



Motueka Tramping Club

Newsletter

April 2021

Email: secretary.motuekatc@gmail.com

Web site: www.motuekatrampingclub.org

Annual General Meeting

This was held on 13 April with 15 members present. The incoming committee is:

President: Rob Bruinsma

Vice President/Secretary: Debbie Smith

Treasurer: Mike Tooker

Committee members: Ann Giggs, Heather Adams, Yvonne Jardine

The guest speaker was Gerry Tonkin from Nelson Marlborough Rescue Helicopter Trust. Gerry kept us interested, amused, astonished and at times indignant when hearing about the rescues undertaken by the Trust. This included the behaviour of some of the “rescued” leading to their need for assistance, and the just bad-luck events that caused others to require helicopter-ing out of the bush. We all learned or were reminded of the need to choose the right trip for the group, have good equipment, check and re-check the weather, take warm and spare clothing, know the capability of your party, take care of yourself and others, ensure someone knows where you are going and when you expect to return. AND take a beacon. On some of the search missions S and R conducted, smoke from a fire was the means for locating a lost party.

Trip Reports



31 January Champion and United Mines

Following the advice of Nelson Trails website, six of us agreed to walk the circuit in a clockwise direction. We started out in a warmer temperature than most had expected and walked easily up the 4WD track which passes through mainly pine forest, managing to cross the streams with



mostly dry feet. After a short distance there is a turnoff to the left which leads to Roding dam but as most people had seen this before, no-one took up the opportunity for a look. We continued along the track high above the river and then, after fording Roding River again, we entered beech forest following United Creek to Champion Smelter where we stopped for morning tea. This gave us an opportunity to spend time perusing the interesting

interpretation panels about the copper mining operation.

Heading on up the track and across United Creek, after a while the tramway track came to an abrupt end and we had to ford the creek again and follow a very rough and rocky route to United Mine site. The reason for walking in a clockwise direction was because the tailing piles around the mine are very steep with little grip and nothing to hold on to and were considered easier to climb than descend. I am not sure everyone would have agreed with this, some finding the easiest way was to clamber through gorse bushes on the side of the mounds. At the top of one of these mounds was a most magnificent southern rata tree which was in full flower, but only on just one side, and had a very unusual rounded shape as if it had been regularly pruned, and possibly had been by the wind



coming up the gully. There were also other rata trees around, very prominent with their bright red flowers.

We somehow managed to miss the mine shafts at United Mine but continued up a steep route to the top of a spur. Here the going got a little easier through the low mineral belt vegetation until we reached the high point where we scattered around the top looking for places to eat lunch out of the wind. At this point there is a magnificent view of the mineral belt which is easily identified by the stunted brown-hued vegetation.



Dropping steeply down after lunch we soon came back to the forest edge where we spent a little time trying to locate the route markers as it was very overgrown. Having found the way the route, although steep, was quite easy to follow and it was not long before we reached the main track that leads to Champion Mine. Turning left here we almost immediately came to the mine site which was identified by the presence of a deep mine shaft near the track, completely flooded with water. It is best to stay on the track here as there are other mine shafts hidden in the bush. After a quick rest and snack we carried on back to the tramway and carpark, quite tired but elated by the wonderful day out.

Helen (leader) Participants Yvonne J, Lynda, Denis, Ann, Bob

11-14 February Angelus

The Stats:

Total distance 25.6 km (is that all?!)

Mt Robert car park to Bushline Hut (via Paddy's Track) - 3.8 km

Bushline hut to Robert Ridge track - 1.3 km

Robert Ridge junction to Angelus Hut - 8.5 km

Angelus Hut to Speargrass Hut - 5 km

Speargrass Hut to Mt Robert carpark - 7 km

Day One Motueka to Bushline Hut

We delayed our trip to Angelus for 2 days to get good weather and we were very well rewarded. Nine of us met in Motueka and we made our way down to St Arnaud, leaving the cars at Mt Robert carpark.

We had lunch overlooking Lake Rotoiti, then donned our packs and went up Paddy's track. The start was in the shade with a fairly gentle gradient which we really appreciated given we hadn't carried our days packs for a while. When we came out of the bush we were rewarded with magnificent views which continued up to Bushline hut. After a cup of tea we went exploring further up the track.

