



Hutt Valley Tramping Club Incorporated

**Birch Street Reserve
PO Box 30-883, Lower Hutt
www.hvtc.org.nz**



Mt Matthews descent

Photo: Lex Grubner

Notice of 102nd Annual General Meeting Annual Report for 2024-2025

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**The 102nd Annual General Meeting of the Hutt Valley Tramping Club Incorporated
will be held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 30th July 2025
in the Clubrooms, Birch Street, Lower Hutt.**

AGENDA:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 101st Annual General Meeting page 22
3. Matters arising from the 101st Annual General Meeting
4. Minutes of an Extraordinary General Meeting, 22 January 2025 page 29
5. Matters arising from the Extraordinary General Meeting
6. Annual Report for 2024-2025 page 2
7. Election of Officers: As of 2 July 2025, the following valid nominations have been received:

President	Marina Skinner	
Vice-President	Doreen Courtenay	
Secretary	Emma Dobbie	
Treasurer	Leanne Asher	
Trip Co-ordinator	Dennis Page	
Transport Officer	Doc Watson	
General Committee (6)	Chris McMillan	Jim Cousins
	Lex Grubner	Debbie Labett
	Mel Stoneham	Ann Hayman
Vice-President Ruapehu	Kate Brownsword	
Ruapehu Secretary	Bruce Miller	
Ruapehu Treasurer	John Simes	
Ruapehu Committee (8)	Alison Newbald	Sheldon Bruce
	Brendan Quirke	Ian McIlraith
	Robert Thompson	
Social Committee (8)	Pamela Campbell	Marilyn Sickels
	Carolyn Lyon	Sharman Robinson
	Graeme McVerry	William Liao
	Valray Climo	Ruth Crawford

8. General Business

Emma Dobbie
Secretary

ANNUAL REPORT for 2024-2025

102nd Annual Report

General Committee:

The General Committee elected in 2024 met on 10 occasions to 30 June 2025. It does not meet in January each year and will meet in July 2025.

		Number of meetings attended
President	Marina Skinner	10
Vice-President	Doreen Courtenay	10
Vice-President Ruapehu	Kate Brownsword	5
Secretary	Emma Dobbie	9
Trip Co-ordinator	Dennis Page	9
Treasurer	Jim Cousins	9
Transport Officer	John Smeith	4
General Committee	Chris McMillan	8
	Doc Watson	8
	Debbie Labett	8
	Mel Stoneham	8
	Lex Grubner	8
	Ann Hayman	8

Ruapehu Committee:

The Ruapehu Committee elected in 2024 met on 7 occasions to 30 June 2025. It will also meet in July 2025.

		Number of meetings attended
Vice-President Ruapehu	Kate Brownsword	5
Secretary	Bruce Miller	7
Treasurer	John Simes	7
Members	Sheldon Bruce	5
	Ian McIlraith	4
	Alison Newbald	5
	Brendan Quirke	7
	David Biegel	5
	Robert Thompson	3

Social Committee:

Pamela Campbell	William Liao
Graeme McVerry	Carolyn Lyon
Marilyn Sickels	Sharman Robinson
Ruth Crawford (from Jan)	

Life members:

Ian Ayson	Sheldon Bruce	Graham Craig	Mat Craig
Graeme McVerry	Bruce Miller	Dennis Page	Ron Pynenburg
Phil Rundle	John Simes	Geoff Spearpoint	John Tristram
Pat Tristram			

Appointments made by the General Committee for 2024-2025:

Sunday Trips Group	Doreen Courtenay, Heather Eskdale, Jackie West.
Club Emergency Contacts	Patrick Fotheringham, Tony Jaegers, Bob Deller, Dennis Page, Jackie West.
Account Owners	Marina Skinner, Jim Cousins, John Simes, John Smeith
Account Signatories	Marina Skinner, John Simes, Jim Cousins, Kate Brownsword
Account Online Administrators	Marina Skinner, Jim Cousins, John Simes
Account Online Authorisers	Marina Skinner, Jim Cousins, John Simes, John Smeith, Kate Brownsword
Financial Assurance Practitioner	Ian Hoare
Membership Officer	Doreen Courtenay
Privacy Officer	Mel Stoneham
E-mail Groups Manager	Doreen Courtenay
Hills & Valleys – Editor	Bruce Miller
Hills & Valleys/ FMC	Doreen Courtenay
Backcountry distribution	
Webmaster	Jan Arts
Clubroom Custodian	Doc Watson
Gear Custodian	Doc Watson
Clubroom Bookings	Julie Lewis
Librarian and Photo Archivist	Andrew Robinson
Fanny Bayliss Grants Committee	Tania Hatfield, Mel Stoneham, Debbie Labett
Environmental Convenor	Derek Richardson
Transport Review Sub-Committee	Andrew Robinson, Ann Hayman, Doc Watson, Chriselda McMillan, Murray McMillan, Bob Deller, Marina Skinner
Constitution Sub-Committee	Pat Tristram, Murray Presland, Marina Skinner, Nick McBride, Gerard McGreevy, Emma Dobbie
Website Sub-Committee	Jan Arts, Kate Brownsword, Marina Skinner

Club members in related organisations:

Dennis Page	Member, FMC Youth Scholarship Committee Trustee, FMC Mountain and Forest Trust
Murray Presland	Representative, Greater Wellington Backcountry Network
Graeme Lyon	Secretary/Treasurer, Wellington Mountain Radio Service
Phil Rundle	Review Accountant - Wellington Mountain Radio Service, - NZ Forest & Bird, Lower Hutt
Nick McBride	FMC Executive

Affiliations: The Club is affiliated to the following organisations:

- Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand
- Greater Wellington Backcountry Network
- Royal Forest and Bird Society
- Friends of Baring Head
- Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association
- Remutaka Conservation Trust

REPORTS

President's report

Many positives have featured this year as we celebrated the Ruapehu Lodge's 75th birthday and increased the number of trips offered to members. We also took some steps to strengthen the club's future.

The first was our decision to replace our club van. At our January extraordinary general meeting, a majority of members endorsed the General Committee's recommendation to buy a new Toyota ZX Hiace Minibus, which is due to arrive in July 2025.

Several members spent considerable time making this happen – first researching transport options, then planning for the new van's arrival. The sub-committee's update in this annual report gives a greater indication of what was involved. My thanks to everyone on the transport sub-committee for their considerable work and drive. I thank the club members who recently donated to the van replacement fund, including one anonymous member who gave an extraordinarily generous \$10,000, and all members who have contributed to the van replacement fund over the last 24 years.

I'm confident that the new van will be a great asset for years to come and will strongly support our club activities. I hope that it will motivate people to lead and participate in trips, which will in turn help us retain and recruit members. Please enjoy it on a club trip when you can.

The second big step for the club was the progress made on drafting a new club constitution to comply with the Incorporated Societies (2022) Act. We agreed at last year's annual general meeting to re-register HVTC under the new Act, which meant we needed to update our constitution. I greatly appreciate the work by members of the constitution sub-committee to modernise and extend our old constitution. This will be circulated in the coming months and all members will have a chance to vote on the new constitution before the end of 2025.

We signed a new memorandum of understanding with the Department of Conservation to maintain our association with Papatahi Hut in the Ōrongorongo Valley. The new agreement gives us free use of the hut for four nights every year in exchange for contributing to hut maintenance.

In September, we celebrated the 75th birthday of our Ruapehu Lodge with a weekend of events and a celebration dinner on the mountain. It was a highlight in an average season for the skifield, which included ownership uncertainty and poor snow. The current season is looking more promising now that Whakapapa Holdings has a 10-year concession to run

the field. All we now need is snow and the continued enthusiasm and efforts of the Ruapehu Committee led by Kate Brownsword.

In May, our webmaster, Jan Arts, migrated the HVTC website to a new content management system, WordPress, which is well suited to our needs. It is easier to use than the previous system, which will enable more of us to share the editing load with Jan. I'm extremely grateful to Jan, who has done an incredible job over 30 years to manage our website. Jan will continue to work with myself and Kate Brownsword on scoping other improvements to the content, design and functions of our website. This is important for members and prospective members wanting to see what our club offers.

It's been positive to have our new Trip Coordinator, Dennis Page, after a year without anybody dedicated to the role. I very much value Dennis and the others who support him to organise our day trips. Thank you to Heather Eskdale, Jackie West and Doreen Courtenay.

A shout out to Emma Dobbie and Debbie Labett for their series of hut-bagging trips over summer, which involved many members and introduced some new people to the club. And Leena Stowell has showed incredible commitment by leading bike rides every Sunday since September 2023. Thank you, Leena.

I'm happy that we offered 34 more trips than the previous year, and the number of activity days increased from 1,523 to 1,841.

I'm also mindful that our membership numbers have dipped during the past year and I'd like to turn that around in the coming year. We have for many years run annual introductory evenings or day trips but it could be time to more regularly promote the club to grow the number of members.

