wild refreshing pool. Amy was very talented and did anything from weaving, making stunning crochet blankets or spinning wool, to knitting up a jumper for Adam, to cooking a very tasteful dinner or skiing down a mountain, so much she did I can't list it all. They traveled the world, renovated houses and created Wilover farm, here in Mapua, a homesteaders paradise, complete with animals and produce producing plants and fruit. Amy was a very inspiring, caring, wonderful friend. She will be very missed by all who knew her. It's our tramping club's great loss that she has gone. One does not get to meet a person like Amy very often.

Sonya



Amy and Sonya on Mt Owen





Trip Reports



Maitai Cave

7 September 2025

Leader, writer and photographer: Debbie

Trampers: Debbie, John, Lynne and Yvonne H



It was a windy cool start to the day. Once we started walking along the 4WD track at the start, approx 2km, we were sheltered from the wind and it was a lovely sunny day.

The 4WD track becomes lovely bush and the track soon separates into the Maitai cave track and the Dun Mountain bike track.

It was interesting to read at this stage about Mr Thomas Cawthron and his donation of 1000ha in 1913 of Cawthron Park to Nelson City. The rest of the walk is in this park. Lovely old bush of mixed beech forest alongside the true left of the Maitai river sth branch before branching off and having Sclanders Creek running alongside the track. There are 2 creek crossings early in the walk.

The track was not the easiest to follow at times with not many orange triangles along the way until you came to a tree with more markers than you knew what to do with!! It was a nice 3 hr return walk.



Pupu Springs Walkway

5 October 2025

Leader and writer Sally

Photographer: Heather and Sally

Trampers: Heather, Kathy, Milan, Sally and Yvonne H

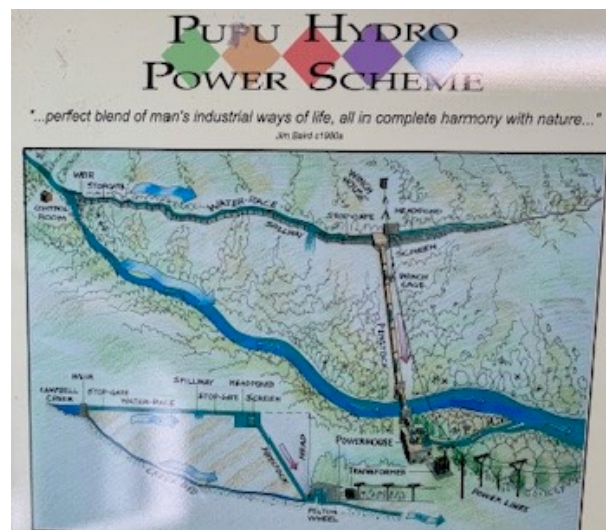
Pupu Springs walkway is an easy, accessible circuit. The track is well maintained and passes through forest, alongside the power station water race and back to the carpark via the power station maintenance road.

We viewed the fully functional power station at the end of our walk, a few moments from the carpark. I found the information about the power station fascinating.

We ate our lunch at the shelter in the carpark as the weather was showery, before heading to Pupu springs. We walked around the Springs track and read about the history from the story boards at the start of the track. The Springs have a calm energy and I would recommend visiting to experience their magic.

I hope everyone enjoyed the walk as much as me.





The water race



The hydro intake



Mt Duppa

19 October 2025

Leader, writer; Heather

Photographer: Heather

Trampers: Birgit, Heather, John, Lynne and Maggie

The Waimea Tramping Club had done this walk a week before us, and reported that it was wet and slippery. It was still wet and slippery, with a strong, cold wind to accompany us. Although we took all the time we needed, it was still a challenge to find adequately firm foot and handholds in places, especially around the granite section halfway up. We were definitely tired by the end of the day. The view at the top of the mount is this walk's redeeming feature. Views can be had in all directions over the sea towards D'Urville Island, over the Richmond Ranges, along the Bryant Ranges and over the Waimea Plains. This area has been locked away behind forestry gates for some years, so it was nice to be able to explore here again. We were impressed with the quality of the access road maintained by forestry company One-Forty-One.