There were meadows of white gentians; we then came to Kea hut, Mt Robert Ski members' hut. Two trampers were settled in it. One of them had been coming up for 55 years. It was the first time any of us had seen inside the hut, so we were pleased to be invited in by the proud inhabitants who showed us around and told us the stories. The hut was built in 1937 for Mt Robert ski club and is nestled on the edge of the bush line, well protected from the winds. It is fully equipped and has a good fire. One certainly had to be pretty fit to go up there and then carry on to the ski field - with ski gear!! When the helicopter was operating in the 1990's there was a sign at Mt Robert carpark saying it took 2 minutes to fly to the ski field or 2 hours to walk!

We were very fortunate (and organised) to have Bushline Hut to ourselves and as it got dark we could see the lights of St Arnaud far below.

Day Two Bushline Hut to Angelus Hut - 9.8 km / 6 hours

The day started with a gentle climb up from Bushline hut, past the private Kea hut to Robert Ridge track junction which we had viewed yesterday. This 'easy' walking soon changed to a steeper and then rocky track, along the ridge, across the top of scree slopes and scrambling around under rocky bluffs. It was an invigorating day!

The weather was magnificent, sunny, warm with little wind and 360 views.



There was one minor injury when one of our club members decided to throw her walking pole down the scree slope, followed soon after by herself. Fortunately a long armed/long legged walker managed to retrieve the pole, the club member having to pull herself back up. The injury was easily managed. Botanising was high on the list today with many species identified and some not - among others, a fascinating variety of vegetable sheep (raoulia) and celmisia.

(RNZ Nic Toki DOC ambassador talking to Jesse Mulligan about vegetable sheep said there are about 23 species which are native to NZ. A very interesting talk and we have a lot more sheep more to spot.)



There are two cirque lakes next to Angelus hut and swimming is permitted in the small lake.

Three intrepid swimmers took a very quick dip in the very cold water. The not-quite-full hut and the fantastic scenery prompted much vigorous discussion of 'options for tomorrow' (far too many and complicated to list here) but the main theme was wanting to spend more time at the beautiful Angelus hut area. We had to wait until the next morning to find out the final outcome.

Mark the volunteer hut warden gave us an informative talk with an emphasis on geology. He told us that most of the local rocks were greywacke and that we would step across from the Pacific plate to the Australian plate (i.e. over the Alpine fault) on the track down to Speargrass hut.

We were all pretty impressed by the parents and six children aged from 3 to 16 who had walked up from the carpark in one day. The little one was carried by dad or her big brother - rather humbling!

Day Three Angelus Hut to Speargrass and home (for some)

After much discussion the night before, for Plan A, Rob kindly went to the top of the hill before breakfast to check if there was any chance of staying another night at Angelus. That was scrubbed as there was no room left at the inn. Plan B was left until later to decide. We left Angelus Hut on a crisp, clear morning and started with a steep climb to warm us up. At the turnoff we headed down a very steep valley which was very challenging at times and there were quite a few slips and slides by most of us. The track followed a beautiful stream with various flowers and there were numerous crossings which were also challenging at times. It was interesting to see where we had walked the day before along the top of the ridge and along the side of the mountains. Eventually we came into bush and onto Speargrass Hut. Margaret needed a swim and do laundry as she unexpectedly decided to have a mud bath - yuk.

We stopped there for lunch and then Plan B - people decided whether to stay or go. Rob, Gerda, Barbara and Ann decided to walk all the way out which left the other five to enjoy a leisurely afternoon.



We had no unusual events on our way out and marveled at the runners who ran the circuit for fun. Coffee and ice creams at St Arnaud set us up well for the trip home.

Day Four Speargrass Hut and home (for the others).

Five of us went back to the very original leisurely plan and stayed the afternoon and night at Speargrass hut, being well entertained by people passing by and one staying the night. We

also walked a short way up the Sabine - Speargrass Track and declared a worthy track for future consideration.

We all enjoyed the trip enormously and wholeheartedly recommend it to all members. We would stay two nights at Angelus and explore the area some more.