Jim Cousins is finally shutting down his spreadsheets and calculator after nine years as Treasurer. We have been very, very fortunate to have had Jim's rigour, discipline and hard work over these years. He has an eye for detail as well as the bigger picture – the wood and the trees, which is not surprising given his bushcraft skills. I've really appreciated his support for myself and the rest of the General Committee. And I'm relieved that he's agreed to continue to share his knowledge and well-considered views as a General Committee member.

Thank you also to John Smeith, who is standing down after 12 years on the General Committee, including four years as Transport Officer.

A massive thanks to Doreen Courtenay as Vice-President and Emma Dobbie as Secretary for their genuine support and often unheralded work during the year.

I feel optimistic about the coming year for the club and I thank everyone on our General, Ruapehu and Social committees for their commitment. We are all working hard to continue offering a range of satisfying recreational, social and environmental activities so that we keep our current members happy and that we attract new members.

Thank you also to everyone else who contributes time, energy and expertise. You're a fabulous crew. See you in the hills. Ngā mihi nui.

Marina Skinner
President

Membership

At 31 May 2025, club membership was 283 members, a decrease of 14 from the previous year. The distribution of membership by type is given in the table below.

During the year, 20 new members joined the club and unfortunately 34 resigned, allowed their membership to lapse or died. The higher than usual loss of members was due to a range of factors, including the increase in subscription and the uncertain Ruapehu situation.

In November we ran two introductory trips in the Ōrongorongo Valley, and nine people subsequently joined the club.

During the year the club noted with sadness the deaths of four current members, June Green, Mick McParland, Nicholas Boyack and Malcolm McLeod. The club also noted with sadness the deaths of three former members, Ken Pearce, Chris Hopkins and Amber Clarkson.

Membership Category	Number at year ending 31 May							
	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Life Member	13	12	12	11	12	12	14	15
Life Spouse	9	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Ultra Veteran	12	13	12	11	11			
Senior Veteran	16	21	20	20	19	25	24	25
Veteran	73	76	75	77	80	80	81	79
General Member	141	143	142	145	153	153	155	150
Student	3	9	7	8	5	3	5	4
Absentee	17	15	17	15	17	22	15	12
TOTAL	283	297	293	295	305	303	302	293
New Members	20	23	13	20	20	26	27	25
Resigned / Not Renewed	34	19	15	30	18	25	18	27

Ultra Veteran: >60 years' membership

Senior Veteran: >50 years' membership

Veteran: >21 years' membership

Doreen Courtenay
Membership Officer

Trips

Thank you to a small but dedicated core of club members who supported me in my uptake in the role of Trip Coordinator following a vacancy in the position for the 2023/24 activity year. I would especially like to acknowledge the support received from Chris and Murray McMillan who provided good guidance and a useful document bundle that greatly assisted with trip planning and participation recording (even to the point of compiling the graphs that accompany this report).

The on-going support from the Sunday Trips Sub-committee (Heather Eskdale, Jackie West and Doreen Courtenay) was of immense help and freed me up to focus on compilation and coordination of other activities that provide the diversity needed to present an attractive trips fixture card. This is not as easy as it once may have been as timetables that enlist member commitments to events further into the future are becoming less certain/guaranteed and that makes for some anxious moments when offerings are few.

The current elephant in the room for trip offerings is the apparent and on-going decline in the willingness of many members to lead or partake in overnight trips and for the pressure that this reluctance places on a core group of members who do put their hand up but who face the potential for burn-out unless the load is shared more widely.

Please have a think about these issues as you read this report and perhaps commit to leading a trip or two in the new activity year. I am available to assist with trip planning, ideas for potential destinations, and I can also assist you in buddying up with a more experienced member if you are unsure about leading. But in general, if you can organise a family holiday or group outing, you can organise a club trip – they are definitely not rocket science.

Number of trips: In total, the club ran 164 trips in the 2024/25 year comprising 1,841 activity days, compared with 1,523 activity days in the previous year. Or viewed another way, the trip tally was 34 more trips than the previous year. The contributing activities included: 57 day tramps, 69 evening/day rides (46 of these were the Sunday ride – thank you, Leena), 26 overnight or longer tramps, 10 work parties and, pleasingly, 2 overnight bike trips. Three trips in the 164 total comprised Ruapehu activities and these may be duplicated in the Ruapehu Lodge report. I include them here because they were specifically singled out for inclusion in the general trips fixture card to attract a wider participant pool.

Multi-day trips to the South Island explored the Toaroha – Hokitika Catchment areas (Westland; Andrew Robinson), the Routeburn and Kepler Tracks (Fiordland; Marina Skinner), and the St James Walkway (North Canterbury; Ann Hayman/Neil Parker).

Weekend overnight trips to destinations closer to home were at some considerable risk of being non-events but were rescued in large part thanks to the initiative of Debbie Labett and Emma Dobbie who spearheaded a very successful introductory tramps campaign to some popular huts (six trips in total). Such was the appeal of these trips that in many cases they were over-subscribed. The noted over-subscription points to the fact that there appear many willing takers but a big hesitancy or reluctance for others to take the lead. My immense gratitude goes to Emma and Debbie for their imagination and drive, and I hope that their torch can be uplifted by others in this upcoming activity year. Honourable mentions must also go to Andrew Robinson, Jim Cousins, Marina Skinner, Mel Stoneham,

Chris and Jackie West, and Ann Hayman and Neil Parker who also led trips to other overnight destinations.

Love Your Huts (see also the separate Tramping huts and tracks report): This was a campaign initiated nationally by FMC in late 2024 and HVTC supported the cause by initially adopting five local huts; Powell, Waitewaewae, Papatahi, Mangatoetoe and Waiorongomai, in the Tararua-Remutaka-Aorangi rohe. (Powell was visited but the booking system and warden duties somewhat complicated the nature of including this hut in the system; something to note for future events should they occur.)

The initiative involved cleaning duties and giving the huts a general spruce-up, as well as noting more substantive repairs for DOC to follow up on, plus a general review of hut visits (log-book tallies) for usage/census data collation and for comparative purposes. The trips, either comprising single- or multi-day tramps, were enthusiastically supported by a good cohort of HVTC members and some of our efforts have made the special FMC feature in the June 2025 Backcountry publication.

