



beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club

February 2007
Issue 1

mail:
MTSC
P.O. Box 245
Palmerston North

web:
www.mtsc.org.nz

Right:
Adam
Photo: Jean Garman
Duckpond Hut Trip



From: Map 260-U22 (LINZ)

Upcoming club nights

Holiday photos+ Trip Card Planning

7.30 pm, 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at the Manawatu Aero Club Rooms, Airport Drive

6th February - Holiday pictures at the clubroom

The holidays are over for some and might be still going for others but how about showing everyone what outdoor activities you've been up to. Bring your photos to the club night or email them to Howard at mtsc.president@xtra.co.nz. Come have a great night.

20th February - Trip card planning meeting

The current club trip card hasn't yet run its course but we need to start putting some trips together for the Winter Trip Card. If there are places that you'd like to go or just trips you'd like to see repeated come along and suggest them, and even put yourself forward as the trip leader if you feel up to it.



President's Report

Summer + Lodge Work Party + Te Matawai Hut Improvements

by **Howard Nicholson**

email mtsc.president@xtra.co.nz or phone (06) 357 6325

We have had a mixed bag of tramping conditions recently, and I hear that many of our members have made the most of the Summer break. Being prepared for any conditions at any time of year is a feature of tramping in New Zealand, which is why we promote the carrying of tents or tent-flies and storm clothing on all trips, and provide a range of gear for hire.

Your help and support is needed to maintain our major asset at Mt Ruapehu. We need to make the most of the stable summer weather (it's coming...) to re-roof, re-line, re-paint and generally tidy up various parts of the Lodge. The season for Lodge maintenance is short, and we have a lot to do. Please give some serious thought to how you can help this year, starting with the February work party – see Ryan's article later in this newsletter.

Last year the club committed \$5,000 towards the building of a covered verandah at Te Matawai Hut. I hear that DoC has nearly completed this project, so you may soon be able to shelter from the summer rain while removing your muddy boots! I would be keen to hear from members who have passed by that way recently to get their views on the new addition.

Enjoy the sunshine!

Chief Guide's Report

by **Tony Evans**

2007 has arrived and so has summer with an official temperature of 29C in Palmy today (mid January as I write this) and very humid, good weather for those trips that involve getting wet. I would like to wish everybody lots of happy and safe tramping during 2007.

Lodge Working Bee Feb 3-6

by **Ryan Badger**

It's time for a working bee! After many years of comfort and good times, the elements have taken their toll on the MTSC lodge at the top of the Bruce Road on Mt Ruapehu and it is well overdue for a bit of a do-up!

So between February 3-6 we are planning a working bee. Items on the list of things to do include:

1. Re-roofing the locker and bunking portion of the lodge (which includes new building paper and insulation).
2. Re-line and paint inside of bunk-rooms general tidy up in other areas of the lodge.

If you are keen to help out with any of these things (you don't have to be a registered builder to lend a hand!) we would love to hear from you!!

Please note that all those who help receive free meals and accommodation while they are there helping.

Please contact Ryan Badger

Phone: (027) 445 1997

Email: Farmboy_ryan@hotmail.com

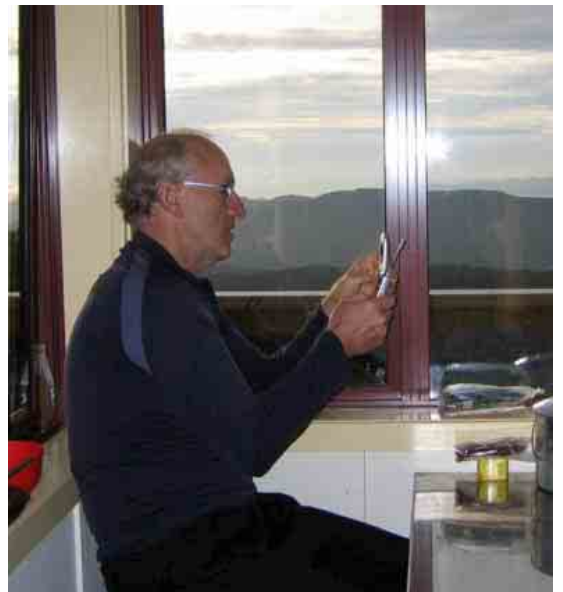
Christchurch Tramping Club 75th Anniversary

Weekend after Easter 2007 (14-15 April 2007). If you have ever had any involvement with the club come and help us celebrate

For details visit www.ctc.org.nz or contact Rex or Greta Vink Ph (03) 352 5329, PO Box 527, Christchurch. Email greta-vink@clear.net.nz

For Sale

DoC hut tickets - discount rates to members. Contact: Howard Nicholson on (06) 357 6325.



Garry checking his cell phone at Elder Hut

Photo: Adam Matich
Elder Hut Trip | 13-14 January 2007

Upcoming trips

TRIP GRADING

The times listed below include tramping, rest and meal stops. In assessing the trip times and grades, terrain, weather and party fitness (a party is as fast as its slowest member) must be considered. As these factors will never repeat themselves, times are only estimates. Contact the trip leader if you are unsure about trip gradings for a specific trip.