View to the east



View to the northeast



An orange marker, rare on Mt Duppa



Navigation Skills, 2 November 2025

An excellent day course was run by Keiran and Rosie from Motueka LandSar who were keen to equip us with navigation skills today to reduce the likelihood of them having to come find us in the future. We began with an introduction to maps – how to discern features and terrain types, how to measure distance, and how to interpret contour lines. We worked with our compasses too – learning the difference between grid north and magnetic north (and how to apply it), and learning to take bearings. Rosie put together a fun wee exercise, which demonstrated the need to observe what is around you (this would be the main reason I struggle with navigation). For the finale, we walked a small circuit on Rabbit Island using the orienteering map, noticing what we were going past and in what direction, then we put our compass bearing skills into practice. It was an enjoyable day.

Participants: Heather, Rebecca, Graham, Kathy, Gill, Una, Debbie, Sally, Maggie.



Maud Creek

9 November 2025

Leader and writer: John

Trampers: Becky, Debbie, Heather, John and Lynne



An abandoned Jacques Excavator



Maggie Creek



*The rock (above) and the sign on it (below)
Balanced on top is an old excavator bucket, upon
which the names of the miners are inscribed*



Please do not Shift This Rock
There is no gold underneath
We have looked
Signed The gold miners of 1953

It was a warm sunny day when we made our way to the Howard Valley where we parked at the start of the easement to Maud Valley Hut.

First was a crossing of Maggie Creek then a walk through farmland and some very curious cows. Once we got further up the valley it got nicer with some good bush and open grassy river flats. We passed a sawmill, still used to cut plantation trees nearby. There were artefacts from the gold mining days and a wonderful old hut, the Maud Valley Hut, privately owned by the Collings family, but free for anyone to use. The hut looks quite ramshackle but is surprisingly comfortable inside and has had some very basic renovations. A bird was frantically trying to get out so we helped it out the door.



Back down the river we visited the Maud Hut (below). This one has a lot of charm but is derelict inside. It was built by George Haigh in the early 1930s.



The day finished with cold drinks and coffee at the Alpine Lodge in St Arnaud.

The Press, 22 May 1965

Big Nuggets Were Found In The Maud Valley Goldfield

(Specially written for "The Press" by JAMES STERS.)

PICKLE jars gleaming with large nuggets—so much and so heavy a 10-year-old boy could not lift them off the ground.

These are some of the memories of Mr Dinnis Collings, of Karori, who as a boy spent nearly 10 years in the Maud Valley in the Nelson goldfield and recently took his family to revisit the area.

The Maud Valley, one of the richest goldfields worked under Government subsidy during the depression, was missed by the prospectors who worked the Otago and West Coast fields in the early 1860's.

The valley is the most fascinating of the Nelson field, which includes the area between Lakes Rotoroa and Rotoiti, 70 miles south of Nelson.

One of the early prospectors, a Scandinavian named Jorgenssen, died in Nelson Hospital without disclosing the locality of his bush claim. He and another bushman, Andy Perry, found gold in the Maud just before the Great War. But they were too shrewd to register their claims. Instead, they recovered the gold on a miner's right which did not require the claim's whereabouts to be disclosed.

They found a lot of gold. Perry, who lived in the field during the depression, used to talk of having recovered large quantities a day. Dinnis Colling's father once recovered a pound of gold in one day.

The bushmen-prospectors were able to work the field in comparative peace until the depression when the Government, concerned about unemployment, offered a subsidy to anyone who would work in areas likely to yield gold. It was just before the influx of the prospectors that one of the bushmen was found dead with his foot badly cut. He was found near his camp near the principal tributary of the Maud. The stream became known as Deadman's Creek and later proved to be the richest part of the field. Miners moved into the Maud in the early 1930's, staked their claims in the valley floor, spent much of their spare time on Sundays looking for "Deadman's" base camp and the jars of gold nuggets. But possibly they were not bushmen. they never found the camp. Many tried. Some tried to follow him each time he came out for his supplies, but at a certain point he just disappeared into the beech trees.