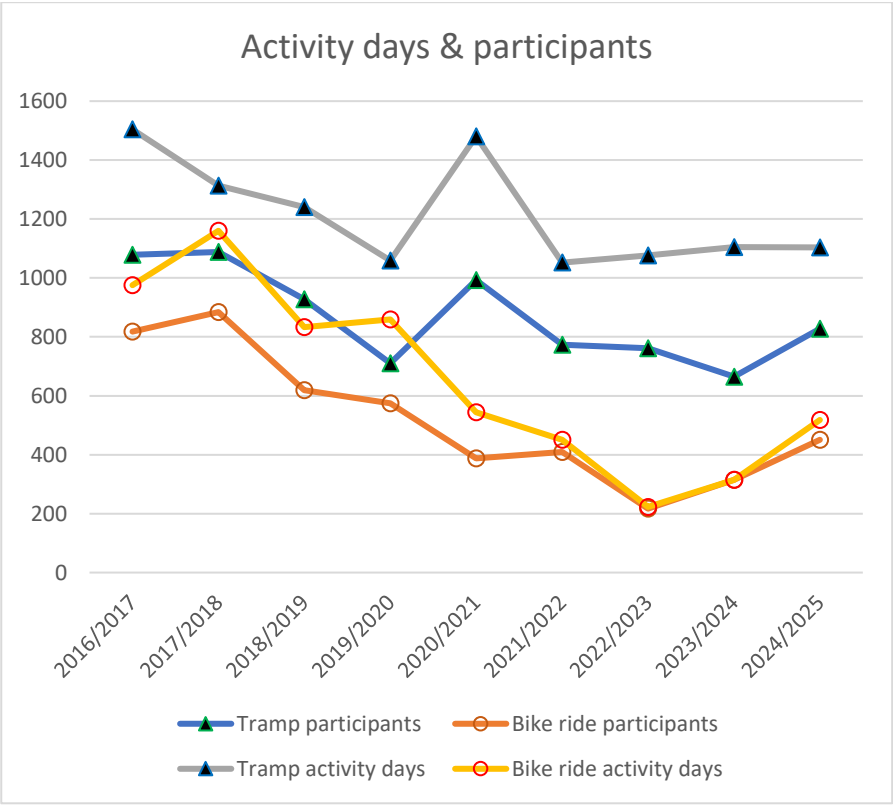
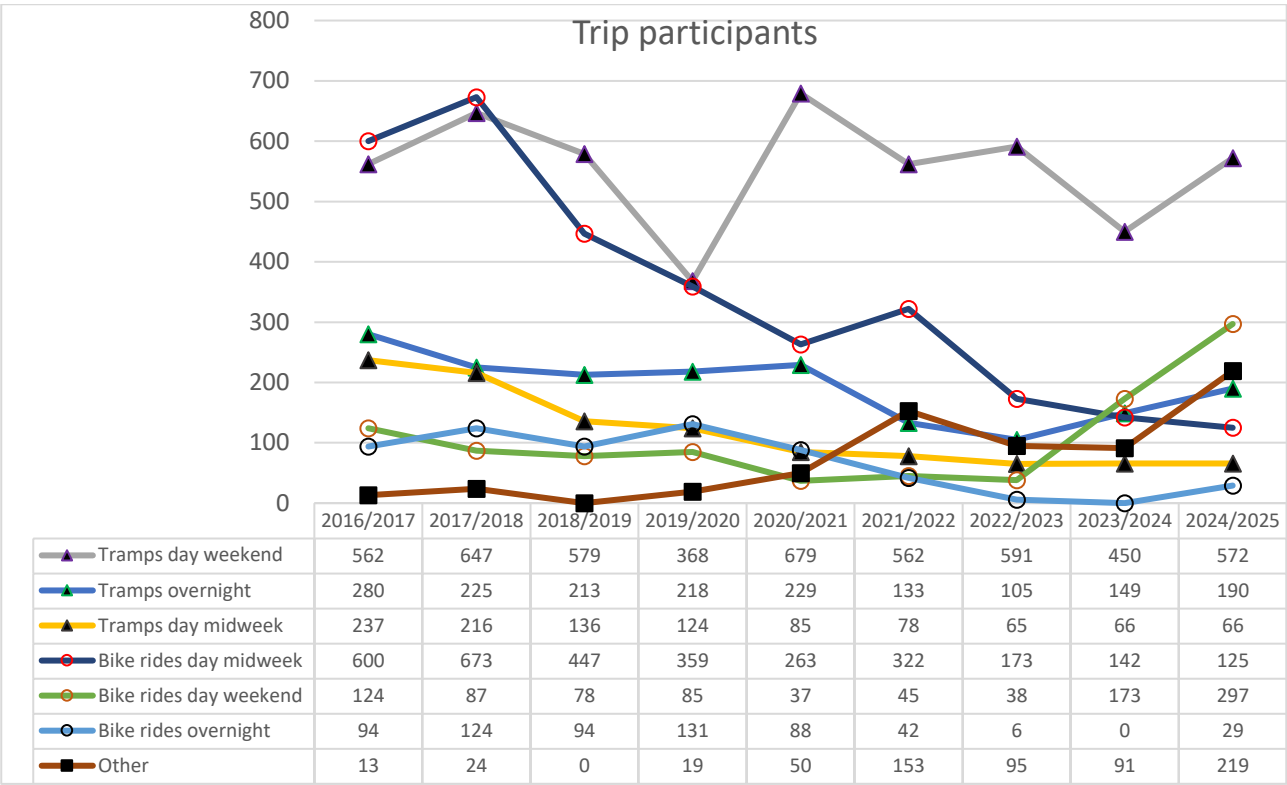
Work parties: Outside of those planned for Ruapehu Lodge (two), HVTC members participated in eight additional work parties, plus the Pinus contorta weekend, that focussed on facilities maintenance and environmental care (primarily planting and weeding) in various reserves around greater Wellington. These undertakings are one way in which the club can give back to the realms that it derives its enjoyment and raison d'être from, and I am determined that they should remain an important set of fixtures in the club's activity set.

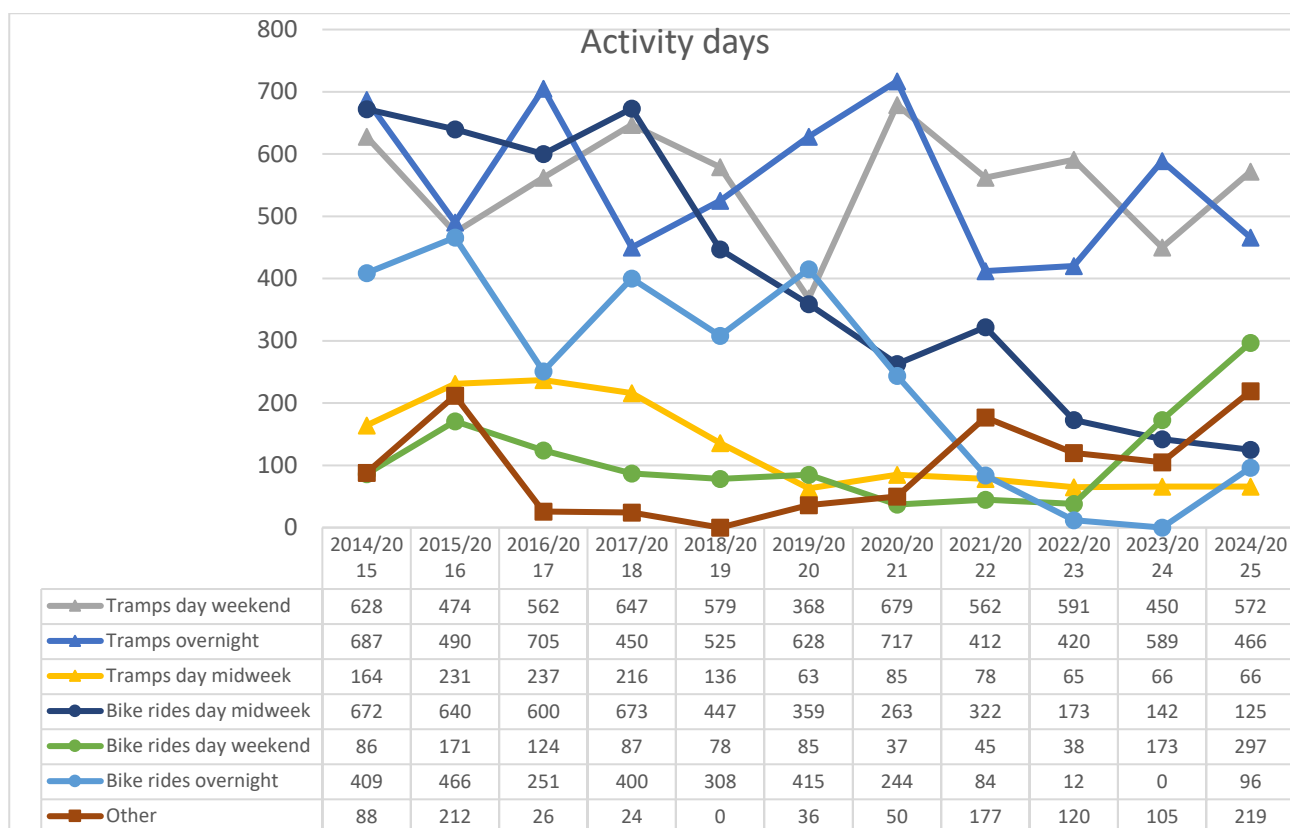
My thanks especially to Murray Presland who has led many of these events and particularly for driving the club contributions to the Greater Wellington Backcountry Network initiatives (culminating in seven participants recently spending eight days lavishing care on Waitewaewae Hut – well done all).

Cycling: Pleasingly, this year, two overnight/multi-day cycling trips were offered: Remutaka Incline/Featherston (Ann Hayman/Neil Parker) and the Timber Trail over Easter (Debbie Labett/Russell Oliver) and I hope these initiatives may reverse a trend that was lamented in last year's report.

Leena Stowell's Sunday rides departing from Avalon Park have been the mainstay of day rides. The initiative of a Tuesday evening ride during daylight saving carried on this year but at times with declining enthusiasm. I am very grateful to those club members that very generously stepped up to lead both easy and intermediate or harder rides – sometimes with few supporters which can be a bit soul-destroying. If the lack of interest continues, I may elect to offer only one evening a month (during daylight saving) for this activity – but this could be easily revived to full throttle if members' enthusiasm/interest wills it (the power is in your hands and legs or should that be e-bike battery).

Finally, thanks to everyone for supporting our trips through organising, leading, sharing knowledge, participating, covering the emergency contact roster, looking after the gear room and for the stewardship of the club van.





Dennis Page
Trip Coordinator

Ruapehu

One year I'm going to sit down to write this report and be able to say that we had amazing snow, the ski field operator ran without financial trouble, there was no global pandemic, and the lodge had great occupancy. But in the 2024 season we were largely missing a vital ingredient – snow. Despite a very light snow year, the lodge had averagely good usage, with club members and groups in residence for 735 bed nights, virtually the same number of bed nights as the previous year. The interesting thing about this year's pattern of usage was that we saw lots of groups at the lodge and greatly increased summer usage, but much lower individual winter skier usage, perhaps unsurprising given the low snow conditions.