ALL	All welcome
EASY	4 hours per day, pace slower than Easy/Med. Does not relate to terrain.
EASY/MEDIUM	5 hours per day at a pace slower than medium.
MEDIUM	7 hours per day at a standard walking pace.
MEDIUM/FIT	8 hours per day at a pace faster than medium.
FIT	Over 8 hours per day at a pace faster than medium/fit.
TECHNICAL	Qualifying requirements to be announced by the trip organiser.

Thursday Trampers

1 February

Ivan Alve

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

356 3123

Mt Egmont Circuit

3-6 February

Christine Scott

The plan for this 4 day trip over Waitangi Weekend is to travel up to Dawson Falls either Friday night or early Saturday morning, walk to Waiaua Gorge Hut via the upper mountain track on the Saturday and through to Holly Hut on the Sunday (via the Kapoiaia and Stony River tracks). The Monday will either be spent at Holly Hut with a day trip to Bells Falls and/or Pouakai Hut or we will go through to the Camp house (North Egmont) or Maketawa Hut via Pouakai Hut, Maude Peak and Henry Peak. The Camp house is a recently restored historic mountain house and has to be booked in advance. The last day (Tuesday), we will walk out to Dawson Falls. The length of the final day will depend on whether we walk out from Holly Hut, the Camp house or Maketawa Hut. Day lengths are expected to be 6-8 hours but at a medium pace.

Medium/Fit

354 0510

Wednesday Trampers

7 February

Ivan Alve

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

356 3123

Thursday Trampers

8 February

Jill Spencer

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

329 8738

Pourangaki Hut

10-11 February

Garry Grayson

Departing P.N. Saturday 7.30 am, we'll drive to the Mangakukeke Road end (off Kawhatau Road). A bit of a grunt (1100 m) from here up past the new Purity Hut, passing by Wooden Peg to Iron Peg then South-East along Hawkes Bay Ridge. If the weather conditions are kind, the

Medium/Fit

326 8837

route leading off down to Pourangaki Hut may be spotted and we'll drop on down there for evening tucker, gossip and a rest session. Since it's Summer, a nice cool trip out via the river route down to Kelly Knight will be appropriate, then continuing on out to the vehicle over the farmland access route.

Tall Trees and Dragonflies

11 February

David Newstead

We will depart the PN Police Station, Church St, at 8.30 am. This very much a family trip aimed at young children of all ages. (For this event a couple of years ago none were under sixty! I wonder who will turn up this year.) We adjust to suit the smallest (or slowest) on the day. We are going to Cole Creek (near Sixtus Lodge) at the foot of Shorts track (Ruahines). The giant dragonflies are common at this time of year, but only fly in the sunshine. There are some other interesting insects too, on a fine day. The tall trees, however, are always there. The focus is on the outdoor education area, Ngahere a Tane, set up by the old NZ Forest Service over 20 years ago. The basic activity will involve walking not more than 4 km; but if the party on the day (as a whole) feels more energetic, we can accommodate. I can also be called at work on 350 4640 if you need more details.

Family

(025) 576 175

Wednesday Trampers

14 February

Liz Flint

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

356 7654

Thursday Trampers

15 February

Ray Pratt

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

328 7884

Longview Hut

17-18 February

Bev Akers

An old favorite for many. This can be done as a day trip but I have put this on as an easy over-

Easy/Medium

325 8879

nighter, for one to sleep overnight but spend little effort getting to a hut. This will be a laid back tramp. An almost two hour drive, followed by an almost two hour climb and we will be at the hut.

Next day we can wander back down the same way or go towards the Daphne Track or better still drop down to the stream to visit Awatere Hut, and out. If you haven't been on an over-nighter for a while and want an easy trip to get you going, this is for you.

Beehive Creek Walkway

18 February

Tim Swale

Family
06 376 6556

This is a very easy walk (less than two hours) across farmland and then down Beehive Creek in the Pohangina Valley. Wet feet are unavoidable but at this time of year that just adds to the pleasure. The intention is to have lunch at the Waterford Pub about 4 km south of Pohangina and then leave from there about 1.30 pm. A vehicle can be left at the southern end of the track before driving to the northern car park to start the walk.

Wednesday Trampers

21 February

Ivan Alve

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium
356 3123

Thursday Trampers

22 February

Keith Fisher

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium
357 1724

Tapokopoka Trig

24-25 February

Mark Learmonth

Phone for more details.

Medium
355 9143

A-Frame Hut

25 February

Rod McKenzie

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium
357 0136

Wednesday Trampers

28 February

Mona Webb

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium
323 4212

Thursday Trampers

1 March

Ken Rush

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium
357 2529

Ohuinga

3-4 March

Howard Nicholson

Up the Government... Spur, that is. Rumour has it that only a government worker would possibly consider putting a track up that ridge, which may be why the route is now overgrown. A round trip that traverses the rugged heartland of the Ruahines is planned, starting at Mill Road end, bashing up the Government Spur, camping on the tops, and then returning via Sawtooth Ridge and the Tukituki River.