You reach the heart of the Maud goldfield by walking in from the road that links Lake Rotoiti with the Murchison highway. The walk was particularly nostalgic for Dinnis Collings. Every step brought back a flood of memories of the times when as a young boy he had gone to get the mail and supplies. The bush had overgrown much of the area. But deep, wide holes, narrow cuts, tailings, and stones too large to go through the races indicated the minefield. Our camp was in a hut last owned by Roland Haste, who was still going into the field in the 1950s when he was more than 80. The winters, he said, were too cold for him, but he still went there in summer to put in cuts and to wash for gold.

Roland Haste's hut was typical of the miner's dwelling. Adze-hewn beech slabs for walls, floor and a huge fireplace. Inside, the walls were lined with newspapers to keep

out the cold. Sitting outside the hut Dinnis Collings pointed across the valley to one of the richest claims in the field. It was worked by a gang known as the “Canterbury Boys.” One of them bought four farms in Tauranga. Nearby five Dalmatians had worked a claim. There was ill-feeling between them and the “Canterbury Boys.” It ended in a fight one night, one of the most spectacular of many seen on the field, but it ended in a near-tragedy when one of the Dalmatians fell into a blazing fire and was badly burnt. A series of stretcher parties carried the man to Lake Rotoiti to the nearest road transport. From there he was taken to Nelson hospital. Medical facilities were limited but the miners were resourceful. When Dinnis accidentally chopped off his young sister’s index finger, his father recovered the severed piece, rinsed it in salt, water and hydrogen-peroxide put the finger back and bound it in place splinted with thin slivers of wood. The finger healed well only a slight crook.

Dinnis Collings was seven when his father left Wellington for the Maud Valley during the depression and he lived there until just before 1940 when the war closed the field. The first thing his family demanded when they went to the Valley was that he find some gold, and he was well prepared for the request. He had brought a gold-pan and after prospecting for “colour” as the old prospectors did, an old race was found and mining started. Dinnis Collings found where the Maud stream had made a new cut in a bank and after finding colour, the family went to dam the stream to provide sufficient “head” of water, and the overburden on the bank was cleared to get to the gold-bearing layer of dirt. The biggest problem was the removal of large stones and boulders to get the smaller stones and dirt through the race. It takes a lot of hard work to get enough dirt to fill a gold-pan in the wash-up. Fired with gold fever the three Collings boys, Barry (12), Stephen (11) and Michael (10), worked hard to push two yards of dirt through the race. Soon the suspense became unbearable, the dam was broken and the race was dragged clear. The riffle (sluice) was removed and the beech leaves under the riffle carefully washed in the gold pan. Then the dirt was scooped into the pan and the wash-up began. Ten minutes later most of the dirt was cleared and on the bottom was the unmistakable glitter of gold. But that was not the only find, there was a small black ruby and a trace of platinum. The hard work was forgotten at the sight of such a success, and it was with the greatest reluctance that the Collings family started the long walk to Lake Rotoiti and the end of their bush holiday.



Sawmill in the Maud Valley. Built 1924. It operates once a year in December when the owner has a family day



Conical Hill

23 November 2025

Leader and Writer: Helen

Trampers: Graham and Helen

Photos: Graham



Two of us set out on a lovely morning to try and find the entrance to the Conical Hill track after realising that the old road in to it was no longer accessible. We found the entrance at a gate on the side of the Tapawera-Glenhope Road shortly after the settlement of Tui.

The track leads through private land and then crosses the Tadmor River, (not possible if it is in flood) and passes through pine forest for about a kilometre to the skid site at the start of the track. The entrance was very overgrown with gorse, but we found it quite easily because of prior knowledge and although it appears that not much maintenance is being done, the track markers were very new and easy to follow. After passing through a muddy patch at the pine forest edge the track through the forest improved a lot and the tracksides were abundant with the tiny white flowers of the

native iris *Libertia micrantha*. The views higher up are stunning, and we were lucky enough to get the weather to see them, being fine warm and very still. It was so still the forest was extraordinarily quiet and only a few birds were heard. It took us about three hours to get to the ridge where there are many large rocky outcrops with some with very interesting forms. Still not a breath of wind. But looking to the south we decided that we were running out of time to make it right to the summit of Conical Hill, so we sat down and had lunch and then returned the way we had come.