Scribes: Moppie, Margaret, Ann and Yvonne H for Sonya, Rob, Gerda, Barbara, and Debbie.

19-21 February Kaihoka Lakes

Day 1

With the promise of a weekend of perfect weather Moppie, Ian, Judy, Rob, Gerda and Debbie set off for Golden Bay. After a brief stop for coffee in Takaka we arrived at Wharariki at low tide and were able to appreciate it at its stunning best. We spent a while watching the baby seals frolicking in the rock pools and then made our way along the beach exploring the caves and archways along the way. One pool contained a brilliant display of sea anemones waving their crimson tentacles. Whilst we lunched at the top of the beach we observed an enormous dragonfly sunbathing on a nearby bush. We headed back to the cars and drove on to Wylies Farm at Kaihoka lakes. *(See end of report for photos)*





Once settled in, some people felt the urge for a swim so we walked across the farmland to the nearby beach. The non-swimmers hunkered down in the dunes to avoid being sand-blasted as by this time the wind had got up. This is a truly special place with the surrounding landscape uniquely sculptured by its environment. We enjoyed spotting various 'characters' in the rocky outcrops and decided

this was New Zealand's answer to Mount Rushmore. How lucky we are to be living with such places on our doorstep. Judy

Day 2

Saturday morning was a relaxed start, leaving the Wylie's old farmhouse at 9.30am for Mt Lunar tops. The start of the walk is a gentle stroll through the farm before heading off up the steepest slope of the walk.



It took about 15 minutes to reach the ridge line. We then headed north along the undulating ridge. It is a fantastic walk with amazing views out over the farm and wonderful rock formations – all with faces! We could also catch glimpses of Kaihoka Lakes. From the most northern point we got to (there is a new wifi tower) we could see one of the arches on Wharariki Beach. It was a lovely clear sunny day.

Next we headed down the fence line towards the west coast until we came our lunch stop with a beautiful view of the rocky coast and Tasman Sea. After lunch it wasn't long before we headed back up to the ridge line and rejoined the track we had first set out on. At this point the group split into two, with Gerda and myself heading back to the farm house and Judy, Ian, Moppie and Rob set off on another loop track down to the west coast and back up to the ridge and the return journey.

Once we were all back at the farm house we got organised for happy hour, only for this to be upset, literally. The picnic table had been set with drinks and nibbles when Ian and Judy sat down

on the same side at the same time and both ended up on their backs liberally sprinkled with wine, beer, cheese, nuts, crackers and a picnic table on top of them!!

After ascertaining that they were not seriously injured and attending to Judy's grazes, happy hour resumed, with special care taken when anyone sat or stood up.

A great day's walk with perfect weather and great company. Thank you Moppie. Debbie

Day Three

I hauled my ancient body out to the kitchen to make coffee to start my day. Fortunately it was not early and everyone else was also a little sluggish as they quietly appeared in the kitchen and slowly shuffled around in each other's way.

So at a very respectable time we set off to walk to the buried nikau palm trees. It was a surprisingly enjoyable walk diagonally up a hill and around a small sand blow until we came out pretty much on a level with the trees. We sat there and admired the view; it has been



years since I was last there and it didn't look quite the same then. Some of the others said there was a lot more grass around the trees now and I'm sure that is right as I have faint memories of a lot more sand.

Then we made our way pretty much straight down except for me because I decided to walk down a couple of ridges and didn't take giant sandy strides down the sand blow.

On the beach we met Debbie who had opted to read in the wind with her back against a log. Some of the hardy ones had a brief swim but Judy and I walked back to our digs to get a head start on our tidy up. On the way home we stopped off at Kaihoka Lakes for a short walk and then it was off to the Anatoki Salmon for some posh nosh.

Tips for sharing a platter – try and share a platter with Gerda and Judy. If you do, you'll get 80% of it. Warning: If you share a platter with me, you'll be lucky to get 20% of it.