Medium/Fit
357 6325

Stanfield Hut

4 March

Tim Swale

This very pleasant walk in the Eastern Ruahines near Dannevirke takes in a variety of scenery and makes a good introduction to tramping. A steep climb for 15 minutes leads to Holmes Ridge which we will follow for some time before dropping down to the Tamiki West Stream and then Stanfield Hut for lunch. The return journey is directly down the stream so wet feet are inevitable. The round trip takes about 4 hours.

Easy
06 376 6556

**On the trail from
Mangaweka**

Photo: Alla Seleznyova
Mangaweka Trip
3 December 2006



Wednesday Trampers

7 March

Pam Wilson

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

357 6247

may come back via the creek depending on weather. Should be a fairly easy and leisurely tramp although I haven't been there myself.

Thursday Trampers

8 March

Neville Gray

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

357 2768

Alfredtown Gorge

18 March

Hugh Wilde

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

356 9450

Waikamaka Hut

10-11 March

Doug McNeur

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

359 1893

Wednesday Trampers

21 March

Neville Gray

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

357 2768

Mikimiki Saddle - Te Mara Loop

11 March

Adam Matich

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

359 2796

Thursday Trampers

22 March

Bev Akers

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

325 8879

Wednesday Trampers

14 March

Chris Brunskill

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

354 2511

Tregear Spur

24-25 March

Garry Grayson

This trip is basically a repeat of my first trip as leader back in the days of being a new club member. We'll leave P.N. around 7.00 am Sat, travel to Otaki Forks, head off up the Waioatauru River as far as the foot bridge, stage left up the Snowy until the Tregear creek – Snowy fork is reached. From here it's a progressive climb, initially on old logging tracks, on up to exit the spur near Kime Hut around 1400 m. Depending on weather, etc, etc, we may camp out near, or spend the night inside the hut. Next day its back down via the track as far as Dennan Peak where we'll drop off down Rae Ridge to return to the Waioatauru near Sheridan Creek confluence.

Medium/Fit

326 8837

Thursday Trampers

15 March

Gordon Clark

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

359 2500

Gold Creek Hut

17-18 March

John Beech

We will depart the police station at 8 am and head for the Makarora Rd end. Once there we will walk up the river to the Gold Creek junction and then up the ridge track to the hut. Sun we

Easy/Medium

354 9310



Piripiri Hut
 Photo: Gary Bevins
 Piripiri Hut Trip
 19 November 2006

Right: Marker post in the river bed pointing in to Joe's Hut
 Photo: Jean Garman (Joe's Hut Trip | 2-3 December 2006)

Below: Having a rest at Purity Hut
 Photo: Alla Seleznyova (Mangaweka Trip | 3 December 2006)



Trip reports

Piripiri Hut 19 November

by Gary Bevins

After leaving the club bus in the paddock we headed off for Piripiri Stream. It's a short walk along the Pohangina River to the start of Piripiri Stream, and although we managed to keep our feet dry to this point, shortly after we all had wet feet.

Trudging up the stream for over an hour we came across a four-wheel drive track crossing the stream. There were a few moans and comments like "you mean we could have driven to this point?"

We headed on and from here the travel slowly deteriorated, including a scramble up a rock face on a chain. The route continued in typical Ruahine creek style, until it narrowed down and we took the right hand branch. There was a large orange triangle in the creek, marking the point which to leave the water. We had all donned raincoats by this point although the rain was more of a heavy drizzle. The steep climb to the hut warmed everybody up. We stopped inside the hut for lunch, and much needed break after four hours of travel.

The same route back to the vehicle was taken. The return trip was uneventful. It was one of those slippery creeks, especially at the top end. A few managed to slip over and get wet, for those who didn't there were a few near misses.

It was a weary group that arrived back at the bus close to 6 o'clock, but with the satisfaction that most of the team had visited a new hut.

We were Stephanie, Tanya, Mark, Tony, Dave, Adam, Brian, Ben, Gary and Jemma.

SAR Navigation Weekend 25-26 November

by Ken Mercer

Well, I'm deeply hurt! The occasion was the SAR navigation weekend, run by Peter. I figured it would be hard work and equivocated over what to wear and take. My red bush-shirt? Perhaps I should try the new fleecy thing which Mountain Equipment had on special recently? If it did rain all weekend it might hold less water. I'd wear my fleecy vest too which had done me all week at work. To cover the legs or not – either way if I got it wrong I'd be stuck with being too hot or too cold for the day as removing boots to change is too much of a pain. I compromised and wore my thinnest polypro.

Hopefully my new raincoat would keep me dry – I'd only used it once, walking the dog, so it was pristine. I'd bought it on a recent trip to Wellington.

