

South Wairarapa Tramping Club

Newsletter for May 2018

www.swtc.org.nz

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Club night:

Tuesday 8 May 7.30 pm

St John's Hall Main Street Greytown

Supper: (tea towel, milk and biscuits) Ed and Juliet Cooke

Speaker: Merran Cooke - Patagonian Paths

Trip List

April May 2018

Date	Destination	Trip coordinator	Phone	Fitness
28.4	Fensham bike ride	Blair Crafar	027 296 5181	M
5.5	Hutt River walk ex Petone	Ian Montgomerie	304 9252	M
12.5	Stokes Valley hills	E & J Cooke	304 9497	M
19.5	Atiwhakatu Hut	Mary Lambert	379 6106	M
25.5	Planting, Onoke Spit #	Denise McKenzie	307 7749	E
26/7. 5 w/e	Probably Waiopehu Hut	E & J Cooke	304 9497	F
27.5	Planting, Okorewa Lagoon #	Jane Lenting	306 9077	E

see attachment

If you wish to go on a trip, please let the organiser know by the Thursday prior.

Trip Gradings

The letters after the cost for a trip are an indication of how tough it will be.

VE Very Easy. A stroll suitable for the youngest, oldest and least fit of people.

E Easy. Up to four hours walk. May involve some uphill. Lots of stops.

M Moderate fitness. 4-6 hours walk per day. Lunch and smoko breaks.

F More fitness. Some experience needed. May go off tracks. 6 – 8 hours walk per day.

FE Fitness extreme. 8 – 18 hours walk, fast. Heaps of climbing. Stops are hurried. Enjoyed only by masochists. May take up to a week to recover.

Leaders: Please remember if you are unable to lead your trip it is your responsibility to find a replacement leader / trip.

Supper: At the end of each club meeting, the people who did the supper should pass the supper box to the people next on the roster.

For the next two meetings the roster is:

June – Royce and Mary Cooper

July – Bruce Eglinton and Jennifer Pomeroy

Trip Reports

FINIS WORKING BEE 26 MARCH

Applied tramping is a term for exercise in which enjoying the view, companionship, and native flora and fauna, is supplemented with a specific purpose.

The Masterton and South Wairarapa Tramping Clubs occasionally organise a joint trip to encourage fellowship and to increase numbers participating.

One such recent trip was to the ridge line behind Featherston where a track leads from the end of Bucks Road, past the summit of Finis and the highest point, on this track, of Mt. Frith, and eventually to the Rimutaka road summit.

With the title of Mountain you may think that Mt. Frith is an imposing sight, but at 645 metres it is not that easy to distinguish from the valley, but it is reasonably easy to climb even if you start from Featherston at about 50m above sea level.

The more difficult part of walking along the Frith-Finis track is finding your way through the native and introduced vegetation. For some years South Wairarapa Club members have been instrumental in trying to keep the track “open”, and it was with this in mind that on a recent Monday five members from the clubs set off to do some track clearing. The trip was due to happen on the Saturday, but as the weather looked better on Monday, and everyone was available we went on Monday - the joy of retirement!

The main “culprit” needing to be cleared is gorse. Gorse loves daylight, which is what you get when you clear an area of ground. Gorse also has a useful benefit in that it provides good, and nutritious, shelter for native vegetation to grow below it, and over time the native vegetation will grow up, cover the gorse, cut out the light and eventually the gorse will die.

So, how did the area above Featherston come to be cleared of native bush to such an extent that the gorse was able to flourish? Back in the late 1800's the Wairarapa was still being settled, and land for farming sheep and cattle was in demand. As the flat valley land had been cleared the low hills around Featherston and other Wairarapa towns must have looked a likely area to expand in to. With a lack of large machinery to clear bush one of the most common methods of clearance was fire. This unfortunately was not always well controlled and many a home was threatened or destroyed in the pursuit of farm expansion.

Much of the land above Featherston was cleared in this way for farming, but for one reason or another the land became uneconomic to farm and eventually reverted to gorse and native bush, as it is today.

Why clear the track along the Finis-Frith ridge? Well, it is an official DOC track, has some unique views over the Wairarapa and gives a good route for a day walk near Featherston.

And what of our day of applied tramping? Well we cut a lot of gorse, cut it, throw it into the air, and the westerly wind carries it away! We also collected a few gorse prickles in our fingers no matter how good our gloves, and, most important of all, had TWO breaks for a cup of tea!

Nigel Boniface, Laura Hopkins, Mike Hopkins, Mark King and John Rhodes



WALL'S WHARE 7 APRIL

A party of eight gathered at SWWMC car park for drive to Wall's Whare. The roadsides have become somewhat over grown after the slip. The Totara Flats track was mostly dry and not bad for this track. A short time after morning tea Richard and Kay decided to return as they were finding the going a bit arduous. We continued on until we had found a nice riverside lunch spot, and Lydia took the chance to have a paddle in the river. Rata is still flowering along the track. We returned to our cars before the rain set in. A nice trip thanks to Lydia Wevers, Ruth and Peter Graham, Kay & Richard Harvey, Warren Harland, Barry Kempton and Ian Montgomerie.



BARR-BROWN RESERVE 14 APRIL

Barry, Rosie and Jack joined me for a short walk around some of the points of interest in Featherston. We started at Dorset Square and crossed the main road up to Featherston Domain / One Tree Hill for great views of the South Wairarapa. Then down and along Wait Street to Keraru Drive and down a walkway crossing a stream into Barr-Brown Reserve. This block of land was set aside by the Barr-Brown family in 1947 as example of low land bush and is well worth a look at the large trees and interesting under story. We walked back along Underhill road to our car and home to Barry's for a cup of tea.

