

South Wairarapa Tramping Club

Newsletter for June 2024

www.swtc.org.nz

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Club night:

Tuesday 11 June 7.30 pm **AGM**

Studio 73, Main Street Greytown

Speaker:

Supper: (tea towel, milk and biscuits) Barry Kempton

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:

July: Rosie & Ian Montgomerie

August: Mary & Bruce Lambert

Trip List

2024

Date	Destination	Trip coordinator	Phone	Fitness

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

Trip Gradings

The letters are an indication of how tough it will be.

E **Easy.** Completely flat, no hills, 2 – 3 hours.

M **Moderate fitness.** Some hills, well formed tracks. 4-6 hours walk per day.

F **More fitness.** Steep hills, challenging tracks. May go off tracks. 6 – 8 hours walk per day.

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

Trip Reports

A tribute to Sheila Stapleton, who passed away on Saturday 30 March 2024 at Summerset Retirement Village, Trentham, aged 89

By Clive Baxter, with help and photos from John Rhodes



Fay Mangin and Sheila, Tauanui Stream 2005

Sheila was a long-time friend of Fay Mangin and SWTC stalwart for many years. There will never be another Sheila Stapleton!

Sheila will be remembered fondly by all who knew her and had the pleasure of her company. Small in stature but massive in personality, Sheila had an incredible spirit and a wicked old-school British sense of humour that would always come to the fore when out in nature, particularly when conditions became testing.

My personal highlight memories of Sheila include doing a southern crossing, an ascent of Mt Taranaki, a circumnavigation of Mt Taranaki, a Tongariro crossing and a circumnavigation of Mt Ruapehu, on all of which I had the pleasure of being her personal 'bag man'.

Sheila was as nuggety as they come, and to have achieved what she did at her age always left me in complete admiration of her. I will never forget her arched back and senior-shuffle as she slowly but determinedly made her way from point A to point B, almost always with a big smile on her face. Now able to be reunited with her long-time husband Reg, and no doubt awaiting the arrival of her faithful old dog Maxi, Sheila must be celebrated as one of the all-time legends of SWTC.
RIP beautiful lady

P.S. Sheila did not wish to have a funeral service, but I understand that at some point her family may organise a gathering to celebrate her life.



Sheila, Tauanui Stream 2005



Sheila, Lake Pounui 2006

BOAR BUSH GULLY TEA PARTY - 4 MAY

Joan felt the gorse scratches 'tween gaiters and shorts were unbecoming. 'Can't DOC do some maintenance on my favourite track?' 'Not a DOC track' replied Gerald curtly.

'We could organise a mighty TTC work party' suggested Joan. 'Good idea' chimed in Gerald, 'I know a South Wairarapa sheep farmer who likes nothing more than a day out cutting scrub'.

'As long as there is more time spent drinking tea than cutting gorse,' stipulated the farmer. 'And 'Gerald picks me up in his EV as I've gone all in carbon neutral in my dotage. We don't need more than six workers on the day either'. 'That's good because we've got some pretend traps lines to bait that day,' said the very relieved Joan and Gerald.

Of course Franz could be depended on but what about the Chief Guide? He was keeping a very low profile as the email traffic whistled overhead.

The much awaited day dawned clear and still as Franz and the Chief Guide (it's all about optics) travelled in an appropriately carbon neutral manner over the hill. But their smugness quickly evaporated as the farmer arrived at the rendezvous on a bicycle. 'You're not going to chain that up to a tree are you? Haven't you heard about the um, er, reputation of Featherston?' queried the Chief Guide. 'I hear that property prices are going up here,' quipped the ever diplomatic Franz.

And so they left for Boar Bush Gully (you can't say that name often enough) along with Chris, a refugee from Wellington, leaving behind an impressively expensive bicycle secured by the flimsiest of chains. They're very trusting in the valley, thought the Chief Guide.

Boar Bush Gully was once the catchment for the water supply of Featherston. The old reservoir still remains and a difficult and dangerous abseil across the dam outlet is necessary to reach the track to Finis. The farmer pulled out the Roger Coventry memorial rope but was disappointed to find a belay already in place. Unperturbed, he tentatively lowered himself down the slippery concrete slope. 'Reminds me of getting off the Olivine Ice Plateau in a snow storm,' he cackled. Suffice to say, no rescue helicopter was necessary.

Safely across, the group began their climb up the hill towards Finis, expecting at any moment to be accosted by head high gorse. It never happened. Instead they worked hard to topiary any of the odd patches. The farmer lagging behind, surreptitiously chugged on a hydration bladder of lukewarm tea.

Finally at 9.59 am the farmer called a halt. 'Time for a brew up and you can put those poncy thermos flasks away too'. With that he produced a flame thrower from his pack. Otherwise known as the MSR Dragonfly, it is the big brother of the Whisperlite. If you thought the Whisperlite was a touch on the loud side, get out the earplugs, because the Dragonfly is the jumbo jet engine of stoves.

While the others moved back a safe distance, the farmer set about spraying white spirits over himself and the stove. 'Keep your wits about you boys, in case I set fire (he did) to the undergrowth' he chuckled. But with the finesse of a Japanese tea ceremony, tea bags were dropped into the boiling water, milk powder added from a marmite jar and the whole thing finished with the flourish of a titanium spork. Franz and the Chief Guide were mightily impressed. You don't get that service on a TTC trip.

Eventually they went back to work but as the farmer reminded them, 'only for long enough to earn another brew up'.

Soon it was lunchtime with an even more elaborate tea ceremony, complete with a highly choreographed 'knock the billy full of water over,' showstopper. Luckily the Chief Guide had foreseen this moment of slapstick from the farmer and carried extra water bottles.

After an extended lunch break any advertising executive would have been proud of, the farmer announced their work was done. 'After all, we want to have an excuse to come back here on an equally fine day and drink more tea,' he smirked, jogging off down the hill.

Back in Featherston, much to the amazement of the Chief Guide, the gleaming Raven laden with fancy accessories was still leaning against the tree. 'Must be all those authors and book lovers who've moved in and gentrified the town,' mused the Chief Guide.

So Wednesday trampers, if you're looking for the best day out (according to Joan) there is a track in Boar Bush Gully just itching (and scratching) to be used. PMcC

Franz Hubmann, Paul McCredie (TTC). John Rhodes, Chris Crowe (SWTC).





ESCARPMENT TRACK 18 MAY

After leaving Greytown on an overcast day with sun breaking through we headed over the Rimutaka hill with rain falling. This didn't seem like a day for tramping, the further we travelled the wetter it got. But the west coast at Paekakariki was fine. Six of us hit the trail, with great sea views. The track is a steep stepped climb in places but the views are worth every step. Two swing bridges add to the adventure, especially in the wind. The track was not busy. Repair work to a large slip which had closed the track is outstanding. When we finally stopped for lunch we sat in brilliant sunshine and the cool breeze dropped away. A rain cloud looked to be coming our way, fortunately the rain stayed away. Could we reach our destination in time for the returning train to Paekakariki? We arrived at Pukerua Bay Station just as a train was departing, not a problem as another arrived in twenty minutes. A great adventure. We had coffee back in Paekakariki before returning home. Thanks to John, Barry, Ross, Leslie, Rosie and Ian.