I had heaps of food, spare food, nibbles, a large first aid kit, sleeping bag, sleeping mat, a billy... So there I was at the police station with the lightest pack (later I added a

Some of the Thursday Trampers in the mist atop Mt Holdsworth

Photo: Keith Fisher
Powell Hut-Mt Holdsworth Trip
15 December 2006



token portion of Mark's new super lightweight tent) and everyone is laughing at me and I have no idea why. They haven't even noticed my new coat... The colour, I'm told – everything is blue.

Hmm. I thought it was a tramping club, NOT A BLOODY FASHION SHOW. Then, last night at the end of year barbecue the whole thing is repeated and I'm a candidate for the chocolate hamster award. But, I didn't win – Howard had stupidly followed Peter's advice and found the deepest hole in the Kawhatau river to cross, on the way out on the same weekend. He went in up to his chest! Blue all over, from the cold - except for the red face! Well won Howard!

Black Ridge - Back Track Loop 22 November

by Pam Wilson

16 trampers.

With little prospects of fine weather, one van and several cars met up the Kahuterawa Valley. We crossed Black Bridge, and walked the easy walk up Back Track, returning via the shelter of the pine forest. Enjoying this so much, we thought we might as well extend the day and go onto Sledge Track for a short time. However, on leaving the pines, there was such heavy rain that only three hearty members continued. The rest of us were more than ready to call it a day.

Mitre Flats Hut 25-26 November

by Tony Evans

Leaving the vehicle in the carpark at the Mt Holdsworth Road end we followed the track along the Atiwhakatu Stream and past the Hut and across the swingbridge over the Aiwakatu Stream. A short but steepish climb to the junction at .670 for a lunch stop, with strong winds and cloud on the tops there was no temptation to detour via Baldy, so we arrived at Mitre Flats Hut mid-afternoon and made ourselves comfortable for the night.

Next morning the weather was good down at the hut but looked like the forecast of rain to arrive during the day

might be correct. Heading back the way we came we only had a little light rain until we arrived at Atiwhakatu Hut where we donned our wet weather gear for the final stage of the walk. We arrived back at the carpark wet but happy. We were Dave Allan and Tony Evans.

Mikimiki Tramway 30 November

Leader: Harry and Chris Allardice

16 trampers.

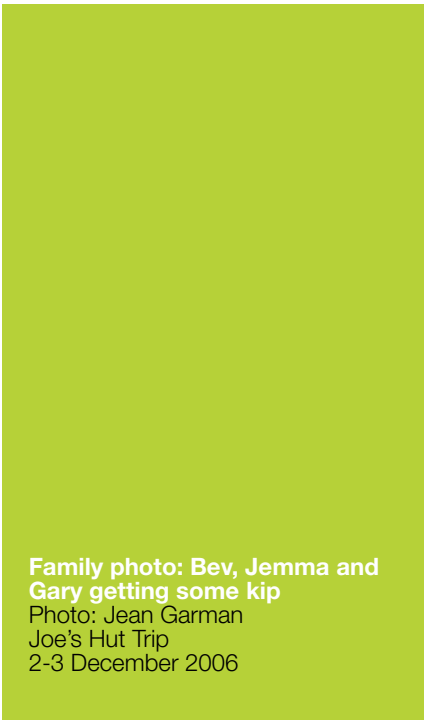
Joe's (Wharepapa) Hut - Rimutaka For. Park 2-3 December

by Adam Matich

Joe's hut is in the south-east corner of the Rimutaka Forest Park, down below Lake Wairarapa. Despite what people might think about driving distances, it is only two hours drive from Palmerston North...much the same as the Sunrise Road-end. However, we managed to drag it out a bit by stopping for a late breakfast at the bakery in Greytown. Finding the car park was not as easy as we thought. Some attention to the route is required in order to avoid driving straight past as we did.

The first half hour (1.5 km) of travel is across farmland following a fenced-off stream with the possibility of wet feet. Once off the farmland, the well-marked and maintained rack climbs gently 160 m (1.75 km) up through open dry forest to the saddle at White Stone Hill, where we had our drink stop, it being a warm day. Then we had a 1 km sidle-descent down into Battery Stream for lunch, 2-hours from the road end. After lunch we followed the tape-markers 20 minutes upstream to find Battery Biv. The winter rains have filled this stream with shingle. So much so that it has overflowed onto the river flats, and all the trees and bushes are now in part of the shingle river bed with their lower trunks buried. There was the faint odour of decaying buried vegetation. Because the centre of the valley is higher than the river flats by the valley walls, the stream has shifted and braided.

Unfortunately, as a result of all this movement, Battery Biv. is now in one of the watercourses. The water hits the



Family photo: Bev, Jemma and Gary getting some kip
 Photo: Jean Garman
 Joe's Hut Trip
 2-3 December 2006



back of the biv and runs down one side. The interior of the biv has also silted up. It is shame really, as otherwise it would be very livable.