We marked 75 years of HVTC being on Mt Ruapehu with a weekend of being together on the mountain – there was a very limited amount of skiing to be done – and a fabulous Saturday night dinner. Thank you Alan Findlay for producing a wonderful meal for us all.

We again hosted a number of groups, including Tihoi Venture School, Hillary Outdoors, Harrison Grierson social group, Ed Oosterbaan and friends, Rosie Doole and family, the Bruce family, Girls on Ice, and Rob Thompson and friends. We are very grateful for their support.

We now have certainty around the future of the ski field with Whakapapa Holdings Ltd being granted a 10-year licence by DOC to operate it.

Maintenance

This year seemed to be the year of replacing appliances at the lodge, which is no straightforward event given our position. We had planned to replace one of our stoves, which had reached the end of its life, but unexpectedly had to replace a freezer too, which involved a second group of volunteers making the 10-hour round trip to the mountain on another weekend. Thank you Andrew Russell who transported both appliances to the mountain and then drove them up the Rock Garden to Hut Flat, making the distance they had to be carried much shorter and considerably less uphill. Thank you also to Tom and Daniel Brownsword, and Rob Thompson and whānau who did the heavy lifting. Of course, not only do new appliances have to go in, but the old ones have to come out, go down the hill, and off for safe disposal. Andrew R took the old stove apart and got \$33 at the scrap metal recyclers for lodge funds, what a hero.



The replacement/upgrading of windows on the ground floor of the two-storey block continues, thanks to the expertise and hard work of Russell Oliver. The upgrade of lights on the kitchen and lounge to LEDs is now largely complete. Thank you to Garry Kane who has spent many years being the lodge electrician.

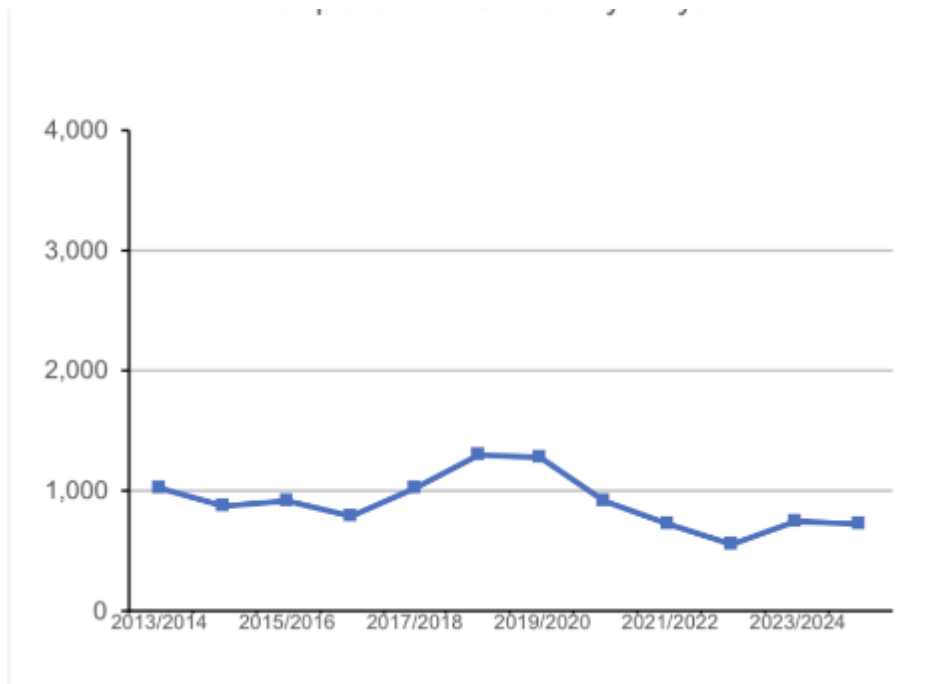
Finance

The poor snow season would suggest a disastrous financial year but fortunately summer use was much higher than has previously been seen. Nearly 50% of actual paying nights were summer use and included a number of education groups such as Girls on Ice. Others such as several small family groups had stays and there was also a large family gathering at the lodge that stayed for three nights. This all helped. Revenue is down because summer use is at a lower rate, but expenses were also down with less food used and much less power used.



Marking
75 years
of the
lodge in
September
2024

Ruapehu activity days



Lodge use statistics											
	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Member	152	560	302	511	633	852	971	654	637	696	535
Non-mbr	51	110	61	90	56	117	85	119	43	74	61
School	61	53	70	84	196	100	152	202	46	88	204
MSC + TTC	120		69	34	56	167	75	24	58	58	74
Summer	351	16	46	65	27	23	12	54	29	65	67
Total pay nights	735	739	548	784	968	1256	1295	1053	813	981	941
Custodn	10	129	119	125	14	48	22	20	8	8	10
Work party	77	30	28	63	82	32		TBA	56	60	52

Thank you

Thank you to the members of the Ruapehu Committee – they are dedicated and hard working and keep on being optimistic and looking ahead despite the challenges in recent years.

We have a fantastic group of lodge users and supporters who contribute in all ways to the life of the lodge and to keeping it going. It's hard to overemphasise the amount of time and effort these great people give to the club.

Please do come and stay at the lodge and support HVTC's own place on the mountain – it makes a great getaway in summer as well as winter!

Kate Brownsword

Vice-President Ruapehu

Treasurer's report

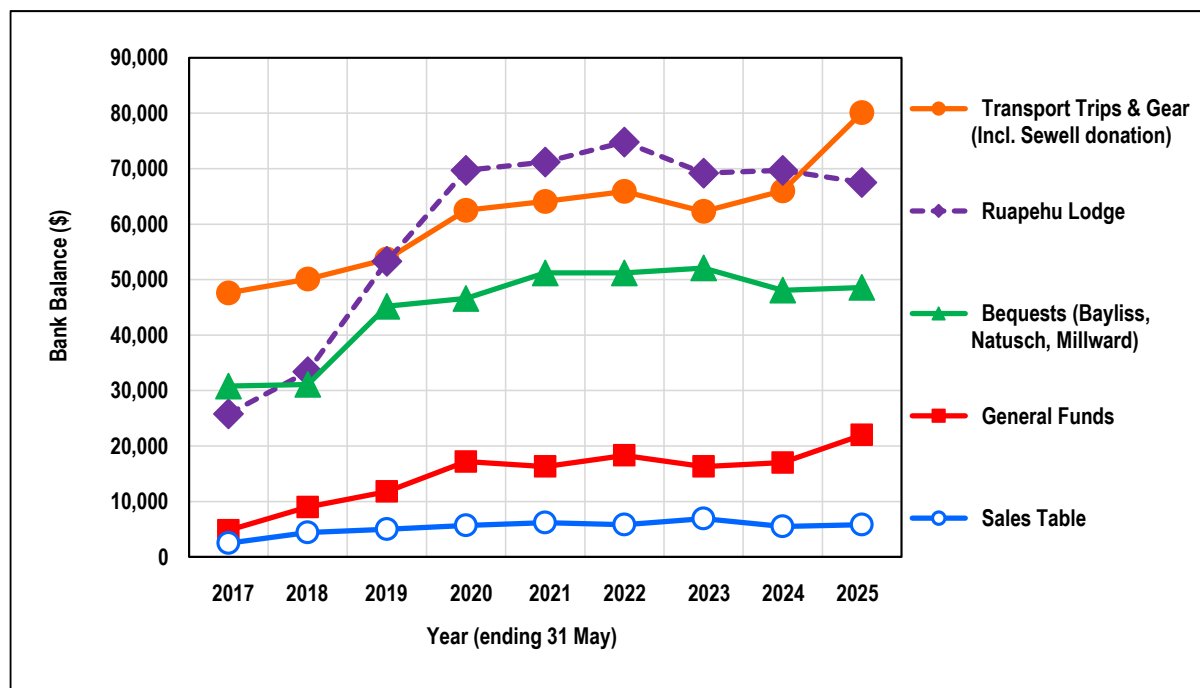
This year there has been a significant change in how the financials of the club are presented. From now on they will have to be part of a stand-alone Performance Report that, as well as the financial section, also contains specific legal and structural information on the club, very brief outlines about how we have met our objectives as a club, and nothing more.

The contents of the financial part of the Performance Report are broadly similar to the financial section of our previous Annual Reports, with the main changes being the addition of a Statement of Cash Flows page, and the transfer of the Clubrooms and Social Activities, Transport Trips & Gear, and Ruapehu Lodge reports from separate pages to Notes in the Notes Section. This year's Performance Report follows the required new layout.

The 2024-25 financial year has seen the club return an overall surplus of \$9,124, compared with a deficit of \$4,245 last year. The main factors behind this improvement are a very generous donation of \$10,000 towards purchase of the new van (from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous) and lack of a \$5,000 net expenditure on the centenary.