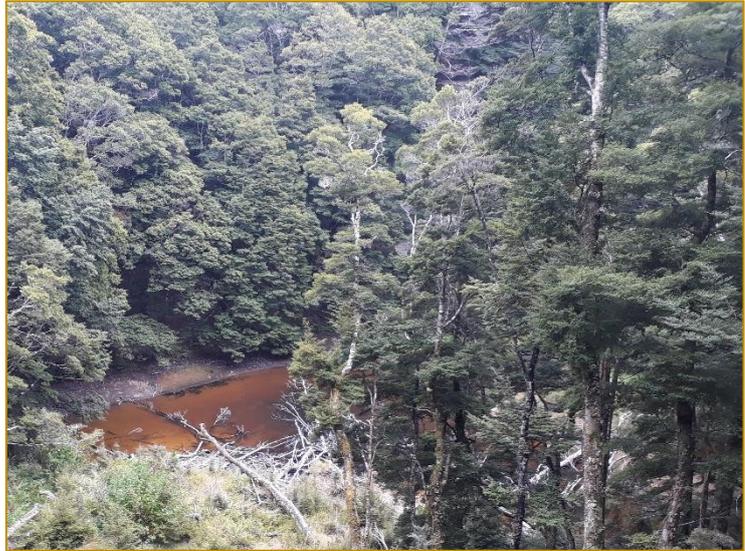
An enjoyable day but my legs had had enough by the time I started driving home. However, I woke on Monday feeling ready to go. Unfortunately all I had to do was some laundry. Ian

Photos: seal and beach: Judy hairy rock face: Debbie Beach Party: Judy Nikau Palms: Ian

28 February Rameka Track

It nearly wasn't a walk as when we got into Canaan the Luminance Festival was still happening so we thought of joining the music and workshops.

However, being good trampers we continued on and had a very pleasant walk along Rameka track enjoying the lovely bush. When we exited out of the bush it was lightly raining so turned around and found a nice dry spot to have lunch. We must have been there too long as a very large spider chased us on our way.



There were lots of piwakawaka spotted along with a couple of fat robins. We also heard bellbirds singing and parrots - either kaka or kakariki. Only a handful of bikes passed us.

An easy, pleasant walk enjoyed by Sonya, Debbie, Eddie and scribe Ann. *(Photo: Sonya L)*

3-5 March John Tait - Cancelled due weather (twice) 

14 March Wave Rock/Flora - Cancelled due various factors including no leader 

19-21 March Collingwood walks – cancelled/no interest 

28 March Beeby's Knob Cancelled/weather 

29-31 March Kahurangi Lighthouse – Cancelled/weather 

4 April Hacket and Browning - Cancelled – just becos!!

11 April Not Mt Malita - but Beeby's

There had been heavy rain off and on over the last few days, but Sunday 11 April looked as if it would be fine with not too much wind - so Mt Malita looked like a goer until we remembered that Roding River no longer had a bridge, and TDC river flows monitor showed the river was well up. A 5pm call was made to the Roding caretaker. He admitted that he wasn't able to get across at that time, not even with the tractor, but he said that it might drop overnight as it often did. Rather than drive all the way to the Roding on the off chance that the river level did drop, we decided to try another option, and Beeby's made the cut.

Sunday the sun did indeed shine, and a pleasant leaving time of 9am from Motueka found two Yvones and Sonya on the way to St Arnaud where we fuelled the car on diesel, and the people on very satisfactory coffee, and made our way to the carpark on Korere - Tophouse Road.

Sonya took the direct route up the four wheel-drive road, while the Yvones



mostly sidled on the bike track which zig-zagged the road at a comfortable slope. The views over the valley, the botanising and the “forest art” completed the walk nicely.

The cloud cover came in before we reached the top, along with a bit of drizzle, so we hunkered down in a sheltered spot for lunch, and had a pleasant trip back down to the car.

Yvonne H for Yvonne J and Sonya L.

18-21 April Inland Abel Tasman Track

Trampers: Margaret Pidgeon and Yvonne Hope.

Total distance: 47.3 km. Times approximate.

Day 1. Wainui carpark to Whariwhurangi hut: 5.7 km; 2 hours.

Day 2. Whariwhurangi to Pigeon Saddle: 8.6 km; 3 hours.

Pigeon Saddle to Awapoto hut: 5 km; 4 hours.

Day 3. Awapoto to Moa Park Shelter: 9.5 km; 4 hours.