After our explorations we continued the 1.1 km up towards the saddle above Joe's Hut, which lies on the Wharepapa River. All of this track has been re-cut and marked. At the top end it is quite steep, and DoC have re-directed it...we think because of a slip. Once on the saddle we had views down to the river which was probably about 40 min (1 km) away. The track dropped us down behind the Hut after a not very strenuous 4½ hour day.

The Wharepapa River has also suffered some shingle events. We intended to camp on the grassy flat down by the river, as we did in 2002 in preference to the rat infested hut. However, the grassy flat is now under a metre, and the river channel is under maybe as much as two metres, of

shingle. Only the top 2-3 cm of the 1 m high sign post on the flat is now visible. Fortunately DoC have cleaned out the rats since 2002 and the hut was fine for us to stay inside for the night, although Gary and Bev decided to be antisocial and tent outside. We found lots of driftwood for the fire, so it was a pleasant night.

Next morning I was delegated to go back the way we came and drive the truck down to the coast so that the others could take the easy 2-hour (5½ km) trip down the river. Fortunately, the track is quite easy to travel quickly in the return direction, and two hours saw me back at the vehicle and able to reach the river mouth just before the lazy party.

This is an interesting easy-medium overnighter, or a medium-grade day trip, for people who actually like to go somewhere new occasionally. Therefore, I suspect this



The river damaged Battery Biv
 Photo: Jean Garman
 Joe's Hut Trip
 2-3 December 2006



Wednesday walkers at Waihi Falls, east of Dannevirke

Photo: Ken Hall
Wed Trampers Christmas Trip
6 December 2006

means that ours will be the only group from the MTSC to ever go there! We were Mark Learmonth, Bev Akers, Jean Garman, Gary Bevins, & Adam Matich

Christmas Get Together for the Wednesday Walkers - Akitio Beach 6 December

by Chris Brunskill

Twenty of us met at the Rose and Crown for an 8 am start. Oh no, one is missing! The organiser had forgotten to collect one on the way. 8.30 am we head off in two vans. Bev in charge of the old van with Neville driving the new improved model. We picked up one extra at Ashhurst and five more at the Gorge. Now we are all here. Twenty seven of us head to Dannevirke where we re-group at the 'Big Red Shed' (wait for Bev) and head for Weber singing Xmas carols and letting the ladies talk. Re-group at Weber (waiting for Bev again), then turn right and head for Akitio. The singing had stopped but not the talking. We met up with two large mobs of sheep allowing Bev to catch up, arriving at Akitio about 10.30 am. Waiting for us was the local Home and School ladies with a much needed morning tea. 11 am we walked along the beach and back to the community hall where the Home and School ladies supplied us with a lunch, and Muriel Cowan, local historian, gave an interesting talk about the local area. Muriel then took us to places of interest in the area including a visit to a 100-year-old woodshed and a homestead where one lounge would have been as large as some homes in Palmerston North. By now it was 3.30 pm and we still had not been to the Waihi waterfall. Bev led the way this time, over metal, dusty windy roads (you could tell she didn't have to wash the van's). We eventually arrived back in Palmerston North about 6.30 pm. There was not much walking achieved but everyone enjoyed the day out at Akitio. A special thanks to the ladies of the Akitio Home and School Committee for helping to make this day such a success.

Roaring Stag Hut - Cattle Ridge Hut 7-8 December

Leader: Ann Green

Seven Thursday trampers reached Roaring Stag in the early afternoon, an easy trip after a later start. Some of us then

explored the route down the Ruamahunga river on the true right towards Cow Saddle for about 2 hours. It would make a good round trip one day. No markers but the bush was fairly open and the river low. Returning to the hut we found a school party had arrived. At 11 pm with a thudding of boots and flashing of lights three more trampers arrived.

During the night the wind got up. In the morning it was very strong with low cloud. Some of us left at 7 am for Cattle Ridge hut, three of us (Gordon, Merv, Ann) made it in 1 hr 45 min. The last bit across open ground was a struggle waiting for gaps in the gusts of wind. At 9 am it started to rain torrents. So abandoning our plans for a wander along Cattle Ridge admiring the view we retreated to Roaring Stag. The others had left, the clear peaceful river was now a brown roaring torrent. After a quick brew up we headed for the road end. The 2 streams just after the hut were now torrents we only crossed one by balancing on a fallen tree. The rest of the party were waiting for us back at the van and gave us a hot drink. We were Ann, Gordon, Ivan, Jill, Lyn, Merv, Nigel.

Manawatu Gorge 10 December

by Ken Mercer

Hundreds of people we didn't have (perhaps the Christmas season was responsible?), but the four who walked the gorge in beautiful weather had a lovely time. We were slightly late and stopped at the lookouts which probably explains why we didn't manage to catch up with Dave, who had kindly offered to help with a ride back to our car. Never mind, the coffee at the café was great and my thumb quickly cadged a ride. We were Tanka Mildner, Bastian Schenke, Mary and Ken Mercer.