Long-term trends in the end-of-year cashbook positions are presented in the table and graph below for the five main subdivisions of the club's finances. The figures for each subdivision include funds belonging to each particular trading account (if any) plus its related term deposits. The changes over the last year are most easily seen in the graph. Starting from the topmost curve they are Transport Trips & Gear – greatly increased, mostly because of the new van donation, Ruapehu – down by about \$2,000, Bequests – up a little, General Funds – increased, due to reduced costs, and finally Sales Table – increased by interest.

End of year cash positions for the major subdivisions of club funds.



End of year cash positions for the major subdivisions of club funds

Year ending 31 May	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
General Funds (\$ - rounded)	17,200	16,300	18,300	16,300	17,000	22,000
Sales Table Fund	5,700	6,200	5,800	6,900	5,500	5,800
Transport T & G (Incl. Sewell donation)	62,500	64,100	65,900	62,300	66,000	80,100
Ruapehu Lodge	69,700	71,200	74,800	69,200	69,700	67,500
Bequests (Bayliss, Natusch, Millward)	46,600	51,200	51,200	52,100	48,100	48,600

No grants were made from the Fanny Bayliss fund this year, and none from the Sales Table fund. A grant of \$2,329 from the Natusch bequest was used to purchase a defibrillator for installation in the Ruapehu Lodge.

As always, I express my heartfelt thanks to John Simes, John Smeith, and Doreen Courtenay for their substantial and valuable contributions to managing the financial affairs of the club, and finally I thank Ian Hoare for providing essential advice in development of the Performance Report and for carrying out the Financial Review of the accounts. His experience and thoroughness are greatly appreciated.

Jim Cousins
Treasurer

Social Committee

Thank you, Ruth Crawford, for coming onto our committee part way during the year.

Our focus this past year has been to provide a quiet and welcoming background for club meetings and to fulfil the various duties expected of a Social Committee, despite the absence of a convenor.

Thanks to Graeme McVerry and Pamela Campbell for sending the WOW (What's on Wednesday) e-mail each Sunday to remind the membership of club night speakers coming up.

Over the course of the year, the Social Committee has organised 48 club nights. As in previous years our club has had a range of speakers, split almost evenly between club members (18) and external guests (19), as well other types of entertainment or social events.

Andrew Robinson and Neil Hickman again compiled and presented the HVTC International Film Festival.

Thanks to:

Pamela Campbell who, until September 2024, had organised speakers for club nights for the previous five and a half years.

Graeme McVerry who has picked up this role from that time, swapping roles with Pamela, who now produces WOW. They have both sourced and co-ordinated speakers.

The thank-you letter writers to each of these presenters.

The presenters for their generosity in making themselves available and for the time they take putting their presentation together.

The club's photo competition was held on 28 August 2024. Our special thanks go to John Rhodes for judging the competition, Graeme McVerry for encouraging members to enter, compiling files into categories, forwarding the best club entries to the FMC competition and co-ordinating this event, and Carolyn Lyon for organising the cups for the prize winners. A very special thank you as well to all those who submitted entries.

The Wednesday night just before the Christmas party (4 December) requires special mention as it involved the entire social committee in organising food, drinks and decorations for John Featherstone's presentation to the club. John had been an active member of the club some years back and was returning briefly from the States with his wife Yasmi.

The silly season began with a Christmas party – a potluck dinner on 11 December. There were some stand outs: William taking seriously his judging of the most festive hat of the night, won by Helen Lukes (women) with her creative whimsical construction and Mike Priest, dressed as an Egyptian Pharaoh (blokes). And for the festive edible gingerbread men on the Christmas tree, thank you, Marilyn.

We began our new year with a welcome back mix and mingle evening on 15 January.

The Social Committee does more than just prepare tea and coffee. Behind the scenes, the little elves clean the hall and put out the chairs for the meeting, tasks that take about two hours for the duty Social Committee person each meeting and would benefit from contributions by other club members. Especial thanks to Carolyn Lyon who does the supermarket shopping for supplies and purchases wine and petrol vouchers for external speakers.

One of our members travelled out of the country where she had a traumatic accident which ended up with her being in hospital overseas, having significant surgery and delaying her return to New Zealand. A big thank you to Doreen who stepped in over the time Marilyn was recovering to fill the roster in the social programme, turning up for her roster with not just one, but three different chocolate cakes.

A special note to Anna who, while not on the Social Committee, has helped as though she was, as well as to the generous others who have helped with cleaning, putting chairs out, and sometimes with tidying up the hall at the end of a Wednesday club night. And thanks to all of you who put your dishes in the dishwasher. It's not expected but is appreciated.

Thanks to all the hosts of the club nights and to all those who set up the computer equipment.

Transport

Everyone will know that our old club Ford Transit van is 24 years old and will be replaced by a new 10-seater Toyota ZX Hiace minibus in July.

What led to this change over the last year? In 2024 the General Committee asked a sub-committee to review the club's transport situation, get input from members, seek advice from others, assess options and provide recommendations to the General Committee. The scope included supporting members on trips, comfort, safety, reliability, carbon footprint, ease for drivers, sustainability for the club's future and a plan to use the transport fund.

Last year our transport sub-committee spent a few months looking at transport options for members to review. Many members gave their views through a survey. An options paper was prepared and circulated with members responding to a request for feedback in late October. The preferred option to replace the van with a new Toyota ZX Hiace Minibus was agreed at an EGM in January 2025.

Members of the original 2024 sub-committee were Marina Skinner, Doc Watson, Ann Hayman and Andrew Robinson. After the EGM the sub-committee was refreshed with members Chriselda and Murray McMillian, Andrew Robinson, Doc Watson, Bob Deller and Ann Hayman to tackle the work of transitioning to the new van.

In April, when Toyota informed us the van could be ready as soon as July, much earlier than the original indication of December, we were very happy and ramped up preparations. We quickly prioritised what needed to be done so members could have the use of the van as soon as possible after Toyota made it available.

Preparing for purchase and installation of van accessories such as the cargo barrier for packs, first aid kit, seat covers, and signage was high on the list. Equally so, refreshing the list of van drivers to drive our brand-new club vehicle. Transport charges needed reviewing as did putting in place a system for future proofing the van replacement fund. There is

ongoing work to update information and educate trip leaders, drivers and club members about using the van.

Sub-committee members were very pleased to help in this way and look forward to sharing the new van with club members on many club trips and outdoor adventures in the future.

Ann Hayman
Convenor Transport Sub-committee

Van summary

Date	Distance travelled (km)	Number of trips	Total number of passengers	Average number per trip
2019-20	7567	20	145	7.3
2020-21	10188	23	164	7.1
2021-22	5841	27	220	8.1
2022-23	3419	14	110	7.8
2023-24	8703	18	110	6.1
2024-25	5337	25	176	7.0

This year the number of trips using the van increased by about 39% and the mileage dropped by about 38% compared with the previous year, perhaps because the van was not used on any South Island trips.

This means the trips have been shorter and therefore income is less for those shorter trips. At least three of the trips have been to Baring Head and three were for day trips. This means the van is only averaging 1.5 overnight trips per month and some months, for example July, the van was not used at all. In March it was used for a *Pinus contorta* work party, which was fully paid for by DOC.

In my view, after the decision was made to purchase a new \$70,000 van, the distance, trip numbers and passenger numbers will need to at least double to make this a viable proposition.

After 12 years on the General Committee, with the last four as Transport Officer, I am not standing again.

John Smith
Transport Officer

Clubrooms

Maintaining our clubrooms means keeping on top of all the little jobs and a few bigger ones too.

Outdoor tasks included: clearing the guttering; applying moss and mould remover to the roof and concrete paths; starting to replace the rusty fixing screws on the lower portion of the roof above the main entrance; keeping the area around the hall free of litter and

overhanging branches; changing a security light; repainting the keep clear sign on the club driveway; cleaning the security light sensors; and making a start cleaning the exterior paint work around the toilets.

Mystery #1: the disappearance of the HVTC sign reported to Hutt City Council.

Indoor tasks included: untangling blinds and fixing the curtain chain above the projector; replacing the starter and fluorescent lamp in the ladies' restroom; refurbishing the two green entranceway doors; fixing the leaky tap in the men's toilet; polishing the floor; replacing lights; lubricating door hinges on the emergency door; placing four emergency signs in prominent positions around the hall; fitting a new catch to the right hand swinging door of the main hall; cleaning the toilets; cleaning and tidying the garage; and lowering the garage side door latch for easier operation.

Mystery #2: a broken chair, the second in recent times to be written off due to misuse by hall hirers.

Patrick Fotheringham improved the hall sound system. Wormald checked and recertified the hall fire hose, kitchen fire extinguisher, kitchen fire blanket and the van's fire extinguisher.

The crowd pleaser: Sheldon Bruce's name was added in gold leaf to the Life Membership board, which is now proudly on display in the hall.