Moa Park to Castle Rocks hut: 3.5km; 4 hours (incl. side trips)

Day 4. Castle Rocks hut to Holyoake Shelter: 5.5 km; 3 hours.

Holyoake to Marahau: 9.5km; 3 hours.



Sunday - Four of us drove over the hill to start walking from Wainui carpark: Yvonne H, Laurie, Judith and Margaret. We walked almost up to the ridge and found a picnic spot that fulfilled everybody’s requirements for sun, shade, view, comfortable seat and enough room to spread the picnic tablecloth. Judith had carried up a delicious lunch for all of us – most appreciated. Then the two ‘real’ trampers (Yvonne H and me, Margaret) continued on the short walk over to

Whariwharangi hut. We were just removing our boots at the hut when we met Jaqui and Hamish from Kina and soon established that they were doing exactly the same tramp as us – more about these two to follow. It was a lovely sunny warm afternoon, perfect for a beach walk and for others, a swim (not us!).



Whariwharangi hut is a beautiful old restored farm house but quite cold.

It was not full despite the DoC website indications that it was fully booked – about 6 spare bunks.

Monday - It was a nice easy start to the day walking up from Whariwharangi to Pigeon saddle but as soon as we had crossed Totaranui Road, things changed – for the much worse to VERY steep up, up and more up. The day was sunny and we were very hot and steamy. There was noticeably more birdsong - bell birds, robins, tomtits, kereru, tui and fantails - than at the busier southern section of the park.

We had arranged with Hamish and Jaqui (younger, fitter and faster) that they would save us bunks, preferably bottom bunks, so we were very pleased to finally reach Awapoto hut enjoying



the fantastic view - with our bottom bunks carefully 'bagged'. From then on, Jaqui and Hamish became our hut agents, always arriving at the hut before us - with bunks saved, fire on and water hot for a safe arrival cup of tea.

We were cautiously starting to feel happy that we might have the hut to just us four when loud shrieks and yells heralded the arrival of a party of fifteen school-girls from Wellington East Girls High. Peace

was shattered! But they turned out to be a lovely bunch of young women completing their Duke of Edinburgh gold award tramp, shadowed by a teacher and three parents. The girls all tented and some of their leaders stayed in the hut. It was probably the busiest night that Awapoto hut had seen in a long time. The hut itself is a type of lockwood style and very warm, with 12 bunks and an awesome view. Even more impressive is the nearby loo with a view.

Tuesday - This day was really a walk in the park at times, especially along Evans Ridge. Again we were treated to lots of lovely birdsong and some great views. Moa Park shelter picnic table was a welcome lunch stop. The shelter is quite basic – no fire place, no mattresses and very narrow

bench seat on one side. We walked out to both the viewpoint and Porter's Rock but unfortunately by now we had poor visibility so not much view – the weather was closing in, as forecast. Overall, we were very lucky with just light drizzle in the afternoon before we reached Castle Rocks hut.

Again, our wonderful hut agents had the fire going and lots of hot water for drinks and washing. It is a very warm hut with 8 bunks, recently painted and deep cleaned by Waimea tramping club members. This hut does not have a resident weka. No – it



has local kea. They are so bold, intelligent and inquisitive. We watched one kea work to pull the protective tin can off the top of the water tank valve and then try to turn on the valve. The bird would probably have eventually succeeded if we had not intervened in the interests of water preservation.

The four of us were cosily tucked up in our bunks reading, sure that we would have the hut to ourselves that night when...in the distance we noticed a bright light and soon after two very wet, cold, tired late arrivals stumbled gratefully into the hut. They had totally misjudged the walking time up from Holyoake to Castle Rocks. No problem, plenty of room for all. It sounded like the kea spent a lot of the night trying to tear off the guttering or stomping up and down the sloping roof. They are so playful and active.



Wednesday - It rained overnight – as forecast, but the morning was fine. We were so lucky with the weather. After a quick side trip to Castle Rock we started down to Holyoake Shelter – a tidy little hut with two bunks and mattresses but no fireplace.

From Holyoake on the track surface is almost as smooth as the coastal track so it was an easy descent down to Tinline and out to Marahau.

For future reference - suggest it would be much better to start at Marahau end to avoid the very steep ascent up from Pigeon Saddle to Awapoto hut (despite the similar look of the elevation profiles on the DoC brochure).