North Ohau Hut 10 December

by Adam Matich

The weather being inclement in November, this trip was moved into sunny December. From Poad's Rd, Levin, the first 20 minutes of travel was across farmland. Some of this was very muddy due to recent rains and livestock. However, once into the forest the track improved and a

further 50 minutes of travel saw us at the Ohau Shelter site. Instead of travelling up the river to the North/South Ohau Forks, we decided to have a look at Oz's track which sidles up the true left of the Ohau to drop steeply back into the river at the forks.

Although some more track markers wouldn't go amiss, Oz's track is still in pretty good condition and we didn't have any trouble finding our way to the forks about 2 hours from the car park. From here-on we traveled up the North Ohau. This river route is quite slow, there being a lot of crossings, boulder hopping, balancing, slipping, falling, and cursing. The North Ohau is more difficult than the South Ohau, and the river being slightly up meant that we needed to show a bit more caution than usual in order to keep our gruts dry.

Even so, we reached the new North Ohau Hut after three hours of travel from the car park, albeit without any rest stops. By now the sun had decided to put in a serious appearance, and so the day got better and better. The hut is on the true left on a small flat, quite high above the river, and at the up-river end of what is probably the largest grassy river flat in the North Ohau. A large orange triangle marks the entry into the forest. However, the more observant will spot the top of the hut from back down near the bottom end of the flats.

This 4-berth hut has a wood burner, a partially full woodshed, a nice deck, and an outside fire-pit with an arc of benches on one side of it so that on nice evenings people can sit outside by a bonfire telling lies about hunting ferocious possums and weredeer.

We decided to travel all the way back down the river system to the farmland. The Ohau from the forks down to the Ohau Shelter Site was easy travel (45 min), and for another 45 minutes further it was still okay. From thereon we got into the difficult section and eventually we had to decide whether or not to swim. We girlied out of that and climbed back up onto the track, the Ohau Shelter to car

park eventually taking us around 100 min because of the slow river travel. This very tidy new hut makes a nice summer Medium-grade day trip or Easy-Medium over-nighter. We were Adam Matich, and Lynda and Daryl Rowan.

Powell Hut 14 December

Leader: Stuart Malcolm
17 trampers.

Powell Hut/Mt Holdsworth 15 December

by Stuart Malcolm
17 trampers.

Fine weather greeted the Thursday trampers for their last official trip of the year. Eleven of the group went as far as Powell, the other six going on to the Holdsworth summit, by which time typical Taranaki clag had reduced the visibility & the temperature had plummeted. It was however good to get out on a reasonable day after the many awful days we have had to accept this spring.

Duck Pond Hut 16-17 December

by Jean Garman

Four of us escaped the pre Christmas madness and headed into the Ruahine Ranges for the promise of "lots of scratches and trips and sprains, navigational arguments and tears before bedtime".

The usual howling gale was blasting through the car park at the Tamaki Road end but once into the river things were relatively pleasant. A quick splash up the river saw us basking in the sheltered sunshine outside Standfeild hut. Unfortunately it wasn't time for lunch yet so we puffed up onto the ridge for some lovely views to munch our lunch by. Adam climbed a dead tree – no idea why but it did



Duckpond

Photo: Jean Garman
Duckpond Hut Trip
16 December 2006

provide a photo opportunity. Along the ridgeline we were buffeted by the wind which made it too hard to hold a camera still enough to get a good shot of the bright orange cattle creek hut below us. We had been warned not to drop into the stream too early as the headwaters are apparently swampy and full of fallen logs to scramble over and/or fall through so we went a bit further along the ridge before dropping off. Turned out to be not quite far enough as we still had lots of logs to scramble over and fall through. Hence the promised scratches and trips although no sprains were recorded. After a little while the stream got a bit bigger and the going a bit easier till we met our intersecting stream and headed up it. This was very small, narrow and also had lots of logs. Adam who been fanatical about keeping his feet dry plunged through one log jam into the water and squealed like a blonde who had just broken a fingernail. We accepted this as the 'tears before bedtime' component.

A nice camping area was passed and round the corner was the duck pond. Garry had been contemplating a quick dip till he saw it. A concerned discussion began about the possibility of mosquito hordes come dusk. Following some pretty good directions we walked straight to the hut which is up in the bush between a little stream and the pond. It was a very quaint two berth affair but there was no camping nearby and it was still favourable camping weather so we headed back to the lovely campsite we had spotted earlier. Flies and bivi bags were erected (one each) and we lounged around while Garry cooked up an enormous pot of pasta, veges and fish. Everything cooked to perfection so I recommend putting Garry in charge of the cooking if he is on your trip. Several varieties of chocolate niceties were consumed for desert and we turned in early as most of us had had a late night the night before and were rather tired.

The mosquitoes didn't eventuate nor did the promised rain so after a very long sleep we were up at 6.00am and got to pack up dry flies. Jenny was trying out using contact lenses for tramping so the obligatory game of hunt the contact lens was played out. There were no arguments on the navigation back to the track as consensus seemed to work better. The promised rain arrived after we were on the track but was only ever gentle. The wind was less ferocious than the previous day and we were back at Standfeild Hut a little before lunch time. As there was still a bit of precipitation about we decided it was a great place for lunch anyway. Back in the river it stopped raining and the sun came out for a pleasant stroll back to the car.