Regular hirers continued to use the hall, with occasional one-off bookings during the year.

Doc Watson
Clubrooms Custodian

Gear room

Thanks to the many club members for returning the gear on time and in good order.

The orange shelters along with the spider cooker have proved very popular and it's great to see these out on many trips.

The first aid kits have been recently updated. A big thank you to everyone who keeps me informed of items to be replaced.

Doc Watson
Gear Custodian

Library and archives

The club library continues to get regular use with Wilderness magazine a popular publication. The last year has seen donations of books from the Tristrams and the Tararua Tramping Club library, a copy of Anna Yeoman's book Geckos & Skinks and Wilderness magazines from Leena Stowell.

Work is underway to make high-quality digital copies of very early Hills & Valleys issues scanned for the club's centennial publication available for anyone interested in reading them.

Andrew Robinson
Club Librarian and Archivist

Fanny Bayliss Bequest Grants Scheme

There were no applications for Fanny Bayliss funds this year. There is currently \$5,082 available for distribution. Applications for Fanny Bayliss funding can be made at any time throughout the year, so get in touch with the committee and we'll help you with a proposal for funds.

Tania Hatfield
Convenor

Tramping huts and tracks

HVTC has fulfilled obligations to contribute to the maintenance of Papatahi Hut in the Ōrongorongo Valley (by way of a Community Agreement with DOC signed in November 2024) and of Waitewaewae Hut in the upper Ōtaki Valley. This was by way of an informal agreement with Greater Wellington Backcountry Network, an organisation of volunteers that has a Community Agreement with DOC covering maintenance of 10 huts, including Waitewaewae Hut, and about 420km of tracks in the Tararua, Haurangi and Remutaka Ranges. Other clubs have agreements to maintain many of the other 32 huts available to the public in those ranges. In addition, during the past summer, FMC ran a programme "Love Our Huts" encouraging volunteer groups to take responsibility for maintenance of publicly available huts.

Scheduled by the Trip Co-ordinator, groups of club members contributed enthusiasm and energy to the cleaning of the huts and tidying the surrounding areas of Mangatoetoe and Waiorongomai huts in November and of Papatahi Hut in December.

Waitewaewae Hut has been scheduled for a major renovation for the past 4-5 years, funding of the project being a challenge until the Back Country Trust took up the project to replace the roof of the hut. The opportunity was then available, using shared equipment and helicopter flying time, to undertake renovation of the hut. At the end of February contractors replaced the roof over three days, between spells of poor weather, and shortly after six club members plus John Duggan (from WTMC) spent eight days at Waitewaewae cleaning, preparing surfaces, and painting the interior and exterior of the hut, plus lots of other jobs.

The weather was unsettled, making painting the exterior particularly difficult – but the tasks were completely completed! I am grateful to Derrick Field, chairperson of Greater Wellington Backcountry Network, for his determined efforts in getting this whole project underway – he is unbelievably committed to generating volunteer contributions to maintenance tasks in the DOC estate of the lower North Island.

And I am very grateful to all the club members who contributed to our club's work in these hut maintenance tasks during the past year. It is demanding of time and energy and it's often mundane, but it is a very rewarding way of contributing to our recreation and the welfare of the wider New Zealand tramping fraternity. I hope our club will continue to make this contribution.

Murray Presland

Environment

No club submissions were lodged with external parties concerning environmental issues over the past year. As in previous years, club members have continued to support a number of environmentally related activities.

The annual *Pinus contorta* eradication trips to Ruapehu continued. DOC assures us that our input represents good value for money and is much lighter on fossil fuels than the helicopter alternative. DOC fully subsidises our transport.

The Ava Park patch of native bush we nurture is certainly a challenge due to the frequency of coastal winds and subsequent salt burn. Despite some loss of plants, there are some good gains to learn from for the future. The occasion represents an excellent social opportunity for those who have just a few hours to offer.

Club members carried out five work party days at Baring Head during the year, assisting Friends of Baring Head and Wellington Regional Council, which owns the East Harbour Regional Park. Planting, our most frequent activity in recent years, was undertaken mostly by contractors. Our contribution this year has been planting rarer species, maintaining the enclosure plots (where rarer plants can be nurtured) and eradicating horned poppy along the beaches of Fitzroy Bay around to the Wainuiomata River mouth. A large project to eradicate lupin is contemplated.

Derek Richardson
Environmental Convenor

Constitution Sub-committee

The Incorporated Societies Act 2022 modernises the legal framework for incorporated societies in New Zealand, replacing the 1908 Act. There are new requirements for society constitutions, governance, and dispute resolution under the 2022 Act. Our club needs to be re-registered before April 2026.

A motion was passed at our 2024 AGM to re-register our club under the new Act. A small sub-committee (Pat Tristram, Gerard McGreevy, Murray Presland, Nick McBride, Marina Skinner and Emma Dobbie) was tasked with ensuring our current constitution was updated to include all new mandatory requirements. There has been a significant amount of work done this year to write a draft constitution that complies with the 2022 Act, yet retains the uniqueness of our club.

At this stage the sub-committee has presented the current draft to the General Committee at a meeting, and from there a google document was made available for further com-

ments. These are being worked on at present and then the final draft will be presented to members. At a later date an EGM will be set to finalise the new constitution, and then the re-registering process can proceed. This appears to be a fairly quick process.

Many thanks to Jim Cousins and Ian Hoare who have been diligently working on the financial upgrades under the new Act. From 2026 a standalone Performance Report for financials is required. The General Committee agreed that the 2024/2025 financials would be presented in this new format. (Please read the Treasurer's report for more details.)

Thanks to those on the sub-committee and the General Committee for the hundreds of hours spent working on the draft constitution in minutiae. It certainly is about as far from the hills and valleys as one can get, bogged down in endless hours looking at words on a screen. A very big thank you to you all.

Emma Dobbie

Constitution Sub-committee Convenor

Hutt Valley Tramping Club Incorporated

Minutes of the 101st Annual General Meeting

7:30pm, Wednesday 31st July, 2024

Clubrooms, Birch Street Reserve, Lower Hutt

Present: 49 members.

The President, Marina Skinner, opened the meeting at 7.30 pm.

- 1. Apologies:** received from John Tristram, Alan Stevens, Graeme Taylor, Mel Stoneham, Maarten Vink, Anja van Kesteren, Chriselda McMillan, Murray McMillan, John Smeith, Richard Moran, Fiona Moran, Pamela Campbell, David Barnes, Felicity Maxwell, Mat Craig, Graham Craig, Cathy Priest, Ian Ayson, Alison Ayson, Sharman Robinson, Heather Eskdale, Bernice Deller, Jo'ann Watson, Paul Labett, Helen Lukes.

A minute of silence was held to honour the following Club members and former members who died during the past year:

Lesley Ferguson died 22 September 2023

Jane Forsyth died 4 November 2023

George Kendall died 26 December 2023

Helen McLeod died 12 June 2024

Mick McParland died 22 July 2024

2. Minutes of the 100th Annual General Meeting:

The minutes of the 100th Annual General Meeting, held on the 26th July 2023, having been distributed to members with the 2023-2024 Annual Report, were taken as read.

Tony Jaegers requested that Susan Cade who passed away in the Kaikoura boating tragedy on 10 September 2022 be remembered in these minutes.

MOVED: That the Minutes of the 100th Annual General Meeting be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Marina Skinner / Pat Tristram **Carried**

3. Matters arising:

None raised.

4. Annual Report 2023-2024:

The Annual Report for 2023-24, having been distributed to members, was taken as read.

Author of the Fanny Bayliss report, Mike Priest, asked that the word 'principal' in the penultimate paragraph of his report be changed to 'balance'. Mike also requested that the balance amount be changed to \$32,178.56.

A request for funds from the Fanny Bayliss bequest for the Centenary Publication was passed to the General Committee and funding was provided from general funds.

The Ruapehu Committee's request for funds from the Fanny Bayliss bequest for an AED was passed to the General Committee. Funding was approved from the Gilbert and Sheila Natusch bequest fund.

There are differences between final figures in the Fanny Bayliss report and the 2024 Financial report. The Fanny Bayliss report refers to the term deposit balance at the 28 February 2024, and the Financial report refers to the Fanny Bayliss term deposit balance, including accrued interest, dated 31 May 2024.

Since its inception in 1994, the Fanny Bayliss bequest scheme has made grants of \$50,171.

Mike noted that he was standing down from the Fanny Bayliss sub-committee.

Comments:

- It was noted that page 36 from the Annual Report was missing out of the printed version. The emailed version included this page.
- Bob Deller noted that the hard work of half a dozen people to create the slideshows for the Centenary events was missed in the Annual Report.

Corrections:

Marina noted that Debbie Labett was inadvertently left off the nominations for the General Committee on page 1.