(Photos: Whariwharangi YH; Other hut photos stolen from the internet by your editor)

25-26 April Link



Pathway

Day 1 Walkers Perspective

Adventure time! Being a new track, none of the group had walked or biked this track in its entirety, but Yvonne J had made some good guestimates and carefully planned a routine that



would allow walking, cycling and car relocation to work seamlessly. Meeting at Linkwater, Yvonne J, Ken, Lynda and Heather "stole" the cyclists' cars and took them through to Picton and then walked back to Linkwater, leaving the cyclists - Rob, Gerda, Debbie, Yvonne H and Laurie to cycle through to Picton in hot pursuit to reclaim their vehicles and bring them back to Linkwater.

The track roughly follows Queen Charlotte Drive but where it deviated and gained height above the road, it seemed to wind back and forth a bit and we had multiple viewpoints of the log pile at Shakespeare Bay with Picton behind it, but at increasing altitude. The track passed through both regenerating bush and shore front. Sometimes we were serenaded by birdsong but being ANZAC Day we were also treated to an unknown trumpeter ringing out The Last Post randomly from the roadside.

What I really liked about this track is its fairly smooth gradients - gentle enough that even I could walk and talk at the same time. The day ticked by quickly until finally, somewhere between the 21 and 22 km marker posts (something we believe is peculiar to cycle tracks) was our respite for the night - Smiths Holiday Park.

But the day was not over! It was crowned off by a scrumptious meal (well, I enjoyed my pork ribs) at the Queen Charlotte tavern.

Heather

Day 2 Walkers

Today our walkers' group seemed to require a few extra breaks as well as a good pace ... maybe a bit tired from day 1. Total time for day 2, including breaks, Linkwater to the 'official' Havelock Pathway roadside carpark was 5hrs 15 minutes, plus short extra time for Havelock shoreline boardwalk.

Today the bikers took all 4 cars (3 with full bike racks) from Smiths Farm in the direction of Havelock for their planned biking day. The end of day plan was for all of us (walkers and bikers) to meet at the 'official' Havelock Pathway carpark.

We 4 walkers were off again, with an 8:30am sharp start from Smiths Farm, heading for Havelock. Today quickly became another magic clear sunny day, but with a distinctly cool headwind in the morning.

Smiths Farm was just down the road beyond yesterday's pathway 21km marker post from Picton. Our first section of the pathway today continued along Queen Charlotte Drive using either a shingle track beside the road or the road itself, for approximately 5km.

Earlier this morning we had stopped for a brief morning chat with two horses in a track-side paddock.

We eventually stopped for 10am morning tea at a roadside picnic spot with tables beside the water (Pathway 27km marker post, also a good carpark). This tea-break was longer than expected, as just before we are ready to resume walking, some very familiar bikers showed up on their way from Havelock to Smiths Farm - and more chatter followed.



Later we met a man with pack walking in the opposite direction to us, who had started out from Bluff in January and was nearly at his own “just the South Island” goal with imminent arrival at Picton and a final walk along Queen Charlotte Track to finish. Local signs at our morning tea stop indicated we were at Mahakipawa.

Soon after this the Pathway track pleasantly headed into some roadside bush until before Belvue Bay Road; this stretch of walking track and roadside bush had several tables and easy access from roadside parking.

Ken

Link Pathway, bikers perspective

Although being a tramping club suggests you organizes also other outdoor activities such as tempted to bike a part this trail that I decided was in the good company of Debbie, Gerda, Yvonne H and Laurie.



go tramping, our club (mountain) biking. I was so the day before to bike it all. And I

Getting up just before dawn in Motueka, Gerda and I heard the bag pipes in the Anzac Parade. It is always a very special sound. We picked up our trip leader Yvonne J and headed off to Linkwater where we arrived exactly in time, but as last ones of the group. After taking the bikes from the car and dressing up with our daypack, we left our car in the trusted hands of Yvonne J to take it to Picton, where the trampers adventure started.