An interesting foray into a little frequented area of the park. We were Garry Grayson, Jenny McCarthy, Adam Matich and Jean Garman.

Rangiwahia Hut 17 December

by Linda Campbell

The numbers on the trip changed by the day and due to illness and transport challenges there were just the three of us who ventured out into the rain on Sunday morning. In spite of the weather it was a very pleasant walk up to the hut where we found a larger group in residence with the heater going and a game of scrabble in full swing. Once we had warmed up and had lunch we strolled on back. The weather cleared for a short time so we were dry most of

the way back and fortunate enough to have a few views. As we got back to the car park the rain started again.

Thanks to Mark Spash and Tim Swale for their great company.



The extent of the slip leading up to Rangiwahia Hut

Photo: Tim Swale

Rangiwahia Hut Trip | 17 December 2006

Elder Hut 13-14 January

by Adam Matich

We dropped into the Waioatauru River from the campground at the very end of Otaki Gorge Road to commence our two days of being wet. Travel up the river route to Waioatauru Forks is preferable to the sidle track and provides opportunity for swims on a hot day. It was pretty warm, but we had somewhere to be. Regardless, by the time we reached the forks less than two hours later, our gruts were wet at least, and of course Garry managed to fall in and get wet beyond his chin. From the forks we headed up the Snowy River past Tregear Forks and through the little gorge where we all got wet chest deep, and being vertically challenged, Jean got wet a bit higher and had to bob along using her Leki Sticks. It is always nice to see a girl in a wet T-shirt.

Just after the gorge we reached our lunch spot (3½ hrs from start) at the bottom of the long spur that leads up to Elder Peak. There was a small scramble up the first 20 metres of the spur, and then we found ourselves on an easy to follow trail and after a few minutes Garry pointed out that our trail was suspiciously unnatural. We were on an old logging track which ran maybe 200 metres up to around 500 m ASL, and appeared to originate from the creek on the western side of the spur. Even after we reached the end of the logging track the going was good. There is a fairly good track all the way up to Elder, through open forest, which has few windfalls. Someone has marked the route down with paint and electrical tape, so in that direction it also shouldn't be too difficult to find one's way. According to the Elder Hut book other trampers have taken this route as well. Because it was a hot day the troops got techy if we didn't stop every hour, on the hour, for a rest. It was pleasant to sit in the dry forest, with a gentle, warm breeze blowing, instead of a wet forest, with a strong cold wind blowing. We got our day of summer. There was a lot

Arriving at Elder Hut

Photo: Adam Matich | Elder Hut Trip
13-14 January 2007



of bird life, and the tuis were so thick we had to beat them off with sticks...we ate well that night.

After 3½ hours of climbing we found ourselves on Elder Peak, 15 minutes away from the Hut to the SW of us. Finally the forecast rain appeared, but only as a few playful showers, which didn't require our raincoats. It got windy and wet in the night though. We had Elder Hut to ourselves and initially enjoyed the afternoon sun streaming through the windows and the views out to Kapiti Island. Latter on, Jean and trip leader used the remainder of the afternoon to bicker about keeping the hut door open to cool the place down as it was a bit warm, or closed to warm it up a bit. It was over 20 degrees in there and only went down to 16 degrees overnight.

Unfortunately, there were light showers on and off all the next morning, and so we headed rain-coated along to Renata Peak (2 hr), before heading north off it down the spur into the South Waiotauru River. His spur was not quite so nice as yesterday's. It has been tracked in the past, but is a bit faded now and somewhat overgrown from the top 100 m or so. Jean bullied trip leader into navigating down the spur, but after some umming and aahing, and a tiny mistake, she lost patience...yet again, and took over the navigation. Progress did improve...probably more by luck than design though. At around 600 m ASL Garry again thought we were on another logging track, a suggestion which was poo-pooed, but confirmed scant minutes later. The thicket of Beech saplings, the hole in the trees running down the spur in front of us and the 3 m wide channel also running down the spur were a bit damning. This increased our speed down the spur as navigation was now somewhat less necessary, and there was a channel through the beech thicket. Someone had been through before us.

The logging track dropped off the left hand side of the spur, before the rather steep end, and zigzagged across the South Waiotauru River to Waiotauru Hut. We took one of the branch tracks up out of the river on the true left to get on the more travelable 4WD track down from Maymorn Junction. We reached Waiotauru hut approximately 3¼ hours from Renata Peak. It is a dive and could well benefit from a better fire than the one that didn't burn it down some years ago. Even the rats-in-residence looked sullen

and disgruntled about living there. From there we had a easy 75 minute tramp along the logging track to Waiotauru Forks, a route which is now only foot or motorbike-worthy. There was also a slight navigational awkwardness at 2694455E, 6028125N, where a missing/removed bridge meant we had to drop down to the river and head downstream 300 m or so and pick up the track where it actually heads south before looping back round to the north again. All very confusing for people who were tired and just wanted to go home and dry out and anoint all their badly chafed unmentionable bits and pieces. On this track we spotted a deer. After it had spotted us!