MOVED: That the 101st Annual Report be adopted, with changes as noted.

Marina Skinner / Debbie Labett **Carried**

5. Annual Accounts for Year ended 31 May 2024:

Annual Accounts for 2023-24, having been distributed to members, were taken as read. Marina thanked the Treasurer, Jim Cousins, and Ian Hoare, as Financial Assurance Reviewer, for the maintenance and presentation of the Accounts.

- The Treasurer noted that Pat Tristram had asked via email, why on page 22, Statement of Financial Performance, the amounts shown under "Other Income" (\$16,977) and "General Expenses" (\$22,612) were so much higher than for last year. Jim's response was that centenary-related income and costs were included in this year's amounts, as follows:
- "Other Income" includes centenary-related payments/donations made by members for School Fund Grants, Cloth Badges, Centenary book, and PWMC dinner (\$14,354), plus \$2,000 from the Fanny Bayliss Fund, giving a total of \$16,354.
- "General Expenses" includes centenary-related costs for the above items plus the free-to-attend functions on the Friday evening, Saturday afternoon and Sunday, totalling \$22,244.
- Mike Priest asked when the lease for the hall land comes up for renewal. Jim thinks there is still 7 years to go.

- Tony Jaegers asked if a line could be added for the centenary finances to make it clearer. The Treasurer responded that the centenary figures are broken down on pages 6 and 7 of the Annual Accounts Report.

MOVED: That the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 May 2024 be adopted.

Marina Skinner / Tania Hatfield **Carried**

6. Election of Officers:

The following valid nominations had been received and notified to members:

President	Marina Skinner	
Vice-President		
Secretary	Emma Dobbie	
Treasurer	Jim Cousins	
Trip Co-ordinator	Dennis Page	
Transport Officer	John Smeith	
General Committee (6)	Chris McMillan	Doreen Courtenay
	Doc Watson	Ann Hayman
	Mel Stoneham	Debbie Labett
Vice-President Ruapehu	Kate Brownsword	
Ruapehu Secretary	Bruce Miller	
Ruapehu Treasurer	John Simes	
Ruapehu Committee (8)	Alison Newbald	Sheldon Bruce
	Brendan Quirke	Ian McIlraith
	Robert Thompson	Dave Biegel
Social Committee (8)	Pamela Campbell	Marilyn Sickels
	Carolyn Lyon	Sharman Robinson
	Graeme McVerry	William Liao

As the number of nominations listed did not exceed the number of positions, Marina declared all the nominees duly elected.

Marina thanked the new members of the committees and all continuing members of the 3 committees for their service to the club. Thanks were also given to members standing down from their roles, Tania Hatfield, Michelle White, Russell Oliver, Cathy Priest, Doreen Courtenay and Debbie Labett.

Marina noted that there were spaces on each committee for new members.

Marina nominated Doreen Courtenay for the role of Vice-President, General Committee. Seconded: Marilyn Sickels. As there were no other nominations from the floor, Marina declared Doreen elected as Vice-President.

With Doreen being elected as Vice-President, a general member vacancy is available on the General Committee. Marina nominated Lex Grubner for this position. Seconded: Emma Dobbie. As there were no other nominations from the floor, Marina declared Lex elected to the General Committee.

Marina asked for nominations for Ruapehu Committee members where there are 2 vacancies. There were no nominations offered.

Marina asked for nominations for Social Committee members where there are 2 vacancies. There were no nominations offered.

7. Notices of Motion

The General Committee recommends to all members of the Club that the following two motions receive their approval:

Motion 1: That Sheldon Bruce be elected a Life Member of the Hutt Valley Tramping Club.
Kate Brownsword / John Simes **Carried**

Kate Brownsword and John Simes both spoke to their motion.
Pat Tristram noted that Mat and Graham Craig, who were unable to attend the AGM, endorsed Sheldon.

Motion 2: That members agree to re-register Hutt Valley Tramping Club under the Incorporated Societies (2022) Act.

Emma Dobbie / Tania Hatfield **Carried**

Pat Tristram commented that the Constitution is the document that runs the Club. Pat acknowledged that the motion needs to be passed so the Club can be re-registered. As the Constitution is a very important document it's going to take time to incorporate changes that suit the Club as well. Pat offered to help with this.

8. General Business:

- Doc Watson thanked the club for their effort to return items to the gear room. Two avalanche transceivers have yet to be returned. John Simes suggested an entry into the next Hills and Valleys may prompt a return.
- John Simes thanked Russell Oliver for his contribution to the club, particularly Ruapehu Lodge.

President's Awards:

Marina acknowledged the outstanding work of several club members with President's awards.

Russell Oliver

Russell is stepping down from the Ruapehu Committee after almost 11 years, including two years as Vice-President Ruapehu. He's kept on top of lodge administration, such as fire procedures.

He's also a hands-on person, and carried out a great deal of maintenance over the years. His work is absolutely meticulous, even in the difficult conditions the mountain has sometimes thrown at him.

He has often made trips to the lodge to carry out work that's not part of regular work party weekends. Last year after Cyclone Gabrielle tore a hole in the soffit in the most inaccessible part of the roof, Russell and Ian McIlraith had it fixed within five days of it being discovered. At one lodge work party recently, a toilet needed replacing so Russell walked down the hill, drove to Taupo, picked up the new toilet, carried it back up and installed it – all in a day's work.

Russell is a talented wood worker and made and donated a beautiful cabinet to hold all the games for the lounge at the lodge.

His talents also extend to the clubrooms, and last year he crafted a lovely cabinet for our awards.

President's Awards for Centenary celebrations:

Marina also recognised the work of five people who played central roles in making our centenary celebrations a success last year.

She acknowledged that many club members contributed to the club's centenary year.

Andrew Robinson

Andrew edited our centenary publication, *100 years 100 stories*, which was a mammoth undertaking and took around a year to complete.

Andrew came up with the idea and – with the help of his fellow compilers – produced a publication that fittingly celebrates the club's achievements over the past 100 years.

This involved searching through hundreds of issues of Hills & Valleys and other sources, including newspapers and magazines, to find stories, trip reports, diaries and photos.

Andrew then formatted the material into a well-crafted publication that's illuminating, inspiring and sometimes hilarious.

It's given us all a lot of satisfaction to read about the outdoor adventures of club members over the past century and it really connects us today with everyone who's gone before.

We're very fortunate to have had Andrew's talents to create *100 years 100 stories*.

Michele Lythgoe

Michele was one of the core members of the 100th Sub-committee who met regularly to brainstorm and plan the events in November 2023.

Michele planned and organised the Saturday afternoon tea along with Bernice and Bob. This was a big event, with several activities throughout the afternoon.

Not only did Michele do much of the planning for the afternoon but she also put in a long day preparing, making and beautifully presenting the food for the event.

She was one of the friendly hosts and made everyone feel welcomed and part of the celebration.

This award also recognises Michele's longstanding support of our club, leading many bike rides, and offering support and delicious treats beyond the expectations of the most exemplary leader.

The enthusiasm and effort Michele contributed to the centenary is just one example of her many years of service to the club.

Bob Deller

Bob was involved in many aspects of the celebrations, starting with his organisation – with Bernice – of the centenary walks on May 14. Bob and Bernice took over the planning from Graeme Lythgoe after his passing in February 2023.

It was a magnificent effort to coordinate four different trips with several leaders, a photographic session and 100 people. A logistical nightmare is possibly a more accurate description. But Bob and Bernice wrangled everyone to meet at Belmont Regional Park for photographs, then somehow linked the trip participants up with their leaders and everyone headed off on their walks.

Bob was also one of the main organisers for the Saturday afternoon tea and he did a huge amount of work at the Friday evening event.

Ahead of the centenary weekend, Bob stepped up with others to prepare the area outside the clubrooms for the centenary planting on the Saturday.

Bernice Deller

Bernice's contributions to the centenary planning ranged incredibly widely. For a start, Bernice – with Bob – generously hosted the 100th Sub-committee for regular dinner meetings at their house.

She was one of the compilers for the extraordinary centenary publication. This entailed hours of researching and reading to find the best example of club activity for a particular year.

Bernice was also a key organiser of the Saturday afternoon event. She helped to prepare the clubrooms before and on the day and worked hard to keep the afternoon's activities and all the helpers on track. She organised the popular slide show for the afternoon.

Among her successes was arranging the 100th birthday cake decorated with a picture of the original Powell hut, which was cut by some of our longest-standing members. Bernice organised the super-veterans of the club to attend and supported them during the cake-cutting ceremony.

She also put up her hand to help prepare the area outside the clubrooms for our centenary planting.

Gerard McGreevy

Gerard was also a core member of the 100th Sub-committee and he was instrumental in getting all of the Friday night mix and mingle organised and well planned in advance.

There was a great deal to arrange, including drinks, catering, the hall layout, staffing and all the other logistics of an event for more than 120 people.