We cyclists started to ride on the flat and soon came to a kayaking company. “They might serve coffee!” but disappointedly were closed. From here four of us chose to ride towards Picton, the fifth person almost went to Anakiwa, but decided to go for Picton also. I won’t mention names. We took our time enjoying the scenery of the Queen Charlotte Sound, regrouping after climbs and giving way to all other bikers, hikers and dogs enjoying the Sunday morning of school holidays. After some sharp bends, tough ups, lovely downs and road crossings we met the tramping section of the pack about 7 km before the trail end. They seem to enjoy the track as much as we did. We finished the trail in Picton after, in total, a little over 500m elevation gain.

In Picton our car was exactly where it was promised to be and we put our bikes on it, changed clothes and decided that our packed lunch could very well stay in our backpack for the next day (or not) and that we liked to go for coffee (some of us were really craving) and lunch. So, we did, and we very much enjoyed our lunch and coffee in the sun at Picton harbour.



Later in the afternoon we found our accommodation by car, had a good shower and a little rest, and met much later the walkers who also had a good time on the track.

As planned, we went for the pub to have a drink and a meal. You all know that Linkwater is small, a few houses scattered around in a wide area, a petrol station, fire department building and a pub. We were very surprised to find that the pub was packed, and more and

more people kept coming. Where did all those people live? Maybe the fact that it was a holiday period. But nevertheless! the atmosphere was good, the drinks very welcome and the food excellent.

Day 2

The next morning was again bright and sunny. This time it was the bikers turn to drive the cars to the trail end and start from there. We planned to ride towards our accommodation and back to the cars. It was easy to find the trailhead. It was not easy to turn the corner and finding out that the start was steep up on a narrow path with a small gully in the middle. It was obvious that the warming up section was easier for the two e-bikes, but we all managed.

The first part was mostly climbing up on a well maintained but narrow path with beautiful views. The sun was great, however the changing shade made biking trickier. After a beautiful down-hill, a road crossing and a narrow winding section with sharp curves, we met the walkers again in a very good mood (*due in part to a lot of honorarium chocolate.*) We decided to carry on the flat all the way to Smiths Farm where we had stayed to be sure earning all the credits of doing



100% of the trail. Riding back there was some regret because of the hard and cold head wind. On the smaller trail we were sheltered from the wind and again it was great.

Yvonne and Laurie decided to take their own speed and to meet us again in Havelock. So, we carried on climbing up and enjoying the downhill. We all were preparing for the steep and narrow downhill towards the end, but that part had disappeared or had not been as bad as we thought it had been, and quite suddenly we were back at the car. Again, well over 500m elevation gain. After exploring the new boardwalks, we ended up in the bakery for coffee/tea and some lunch. Leaving the cafe, we met Yvonne and Laurie, and back at the cars, the hikers.

After a great ice cream we again hit the road and returned safely home. It was a great trip in good company and excellent weather!

Rob

2 May Takaka Hill Walk

It was a lovely calm autumnal day as we made our way down the airstrip and enjoyed amazing views of Tasman Bay. Our aim was to go to the old musterers hut at the head of the valley. We noticed that the bush had grown considerably since our last visit in 2018. After a short break near the top of the saddle we followed the 4 WD track on the true right of the Otuwhero river to the beautifully preserved hut where we had lunch.

On our return journey we took a slightly different route, admiring the amazing outcrops of marble/limestone. We saw a large herd of wild goats with a magnificent billy ...



Stopping at parliament hole we saw the remains of the machinery and some trolley wheels used to transport marble down to the coast and then onto Wellington. Parliament steps are made from marble from this farm. The miners and their families used to walk down the tramway to Marahau for their days off. Sadly, Cyclone Gita caused big slips on the final farm section leading to Marahau and now there is no through route.

A very pleasant day with excellent weather and company. Thanks to Yvonne H, Yvonne J, Debbie, Sonya A, Sonya L, Marie and Christine H. Moppie.

(Photo: YJ)

The End

Bits of history and bio-diversity:

Sea anemone (Judy)



Triffid (YH)



Rata (Judy)



Fungi Garden (YJ)



The bush "Thinker" YH



Fern – hymenophyllum malingii (yj)



Editor Yvonne J (yvonnejay@xtra.co.nz) who thanks scribes for their written contributions and photographers for lovely photos