At Waiotauru Forks we dropped into the river and made our weary way for two hours down the river to the car, which was un-vandalised and still had all five wheels. We wouldn't take that spur down off Renata Ridge again, but the spur up to Elder peak was very hospitable.

We were Jean Garman, Garry Grayson and Adam Matich.

Deadmans Loop

14 January

by Dave Mitchell

I pulled up at up old police station, out of habit, then realized we nowmeet at the new one. I only had to pick up Don and Darlene and we were off for an uneventful drive to the Rangiwahia road end.

We set off just before 9am and steadily climbed our way up the deadmans track till we were on the main ridge. The clouds were swirling about us but this provided good cover from the sun. At about 12-30 we reached Mangahuia which was the high point at 1536m. We had a quick lunch break at the turn off sign while taking in all the views all around us. It took an hour to get down to Rangi hut, where we had another break, then it was off down the track to the bridge. Just after the bridge we have to negotiate the detour, Don really enjoyed this challenging piece of track. We met a family coming up the detour track but I don't how far they got. All to soon we were back at the car. We then made a bee-line for the ice cream shop at Cheltenham. All in all it was nice day trip with the cloud cover making it more pleasant otherwise we would have cooked up there. We were Darlene, Don, Dave and Fred.

Club Information

Annual Hut Passes

Buy your Annual Hut Pass through DoC. The full price of an Annual Hut Pass is \$90 but is reduced to \$63 with your Federated Mountain Club (FMC) card discount. Jean Garman will provide you with a form to fill in which will be sent off with your cheque and FMC card (if you have one) to DoC Waikanae who will post you an Annual Hut Pass. Note that MTSC family memberships only pay one FMC sub so only one FMC card (and therefore discount) is available per family. Contact Jean at jeanandivan@value.net.nz or phone (06) 354 3536.

Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, hot showers, and is stocked with food. The lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860. Lodge bookings can be made between 9:30 am and 9:30 pm on any day. Do not call outside of these hours.



Note that bookings are not confirmed until the fees are paid. Payment is in advance by cheque or cash. Contact Hugh & Liz Wilde on (06) 356 9450.

	Members	Non-members
Adult	\$21	\$33
Secondary School	\$18	\$30
Primary School	\$15	\$26
Group prices	on application	on application

Booking and use of the MTSC Transit Van

The normal run-of-the-mill things you need to do if using the Transit Van are:

1. Book preferably by Thursday, and certainly no later than 6 pm Friday.
2. Cancel bookings by these times so others needing the van have time to amend travel arrangements.
3. Check the oil, water, and tyres.
4. Fill in the travel sheet (km, people, and dollars).
5. A fly should be carried on every tramp, there is always one in the passenger door of the club van and they are available from the Gear Custodian at no charge.

Trip leaders and those planning trips should use this cost effect club asset. Neville Gray is our minibus custodian and he can be contacted at (06) 357 2768.



Club Equipment

We have packs, 2 and 3 person tents, fly-sheets, snow mats, sleeping bag cover, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies, two bivvy bags and two big tent flies. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. Food Dehydrator: ideal for drying large and small quantities of fruit, vegetables, and meat for tramping rips. Easy to use, works well, and is available for hire from the Gear Custodian. Hire cost for members, \$1 per day. Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 15th of each month to Wei-Hang Chua at mtsc.editor@xtra.co.nz. Please contact me if you'd prefer to receive your newsletter by email only. Send changes of address to the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North or email info@mtsc.org.nz

Club website | www.mtsc.org.nz

This includes a list of contact details and a club email address. The club webpage is maintained by Howard Nicholson and is kindly hosted by InSPire Net.

People to contact

If you would like to contact the club with general inquiries, please drop a line to MTSC, P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North and it will reach the appropriate person. If you want a particular topic discussed at Committee meetings, this is a good way to go about it.

MTSC 2006-07 Committee

President	Howard Nicholson	357 6325 mtsc.president.xtra.co.nz
Secretary	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Doug McNeur	359 1893
Chief Guide	Tony Evans	357 4355
Day Trip Convenor	Bev Akers	325 8879
Membership Sec.	Mark Street	353 7442 mtsc@inspire.net.nz
Newsletter Editor	Wei-Hang Chua	021 212 0369 mtsc.editor@xtra.co.nz
Social Convenor	Linda Campbell	323 3836
Ski Captain	Ken Mercer	356 7497
Lodge Manager	Ryan Badger	027 445 1997
Lodge Booking Officers	Hugh & Liz Wilde	356 9450 wildeh@clear.net.nz
Mini-bus Manager	Neville Gray	357 2768
General Committee	Bev Akers	325 8879
	Roger Athersuch	353 0434
	Darlene Westrupp	354 5764
Imm. Past President	Christine Scott	354 0510