A Conical Hill horse



Angelus

7 -10 December 2025

Leader and writer: Maggie

Photo: Gill, Graham, Maggie and Maike.

Trampers: Gill, Graham, Kathy, Maggie and Maike



Day 1:

After reviving coffees at St Arnaud, five happy trampers set off from Mt Robert carpark on Sunday 7th heading for Speargrass hut. It was an uneventful walk, just a bit longer with more uphill than we all remembered because we had always done it the other way. This hut now must be booked and we had it all to ourselves, very comfy with lots of room for the Rummykub game.

Day 2:

We knew from the forecast that this was expected to be the worst day weather wise and that proved totally correct – wind, rain, fog. One saving grace was that it was a tail wind helping to blow us up hill to ridge. We passed many trampers on their way down. They had obviously heeded the warden's advise and avoided walking out by Robert Ridge in the predicted strong winds. Again, the walk from Speargrass to the top seemed much longer than last time - going uphill. Angelus hut was a welcome sight looming out of the fog and the two fast members of the group kindly had the fire burning cheerfully. There was a small friendly group at the hut that night.

Day 3:

We had the luxury of two nights at Angelus hut and with the predicted forecast for 'visibility clearing at 10:00' we had a late start. Unbelievably, the vis did improve slightly at 10:00 (weather forecast was correct!) so we set off towards Sunrise Saddle. This is very easy to see in good visibility but when the fog closed in again it proved to be a little elusive. En route, enjoyed a little snowball throwing exhibition from Maike. Eventually, after a small detour! we were all very happy to sit at the saddle and enjoy the 'atmosphere'. Read that as 'no view at all.' We had vague thought of climbing Mt Angelus, but that was soon cancelled as we could not see it at all. However, almost as soon as we dropped down off the saddle heading back to the hut, the visibility suddenly became fantastic and all the beautiful valleys and peaks were revealed. It was a lovely walk back taking in all the views. Angelus hut came alive that afternoon with people sunbathing on the decks and taking in the amazing vistas. Full hut and campsites that night.



Snowball throwing exhibition



Day 4:

To complete the circuit, we returned to the car via Robert Ridge. It was a bluebird day – this was what we came for. 360-degree views as far as we could see. Superb!





Browning Hut

14 December 2025

Leader: Lynne

Writer: John

Trampers: Heather, Jean, John, Lynne and Sally

A very enjoyable day. Four from the MTC were joined by an ex West Auckland Tramping Club member, Jean.

First to Hackett Hut. On the way a hunter on a bike stopped to let us past. Without a shirt on, we could see that his whole body was covered in tattoos and he had a number of piercings with rings in them. We chatted with him for a while and found he was a very nice guy. He hadn't shot anything. He said he had been intently watching where he thought a deer might go by. It did, just as he'd got tired of watching and looked away for an instant.

Morning tea at Hackett Hut after moving the heavy park table into the shade.

Then on to Browning. There we had lunch on the edge of the track and spoke to some TA walkers. One, a German guy whose accent sounded Irish, stopped to eat near us and we spoke to him for a while. He described to Lynne the energy dense food he was carrying in his 8 kg food bag and what he ate.

Breakfast: oats.

Lunch: two wraps with a slathering of peanut butter and Nutella amongst which was placed a Snickers bar. (We saw him preparing this.)

Dinner: Two minute noodles with tuna and cheese.



TA Walker with red 8kg food bag

Heading back we met quite a few people and their dogs. It was quite hot now and we were getting a bit tired.

Near the Hacket carpark there were a lot of swimmers. One woman on the footbridge was about to drop her child, wearing a life jacket, down to the river below where her partner was waiting. Heather advised the woman against it as landing in the water with a lifejacket on can result in injury. We moved on and hoped that the woman took the advice.



Added to the sign are the words "NO, DON'T"
This is on the way up to Browning Hut.