Gerard worked with several suppliers to get quotes and the best deal for the club. He managed to come in under budget for the most expensive event of the weekend's celebrations.

At the last minute a family bereavement meant that he could not be there on the day, but his meticulous planning paid off and the event went off without a hitch.

Gerard also assisted with agenda and sub-committee organisation in the early stages of the planning.

Dennis Page accepted the award on behalf of Gerard.

Marina took the opportunity to also thank Dennis for all his work as chair of the 100th Sub-committee.

Dennis acknowledged the late Graeme Lythgoe, Tania Hatfield and Jan Arts for their hard work behind the scenes and Gerard McGreevy for meticulous planning of the Friday night celebrations.

General thanks

Marina thanked Julie Lewis for her hard work managing bookings for the clubrooms over some years. Julie is standing down from this role.

Marina also thanked all the Club's committee members, sub-committee members, emergency contacts, the people who take care of our clubrooms, our Ruapehu lodge, our club nights, our Hills & Valley newsletter, our website, and everyone who leads trips and participates.

The meeting closed at 8:25 pm.

Signed

Chair

Date

Hutt Valley Tramping Club
Minutes of an Extraordinary General Meeting
7.30 pm, Wednesday, 22nd January 2025

Apologies:

James Herdman, Jeremy Ballantyne, Charlotte Hargreaves, Rosie Doole, Shane Harrison, Darren Horner, Mary Horner, Ian Ayson, Alison Ayson, John Tristram, Cathy Priest, Dennis Page, Paul Labett.

Present:

53 members.

Marina Skinner club president opened the EGM by welcoming all and outlining the format of the meeting.

Marina presented a slide show starting with the history of the current van proposed at the 1999 AGM and purchased in 2001. Archived annual reports show similar issues with the old truck and our current van, the truck was underused, and members were using other forms of transport, the truck was not meeting people's expectations of safety, speed and comfort. A key difference between then and now is that 20 plus years ago the club's transport replacement fund did not have enough funds to buy a new vehicle, this was topped up by loans from members and a grant from the Quinn's Post Trust.

Moving to the present, club van usage has dropped in recent years and there has been an increase in maintenance costs. In 2024 the transport sub-committee spent several months looking at different options and members gave views through a survey and later, a request for feedback. 68% of survey respondents said they would be likely to use a new van, 67% said they would be interested in driving an automatic van. Responses from the feedback request were 23 members in favour of a new van and 4 mixed responses.

The sub-committee contacted three other tramping clubs about their van usage. Doc Watson looked at several different van options as well as new and second-hand models.

The transport sub-committee and General Committee are recommending the 10-seater Toyota ZX Hiace Minibus as it is the best price and has the best features for our club needs. There is up to a 12 month wait for this model. The cost is \$69,000 and we would add some extra safety features: a cargo safety cage, fire extinguisher and a safety hammer. Sign writing is an additional cost. At present our van replacement fund has enough to cover the cost of the van and all the additional features. Because of the long wait for this van, in December the General Committee voted to pay a \$2,000 fully refundable deposit to reduce the delay of delivery.

Motion:

That Hutt Valley Tramping Club replaces the van with a new Toyota ZX Hiace Minibus.

Moved: Marina Skinner / Doc Watson

In moving this motion Marina added that a new van is an important benefit for our members and makes trip planning easier, more flexible, cheaper, greener and more fun than taking private vehicles or hiring vehicles. It is time to upgrade to a van that is automatic, has more comfort and safety features. A new van will be popular with members,

it should be used more than our current van, it may increase the number of trips that the club offers and could attract new members.

There are still questions to work through if a new van is purchased such as how to dispose of the current van, a review of the current fares, review processes of which trips get priority and who can drive the new van.

Marina thanked the members who have generously donated to the van replacement fund.

As seconder of the motion Doc Watson thanked the members for attending the EGM and the transport sub-committee for their hard work getting to this stage.

Doc discussed being tasked to find a van that suited the results from the survey. These were automatic transmission, improved safety and comfort, 10-12 seater. The Hiace mini van fits this bill. It has individual air conditioning vents and reclining seats with full seat belts, with slightly more leg room than the current van. Clear vision down the van with rear vision mirror. The step into the van is lower. The luggage compartment is slightly smaller than the Transit. The van size is very similar to what we have at present in width and length, and it will fit nicely into the garage. There is prepaid servicing so it's a known cost.

Marina opened to members for questions and comments:

Comments by email from Shane Harrison – against because of low numbers on trips and environmental grounds , James Herdman – supportive, Rosie Doole – supportive and would like signwriting, Ian and Alison Ayson – supportive and offered to contribute to funds and hoped members would support in this way.

Comments from the floor:

Chris West – further drawbacks to the current van are the 2 rear seats are uncomfortable, getting the spare wheel out is very difficult. Electric options are very expensive and charging stations are few and far between.

Doc said the spare wheel in the Hiace is underneath, the gear and equipment is under the hatch.

Michael Grace is concerned about the financial viability of the purchase. Usage of the van provides income for the van and trips are diminishing. It's not going to cover the expenses of running the vehicle. The club will need to subsidise the van by paying more for trip fees, increase in annual subs. Trips have a scarcity of leaders, don't think a new van will encourage usage.

Doc believes a new van will increase drivers and trips.

Marina said she can't predict numbers for the new van however the survey said 68% were more likely to drive the van. The fare schedule needs to be revised. Marina hopes the van will encourage more trips.

Mike Priest – reading from Annual Report 2019-2020, 10,000 km each year is needed to cover the costs of running the van. In the last 10 years only 1 year has exceeded that. Mike asked 'what trips are we going to do?' Longer trips need to be planned to get good usage. Does the \$10,000 of donations include the \$5000 Bob Sewell donation?

Jim replied that it does not. There are \$63,000 in term deposits for the van which includes Bob Sewell's \$5000. There has also been \$10,160 in donations recently.

Pat Tristram – Agrees with Michael's concerns however would like to see a new van to encourage more use. We need to ensure that weekend and long-distance trips use the van. We need to keep a careful eye on reviewing the usage of the new van and that trips in the van cover all van expenditure.

Graham McVerry – Asked if the transport fund incomings are exceeding expenditure.

Mike Priest replied that in the last 5 years there has been a deficit once, this includes club gear as well.

Jim Cousins also replied that since he has been Treasurer, for most of those years quite a substantial amount has been placed on term deposit for a replacement van, over the last 4 or 5 years this has not happened.

Graeme McVerry commented that there are 4 years of free servicing for the van that will cut the operating costs, and after this stage the club may need to make a decision.

John Simes – We have \$72k that, as users of the van over decades, we have all contributed a little bit of money to the new van. So we would be undercutting all that usage if we decided to use that money for something else or not buy a new van. John's view is that a new van gives the opportunity to revitalise usage.

John Smeith – John thinks a new van would be nice but does not believe it is a viable economic proposition for the club. The cost of repairs and maintenance over the last 10 years averages out to \$1928 per year. The interest from the transport fund being invested would cover this over 5 years. What will the cost of the new van insurance be? Since becoming transport officer in 2021 van usage has declined from 213 passengers in 2014/15 to 110 last year. The number of trips has decreased by 33%. Indicates a lack of leaders and less participation by members in club trips. What about the carbon footprint of taking other means of travel? We have an ageing membership and less people are going out and are less willing to lead trips. In the tramping section we have fewer members under 65. The survey results were from only 20% of the total membership (53) and 13% of the total membership (35) want to purchase a new van. The Toyota van does not have a safety rating and has never been tested. John questioned the Toyota van's fuel economy. He asked whether van fares will increase and will grow a fund to replace a new van. It would be to better keep the current van for the next 5 years, and make some improvements. The current van has been well looked after by Doc Watson and should see us for another 5 years.

Members discussed the safety rating of the Toyota Hiace minivan and Marina said this would be looked into.

Geoff Norton asked for more information about the Toyota van's warranty, parts and labour.

Bernice Deller does not want the club subsidising members to use the van and wants members to pay a fixed, affordable cost for van use.

Mel Stoneham thinks that the new van will be used more because it is automatic.

Mike Priest said that justification for a 10 seater is that the average occupancy for the van over the last 9 years has been 10 people.

Motion:

That Hutt Valley Tramping Club replaces the van with a new Toyota ZX Hiace Minibus.

Moved: Marina Skinner / Doc Watson **Carried**

Marina thanked all members for attending, and the questions and comments raised and discussed. There are further issues to be addressed around the van and this will be done in time. Marina is excited about a new van and hopes that everybody gets an opportunity to use it.

The EGM closed at 8:45pm.



Doc Watson, left, Murray McMillan and Chriselda McMillan, Tararua Forest Park.
Photo: Andrew Robinson
Winner of the topical section of the 2024 HVTC photographic competition